Royal Holloway
Academic Quality and Policy Manual
2019-20

Chapter 7: Academic Partnerships Framework
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1. Overview

Royal Holloway has a range of UK and international partnership arrangements that support the College's objectives in research and teaching and reflect our identity as a global institution. Many of these relationships involve agreements in which undergraduate and postgraduate courses are offered in collaboration with an external organisation. For further details please consult the Partnerships section of the Academic Quality and Policy Office website, and the College's Register of higher education provision with others.

Academic departments and schools may wish to explore partnerships with external organisations for a range of reasons, such as building on research links, diversifying student recruitment, developing opportunities for student experience and employability, engaging with public or private sector organisations, and enhancing the College's global reputation. It is important that all partnership arrangements align with strategic priorities at school and College level, are viable in terms of their resource implications, and that financial and reputational risks are manageable. Academic staff interested in a potential partnership opportunity are encouraged to seek support from the Academic Quality and Policy Office with developing a proposal.

The College’s partnership arrangements include the following:

- Validation agreements;
- Flying Faculty courses offered overseas;
- Student exchange and study abroad agreements with universities around the world;
- Preparatory provision at the Royal Holloway International Study Centre;
- Progression, articulation and dual degree arrangements with overseas institutions;
- Intercolligate courses and modules offered by and with members of the University of London.
2. Definitions

The following definitions cover the partnership arrangements currently supported at Royal Holloway.

Articulation
An arrangement whereby Royal Holloway recognizes all or part of the curriculum offered by a partner institution as being equivalent to one or more stages of a specific course of study at Royal Holloway. Students who successfully complete the agreed requirements at the partner institution are granted direct entry at an advanced point in the Royal Holloway course. Royal Holloway recognises the credit awarded at the partner institution and exempts students from part of the course at Royal Holloway. Credit gained by students at the College may also be recognised by the partner institution.

Distance learning
The provision of academic courses designed and assessed by Royal Holloway and delivered in partnership with University of London Worldwide. The University of London has primary responsibility for quality assurance and standards of the courses, which lead to an award of the University of London.

Dual degree/award
An arrangement whereby Royal Holloway and another degree awarding body (typically an overseas university partner) provide jointly developed or related courses that are delivered separately and lead to separate awards granted independently by each institution.

Embedded College
The Royal Holloway International Study Centre (RHISC) provides an International Foundation Year (IFY) course for international students as an approved pathway for progression onto the College's undergraduate courses. The RHISC has primary responsibility for assuring the quality and standards of the IFY course, and its provision is assured by the QAA through a periodic Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight. Royal Holloway endorses the IFY course and has secondary responsibility for supporting curriculum development and monitoring the quality and standards of provision. The RHISC is operated by Study Group, the first private pathway provider accepted onto the Office for Students (OfS) Register of English higher education providers.

Flying Faculty
An arrangement where Royal Holloway courses are delivered in an off-campus location (typically overseas), with teaching delivered wholly or partly by Royal Holloway academic staff. Course delivery is supported by an external organisation and students are awarded a degree from Royal Holloway, University of London. The main example at Royal Holloway is the Management courses delivered in partnership with Kaplan Singapore.

Intercollegiate module-sharing
Royal Holloway has a formal agreement with other institutions within the University of London, which allows undergraduate and postgraduate taught students to take optional modules outside their home institution and have the credit recognised as part of their degree award.

Joint Research supervision
Formal arrangements for doctoral research to be conducted at another academic or industrial organisation, leading to an award of Royal Holloway, University of London.

MOOC (massive open online course)
The provision of online short courses aimed at large-scale participation developed by Royal Holloway academic staff and delivered in partnership with external organisations such as Coursera and Futurelearn.
Placement learning
Arrangements where academic activity which is a formal (core or optional) part of a course takes place off Royal Holloway premises in Egham or London using the workplace as a site of learning, e.g. including work-based and work-related learning, practice placements, years abroad for modern foreign language students, day activities away from Royal Holloway campuses.

Progression
An arrangement whereby Royal Holloway grants entry to a specified course to applicants who have successfully completed a specific part or whole of a named course or course of study at a partner institution. Royal Holloway does not recognise credit awarded at the partner institution or give exemption from part of the Royal Holloway course. Students may need to meet certain academic and English requirements in order to be considered for admission.

Reverse articulation
Certain recruitment-focused partnership arrangements (progression, articulation, dual degree) may involve international students transferring credit gained during their degree course at Royal Holloway back to their home institution where it contributes towards an award of that institution. Such a process has no direct quality assurance implications for Royal Holloway as an awarding body. However it does involve the double-counting of credit at two different institutions and should be considered carefully when proposed as part of a new collaborative arrangement.

Student exchange and study abroad
Arrangements with overseas degree-awarding bodies to facilitate the mobility of students for short periods of credit-bearing study. Agreements may be for the bilateral exchange of incoming and outgoing students with a mutual waiver of tuition fees (Erasmus+ and international exchange) or for the unilateral recruitment of fee-paying study abroad students to Royal Holloway. Students remain enrolled on the course at their home institution, and do not enroll on a full degree course at the host institution. Credit gained by students at the host institution is converted and recognised by the home institution.

Validation
An arrangement whereby Royal Holloway considers a course developed and delivered by another organisation to be of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. Following approval the College will hold a validation event involving the partner organization, and the performance of the course will be subject to annual monitoring and review.

3. Governance and awarding powers

3.1 Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee
The Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee (APPC) has devolved responsibility from Academic Board for the approval and ongoing monitoring of all academic partnership arrangements. APPC meets eight times a year and considers new course proposals as well as receiving annual reviews of existing collaborative arrangements. Executive responsibility for oversight of partnership strategy sits with the Chair of APPC, the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Resources).

3.2 University of London Worldwide
The distance learning courses offered by Royal Holloway in partnership with University of London Worldwide (UoLW) are governed by the Board of the University of London Worldwide. The terms and conditions of the partnership, and division of roles and responsibilities between Royal Holloway and
3.3 Degree awarding powers

Royal Holloway has dual degree awarding powers, both as a member of the University of London and independently as Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The University of London’s regulatory framework restricts the degree awards the College is able to offer through certain types of partnership arrangement. Regulation 1 ‘University of London Awards’ stipulates that member Colleges may not offer University of London degrees through a validation or franchise arrangement. Such partnership arrangements will therefore lead to awards of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College.

The distance learning courses offered by Royal Holloway in partnership with University of London Worldwide lead to an award of the University of London. In cases where arrangements are in place for students to transfer between the distance-learning and on-campus versions of cognate courses, students will graduate with an award of the institution at which they complete the course. For example, a student who begins stage 1 of a UG distance-learning course with University of London Worldwide and then transfers to the on-campus course for stages 2 and 3, will receive a Royal Holloway award.

3.4 Office for Students

An ongoing condition of the College’s registration with the Office for Students (OfS) is that the College must notify the OfS of a ‘reportable event’, defined as any event or circumstance that could materially affect the provider’s legal form of business model, and/or its willingness or ability to comply with its conditions of registration. Further guidance on what constitutes a reportable event can be found in paragraph 494 of the OfS Regulatory Framework (‘Condition F3: Provision of Information to the OfS’). Reportable events must be reported to the OfS within five days of the date that the event is identified or, if that is not possible due to exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the provider, as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter and without undue delay.

One of the OfS reportable events concerns partnerships: ‘any new partnerships, including validation or subcontractual arrangements’. Academic or professional services staff who become aware of a significant development relating to a current partnership arrangement, or a potential new partnership arrangement, that could substantially affect the College’s legal or financial status, should notify Natasha Jones, Strategic Planning and Change, and David Ashton, Deputy Principal (Operations), immediately.

4. Academic standards and quality assurance

Royal Holloway has a responsibility to ensure that all learning opportunities provided in partnership with an external organization, and the degree awards issued through such partnership arrangements, are of an equivalent standard to those for which the College has sole responsibility. To meet this aim the College follows the Expectations for Standards and Quality and Core and Common Practices set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. All modules and courses delivered with a collaborative partner are subject to equivalent processes of approval, validation, monitoring, annual and periodic review to those outlined in the relevant chapters of this manual.
5. Student Mobility (exchange and study abroad)

5.1 Overview

Royal Holloway facilitates international student mobility for academic study through three types of partnership agreement:

- **Erasmus+**

Inter-institutional exchange agreements (IIEs) that facilitate exchange between students and/or staff in specific academic departments or subject areas, at specific levels of study (normally UG and/or PGR). Mobility taking place under such agreements is supported by annual funding allocated to the College through the Erasmus+ framework. Please see the College’s Erasmus Policy statement and Erasmus+ Charter here for further information.

- **International Exchange**

College-wide exchange agreements with partner institutions in a range of international locations outside of Europe. Primarily with English-speaking locations or with institutions offering sufficient English-medium curriculum and support. Places are made available to outgoing RHUL students through a selective annual international exchange scheme managed by CeDAS.

- **Study Abroad**

Agreements with partner institutions to facilitate the recruitment of fee-paying visiting students to the College for term 1, terms 2 and 3, full academic year and/or summer school. These may include specific conditions such as a tuition fee discount or guaranteed provision of campus accommodation.

CeDAS have responsibility for the administration of all incoming and outgoing study abroad activity. For further details on the specific processes and responsibilities involved please consult the CeDAS Handbook for Academic and Administrative Contacts working on Study Abroad activities.

For queries relating to partnerships that support other types of non-academic international mobility (e.g. work placements and volunteering), please see the Careers & Employability Service.

5.2 New Agreement Approval Process

Staff who would like to initiate a new exchange agreement with an international partner for the purpose of student exchange should contact AQPO (partnerships@rhul.ac.uk) in the first instance to discuss viability and fit with the College’s portfolio. Staff may be invited to complete the Proposed New International Exchange/Erasmus+ Agreement form with details of the educational and strategic benefits of the partnership and a plan for maintaining a balance of mobility in both directions at department and/or school level.

Once approved by the Head of School, this form should be emailed to partnerships@rhul.ac.uk so that AQPO can initiate a risk assessment and begin the process of seeking central College approval. The risk assessment will cover issues such as the availability of student support services at the proposed partner, potential risks to student safety, general travel and security issues, cultural, legal and social issues relating to inclusion, diversity and access in the proposed overseas location and any other concerns relating to student welfare.
It is important that new agreements align with College strategy by enhancing student's educational experience, supporting strategic aims relating to the College's international reputation, and/or generating financial benefit through international recruitment.

Key questions to consider prior to proposing a new student mobility partnership are:

- Curriculum compatibility
- Size, standing and location of partner institution
- Academic and pastoral support available for both incoming and outgoing exchange students
- Evidence of sufficient and sustainable interest from students in both directions, or evidence of a sustainable market of fee-paying students (for study abroad agreements).

5.3 Monitoring of agreements

AQPO is responsible for monitoring the performance and viability of exchange agreements, acting as the key institutional contact for partner institutions and advising the College on decisions regarding renewal and termination of agreements. The Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee has responsibility for monitoring the overall portfolio of exchange agreements and ensuring that the College has appropriate agreements in place to support the opportunities it offers to students.

As all exchange agreements work on the basis of reciprocal tuition fee waivers, AQPO record incoming and outgoing student numbers so that exchange parity can be maintained and agreements are sustainable for both sides. Exchange agreements typically allow for 1 or 2 FTE places in either direction per annum, although there is flexibility year to year and exceptions can be negotiated with partner institutions according to student demand. Exchange is calculated on the basis of 1 FTE = one full academic year, September to June, while individual semesters are counted as 0.5 FTE. A student studying at Royal Holloway from September to December, or from January to June, will count as 0.5 FTE.

5.4 Visiting Student curriculum

Academic departments may need to request AQPO to set up special 'V' modules with modified credit weighting and/or assessment requirements to meet the needs of visiting students studying for one or two terms. For example, if a department wishes to offer visiting students studying in Term 1 only a course that contains summative assessment normally completed in the summer, it will be necessary to approve an alternative assessment scheme so that students leaving in December are able to complete the module. For further information please consult the Guidance on the Assessment of Visiting Students available here.

5.5 Credit transfer

The College maintains grade conversion grids for all approved partner institutions to define how the credit Royal Holloway students gain whilst abroad is converted back into the College's grading system and approved by the relevant departmental assessment board. New or amended credit transfer grids are approved annually by the College’s Executive Committee for Assessment (ECA). The College also publishes annual Credit Transfer Guidelines to inform students and staff how credit gained during study abroad is counted towards different degree courses at Royal Holloway. The approved Grade Conversion grids and Credit Transfer Guidelines are available on the International Exchange webpages here.
6. General institutional agreements (Memoranda of Understanding)

6.1 MOU Policy

i. Academic staff, research groups, departments and/or schools may wish to pursue partnership opportunities with external organisations to support research and educational objectives. There will be occasions when it is appropriate to formally record the intent to cooperate in the form of a general institutional agreement such as an MOU.

ii. MOUs may be required by prospective partner organisations for a range of reasons, including research funding requirements, the provision of scholarships for students, or to authorise negotiations towards other collaborative activities.

iii. MOUs are relatively low risk and do not normally incorporate financial or legal commitments for the College. However there are strategic and reputational implications that should be considered in relation to the status of partner and objectives of the collaboration. Royal Holloway does not routinely publicise details of MOU agreements, however partner organisations may do so themselves which can have consequences for the College’s global reputation.

iv. MOUs should only be proposed in cases where there is a formal requirement or demonstrable strategic benefit to the College. Examples of the latter might include tangible benefits for the teaching and/or research of the lead academic(s), a link with a highly-ranked university, a government agency providing an opportunity for sponsorship, or a partnership initiative led by a member of the Executive team. Specific proposed joint activities will normally be the subject of separate agreement.

v. In cases where the sole collaborative objective is an activity covered by an existing process or template agreement (e.g. student mobility), consideration should be given as to whether an MOU is necessary or whether the parties should move directly to the relevant agreement.

vi. The expectation is that the College’s approved MOU template will provide the basis for such agreements, to be amended as appropriate through negotiation between the parties. In cases where a partner organisation insists on using its own template document, or insists on extensive revision to the College’s template, advice may be sought from AQPO and/or Governance & Legal Services.

6.2 MOU approval process.

i. The lead member of academic staff should complete the Initial Approval Form for MOUs with details of the rationale for the proposal. The proposal should be discussed within the department and forwarded to the Head of School for consideration. The proposal will be tabled at a meeting of the School Executive for further consideration, and advice may be sought at this stage from AQPO, International Student Recruitment and/or Research & Innovation as appropriate.

ii. Once endorsed by the Head of School, the Initial Approval Form and any other supporting information should be submitted to partnerships@rhul.ac.uk. AQPO will then undertake a proportionate due diligence evaluation of the proposed partner organisation and, if appropriate, a risk assessment for the proposed joint activities.

iii. The completed proposal (Initial Approval and Due Diligence) will be submitted to the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Resources) for consideration and approval. MOUs relating to major collaborative initiatives may also be considered by the Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee. Following initial approval, AQPO will liaise with the academic contact and the partner organisation to negotiate and approve the final agreement document.
7. Progression, articulation and dual degrees

- The College enters into a range of formal agreements with overseas higher education institutions to diversify international recruitment pathways onto College UG and PGT courses. See section 2 ‘Definitions’ for further details.
- A key initial consideration is whether such arrangements are designed to facilitate admission to the start of a full Royal Holloway degree course (‘progression’ and ‘dual degree’), or to facilitate admission with credit transfer and direct entry to an advanced stage of a Royal Holloway course (‘articulation’ or ‘direct entry’). The latter pose a higher risk for academic quality and standards as the College is recognizing credit gained at another institution, and therefore require a more robust approval and monitoring process as outlined below.

The following models illustrate some of the joint arrangements supported by the College:

7.1 Progression models

- Any arrangement that facilitates admission to the start of a full Royal Holloway degree course
- UG 1+3: students study an approved foundation course then progress to a Royal Holloway undergraduate course
- PGT 3+1+1: students study years 1-3 of an approved undergraduate course at the home institution then progress to a Royal Holloway postgraduate taught course via an intermediate year of preparatory study at the College (e.g. pre-Masters Diploma or study abroad).

7.2 Dual degree model

- Any arrangement in which a full Royal Holloway degree course is combined with all or part of a course of study at a partner institution and promoted as a comprehensive offer
- PGT 1+1+1: In year one students study the first year of a two-year Masters course at their home institution; in year two students study a full Royal Holloway Masters course; in year three students return to their home institution and complete the second year of their course.
- The overall opportunity may be promoted to students as a ‘dual degree’, and the curriculum of both courses may be aligned, but students complete the full requirements of each course independently and graduate with two separate degree awards.

7.3 Articulation models

- UG 2+2, 3+1, 3+2: students study one or more stages of an undergraduate course at their home institution, then enter directly to an advanced stage (normally stage 2) of a Royal Holloway undergraduate course. Students complete the course and graduate with a Royal Holloway award.
- In addition, students’ home institution may recognise the credit they gain at Royal Holloway as counting towards an award from that institution (‘reverse articulation’), i.e. students will graduate with two separate undergraduate awards.
- Articulation agreements may guarantee entry for students meeting a stipulated level in the partners’ curriculum (full articulation) or may guarantee a ‘right to apply’, with applications assessed individually and admission remaining at the College’s discretion.
- Articulation arrangements pose a higher risk to academic quality and standards because the College is granting exemption from one or more stages of its degree course curriculum on the basis that equivalent learning has been completed at the partner institution. For this reason the approval process involves an academic case, outlined below.
7.4 Initiation and development of proposal

The following three elements are required for the development and approval of progression, dual degree and articulation arrangements:

1. Initial expression of interest
2. Due diligence
3. Business case

In addition, articulation agreements require a fourth stage:

4. Academic case

1. Initial expression of interest

- Academic departments or schools interested in initiating a new international recruitment-focused partnership should complete the template expression of interest form. Informal advice may be sought from AQPO and International Student Recruitment at this stage on the viability of the proposal and its alignment with College strategy. The initial rationale should explain how the proposal supports key College objectives and indicate the potential benefits, including projected student numbers.
- The completed form should be submitted to the School Executive for consideration against the School’s strategic objectives, and approval granted for the proposal to be taken forward for consideration by the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Resources). The Senior Vice-Principal will consider the approval against College objectives and priorities before approving support from central services to proceed further with developing a full proposal.

2. Due diligence

- Following initial approval, AQPO will undertake a desk-based due diligence exercise on the partnering institution. Factors to be considered at this stage may include:
  - Location
  - Size and reputation, national and international ranking
  - National regulatory and quality assurance authorities
  - Governance and ownership, public/private status
  - Publish annual reports, including financial reports
  - Areas of academic excellence
  - Details of other UK and international partners
  - Evidence of international strategy and key operational functions, e.g. international office

3. Business case

- This should contain supporting evidence to justify the projected student numbers via the proposed partnership. This may include information obtained from the partner such as:
  - the number of proposed sending degree courses
  - data on student numbers on sending courses from the last 3-5 years
  - data on proportion of cohort meeting academic requirements for transfer to RHUL
  - information on other international partners and available data on current student numbers leaving the relevant courses via articulation or progression arrangements
  - supporting information on the sending institution’s promotion and recruitment activity and how the new arrangement could be used to increase student numbers on specific pathways
  - potential alignment with current RH international recruitment activity/priority markets
4. Academic case (articulation agreements only)

- The aim of the academic case is to demonstrate that students joining Royal Holloway courses have met the same or equivalent learning outcomes to the stage or stages from which they will be granted exemption, and will be academically prepared to succeed when they join the College.
- A key consideration is whether the arrangement will guarantee entry for students meeting a minimum threshold in the overseas curriculum or whether it will guarantee a ‘right to apply’, with applications assessed individually. Both have advantages but the first is higher risk and requires more scrutiny. The required elements of the academic case are listed below:
- The precise requirements for the academic case will be agreed on a case by case basis following the due diligence exercise and an assessment of the overall quality assurance risks posed by the proposed agreement
- Required documentation (essential items in bold)
  - Course and module syllabus details from sending institution
  - Course and module marking criteria and marking scales
  - A grade conversion grid relating marks at sending institution to RH marks
  - A module-level curriculum mapping document, indicating where RH module learning outcomes are covered in the overseas HEI syllabus
  - A draft articulation agreement (College template preferred), including specific details of RH courses and proposed RH entry requirements
  - Sample exam papers or other sample summative assessments and/or anonymized samples of student work if available
  - Data on student achievement from sending institution, e.g. annual summary of students achieving each grade/classification
  - Report from academic staff on visit to sending institution on quality of learning environment and teaching facilities and meetings with academic staff and students
  - Statement of approval from an External Examiner of the relevant Royal Holloway course(s)

7.5 Approval and monitoring

- Completed proposals for new agreements (documentation from 7.4) will be submitted to a meeting of the Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee for consideration and approval. In exceptional cases, including for example renewal or expansion of existing agreements, agreements that are considered to be low risk, or where agreements are particularly time sensitive, approval may be granted by Chair’s action and reported at the subsequent meeting of APPC.
- Records of all articulation agreements will be maintained on the College’s Register of Collaborative Provision and reported regularly at APPC.
- The College’s undergraduate annual review process (see Chapter 4) includes a requirement for course directors to monitor the performance of students entering courses via articulation agreements and to raise any issues of academic standards or student experience relating to such agreements.
- All articulation agreements will include a requirement for both partner to notify the other in the event of any significant amendment or revision to the curriculum that may affect the academic viability of the agreement.
- School Education Committees are expected to monitor the academic performance of all students on recruitment-focused collaborative agreements on an annual basis
8. Collaborative Provision

- This section applies to all partnership arrangements that involve the delivery of a Royal Holloway award in partnership with an external organisation, such as validation, franchise or flying faculty arrangements.
- The development of partnership proposals often requires a flexible and responsive approach according to the nature of the opportunity, the resource implications and the scale of risk involved. In summary, the process consists of four steps:

  Stage 1: Interest and Consideration
  Stage 2: Detailed Investigation and Proposal
  Stage 3: College Decision
  Stage 4: Preparation for Validation and Delivery

- If you are interested in setting up a collaborative arrangement, please speak to your Head of Department for guidance on departmental and school strategy, and contact AQPO for advice.
- AQPO maintains a suite of template documentation (the collaborative provision 'toolkit') required at the different stages outlined below. For further details contact the Senior Academic Quality Manager (Partnerships) via partnerships@royalholloway.ac.uk

8.1 Stage 1: Interest and consideration

- Initial interest in creating a collaborative relationship can come from a department, school or central College. This could be in relation to the adaptation or delivery of an existing course, the development of an entirely new course, or an innovative concept originating with an enquiry from an external body. All such proposals should be discussed within the academic department concerned to develop the concept for consideration by the School Executive.
- The concept for the partnership should go to the School Executive for discussion of the overall rationale and approval in principle, using the Consideration of Initial Proposal form. It is important to consider the core objectives and the potential impact across the School and College as a whole. Please use the following list of questions for consideration to inform this discussion, the answers to which will inform the Initial Course Proposal.

8.2 Initial questions for consideration

You may wish to consider some or all of the following questions whilst establishing the scope and objective of the partnership proposal. These question can help to inform both the completion of the Consideration of Initial Proposal form, and the discussion of the proposal at School Executive. The answers to these questions will also help to provide a basis for completion of the Initial Course Proposal (Collaborative) Form and submission of the overall proposal to APPC.

**Strategy**
- Is the collaboration in line with the College and School Strategic Plan?
- Has the proposed collaboration been discussed and approved by the School Executive?
- What is the market for the provision? Has any market research been undertaken to ascertain demand for the course? If not, is there any other evidence for the viability of the proposed course? The department should contact Strategic Planning and Change if any initial market research is needed at this stage.

**Partner**
- Who is the partnership with? Why this external partner?
- Is there a clear governance/corporate structure? Will there be any additional third-party or subsidiary bodies involved in the partnership?
- Has the partner declared a firm interest in the collaboration, or are they making a tentative enquiry? Does the College need to submit a formal tender for the collaboration? How would the timeline for this align with the College’s timeline for validation of new courses?
- What evidence is there of the standing of the external partner in terms of its equivalency to College/departmental/school standards?
- Is the external partner financially stable and legally competent as far as the department is aware?
- Are you aware of whether the external partner or the College requires government approval or license for the collaboration? If so, has this been given or, what will be involved?

Resources
- What impact will the collaboration have on workload for both academic and administrative staff? How will this be included in the workload model?
- Is it anticipated that additional academic and/or administrative staff will be required?
- What additional resources may be needed to support the delivery of the course in the department, school and/or professional services?

Delivery
- What course is being considered for the collaboration and why this particular course?
- What timescale is proposed for the introduction and therefore validation or amendment of the course?
- How will the course be taught and assessed? If an existing course, will the structure or delivery mode need modifying?
- Will departmental staff be involved in the admissions process?
- Are there any issues to consider in terms of the overall student experience, i.e. will students have access to equivalent levels of support and resource as on-campus students (including pastoral and study skills support, support for students with special needs, careers advice, learning resources)?
- What sort of student will the provision appeal to (Home/EU/OS)? Why will students choose this particular provision against other options in the UK or internationally?

Oversight and monitoring
- Who will be appointed as the Course Director?
- What is the structure of the partnering organisation, and who will have responsibility for management of the partnership and liaison with the College?
- How will the department/school/College ensure that the quality and standards of the course are maintained?

8.3 Stage 2a: Detailed investigation
- The concept should be taken to the School Executive by the Head of Department and the Proposer for discussion. The School Executive will consider the strategic and resource implications and ensure that the department has considered the potential impacts of the proposed partnership.
- The School Executive will then discuss the proposal with the Senior Vice-Principal (as Chair of APPC) and seek approval for a detailed investigation to take place. Depending on the nature of the proposal resource may be allocated from professional services (e.g. Strategic Planning and Change) to manage the development of the proposal in more detail.
- Should the Chair of APPC approve, a Project Manager will be appointed. In some cases the partner organization will require a Memorandum of Understanding to pursue the detailed investigation (see section 6 of this chapter). This should be prepared by the Senior Academic Quality Manager (Partnerships) once APPC is satisfied that the collaboration is viable, and signed by the Senior Vice-Principal as Chair of APPC.
8.4 Stage 2b: The Initial Course Proposal

The New Course Proposal (Collaborative) form will be completed by the Course Director with support from the Senior Academic Quality Manager (Partnerships), and will be accompanied by:

- A Financial model, provided by the appropriate School Accountant;
- A Risk Analysis, for which the Project Manager will be responsible, and which must consider potential steps to mitigate risk;
- Due Dilligence, for which the Project Manager will be responsible, assisted by Finance where appropriate, which must also include one independent external reference on both the reputation of the external provider and on the collaborative proposal.

In some cases a Draft Course Proposal will also be required.

8.5 Stage 3: College decision

The formal proposal will be submitted to the Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee, who will consider the collaborative proposal against the following headings:

- College Strategy
- Achievability
- Financial Model
- Risk Analysis
- Due Dilligence

APPC will also ensure that the proposal is consistent with the principles of QAA’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education

If APPC does not approve the proposal, it can be re-submitted at an appropriate time as identified by the Committee. Further information may also be requested in order to enable a decision to be made.

8.6 Stage 4: Preparation for validation and delivery

If the proposal is approved by APPC, the course will go forward for validation or re-validation/amendment (as required).

The process of establishing the partnership may require the following actions:

- The preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding;
- A Project Initiation Document may be prepared to formalise the project, and a Project Board formed;
- A timeline for the project, which will include the timeline for validation, conducted in line with the College’s standard quality assurance procedures (See Chapter Three of this Manual);
- A contract will be prepared, agreed, and signed with support from the Project Manager, Governance & Legal Services and the external provider;
- Advice will be taken on necessary legal, taxation, human resources, and governance issues arising from the collaboration;
- Validation documentation will be prepared by the Course Director as required in line with the Validation process;
- Working with the Project Manager, RH Course Director and Partner Course Director, the Senior Academic Quality Manager (Partnerships) will prepare a draft Operations Manual alongside the validation process. The Operations Manual will be finalized and agreed by both parties and form a schedule to the contract.
8.7 Ongoing monitoring and development

Once the collaborative course is validated and teaching delivery has begun, the course(s) will be subject to a cycle of:

- Annual monitoring and updates at the Academic Portfolio and Partnerships Committee;
- Periodic Review and/or re-validation;
- Periodic Renewal of the Contract and Schedules, including annual review of, and updates to, the Operations Manual.

Please note that all collaborative courses are subject to equivalent Quality Assurance processes and guidelines as campus-taught courses.

8.8 Forms required for collaborative provision

Please see the 'Forms and Templates' section of the AQPO website for links to the current versions of these forms, or contact the Senior Academic Quality Manager (Partnerships):

- Consideration of initial proposal by Head of School;
- New Course Proposal for Collaborative Arrangements;
- Annual Collaborative Review Report form.