

Section 11: Working with other institutions

Self-evaluation and Business Planning for the review of Partnership Programmes

[Although a significant proportion of this document needs to be descriptive it should also include an evaluation of current practice - showing areas where weaknesses are known and where improvements/enhancements can be made]

This document has been developed to encompass all partnership programmes. However, it is appreciated that each partnership programme is different and the review process should be proportionate. Therefore those operating progression and articulation arrangements should contact the Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) for further guidance.

Schools are required to write a Self-evaluation and Business Planning document covering the following headings. The questions should be used as prompts and indicate factors which should be considered. Particular attention should be given to areas of significant development since initial approval or last review of the partnership programme.

1. Executive Summary

- This summary should provide an overview of the key elements of the programme covering the period since the partnership was established or the partnership was last reviewed, including details on:
 - Brief details of the partner organisation, the origins of the partnership and timeline of the relationship:
 - List of the programme(s) involved, type of award, mode of study, amount and type of study done at each institution, entry tariff, fees:
 - Student numbers involved:
 - Local recognition or accreditation requirements for operating in the Partner's Country
 - What has worked particularly well? What are the examples of good practice? Have these activities led to any other partnership programmes (either within School or across the University)?
 - Have there been any significant changes in the context of then programme? (e.g. Changes with the partner, changes in the locality of the partner)
 - What key areas have been identified for development? And how are you going to take these forward?

2. Strategic Fit

- Does the programme continue to fit with:
 - The School Operating Plan?
 - School's – and related areas - current offering?
 - University's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Priorities?
 - Internationalisation Strategy?
- What are future plans for the programme/s? Any changes planned for size, scope, model? Will this have implications on resources?

3. Resources

- Is the School able to continue to support the partnership programme with its existing resources? If there are concerns about this how will they be mitigated?
- Have you consulted with the following services for feedback on the operation of the programme:
 - Other Schools involved
 - Admissions
 - Library
 - IT Services
 - Study Advice
 - Student Services Centre
 - RISIS
 - Exams office
 - International Study and Language Centre (for pre/in-session language support)
 - Centre for Quality Support and Development
 - Careers, Placement and Experience Centre
 - Reading International Office
 - International Partnerships Team
 - Health and Safety Team
- Are there any plans to enhance the resource provision on the programme such as new technological or lab based equipment?

4. Risk Analysis

- What are the key risks involved in running the programme and how do you mitigate these?
- Are there any factors of change on the horizon? What would their impact be?
- Does the School/University continue to have capacity to successfully run the programme?
- What would be the implications if 10% or 20% fewer or more students were accepted on the programme? Has this occurred for previous cohorts and what was the effect?
- What is the exit strategy if the partnership were required to terminate quickly?
- Has the partner established or are they in the process of establishing similar programmes with any other partners?

5. Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions

- What marketing materials are in use for this programme? How does UoR monitor these marketing materials? What mechanisms are there for UoR to check amendments or final version of new materials? Who is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of marketing information?
- What evidence do you have that there is continued demand for the programme?
- Have any new competitors emerged? What do they offer which is comparable? Does UoR still have a unique selling point?
- If UoR is responsible for admissions, are the standard procedures applied? If the partner is responsible for admissions, what is the process and have any problems arisen?
- What have the recruitment numbers been? What are the maximum and minimum numbers for the programme? Have these been reached?
- Has there been any fluctuation in recruitment numbers and if so, has the cause been identified?

- What is the projected recruitment numbers for the next three years? Are there any anticipated issues coming up that are likely to affect recruitment?
- Are there any plans to change the entry tariff? Is the entry tariff still competitive?
- What are the fees for the programme? Are the fees still competitive?¹
- What is the profile of students admitted? Are there particular patterns in admission and are there areas where more marketing could be utilised?
- Have any students had problems financing their studies?
- Are there any proposed new initiatives to enhance marketing of the programme and recruitment?

6. Programme Delivery and Student Experience

- Is the programme being delivered in line with the MoA, Programme Specifications/Module Descriptions? Do you have any concerns about the programme delivery? Are there examples of good practice you can highlight in the programme delivery and student experience?
- Have any significant changes been made by either the partner or UoR? How does UoR ensure that changes are communicated and curriculum mapping exercise take place (if necessary)?
- How do you ensure that the programme delivers a high quality student experience? Please provide examples to support your answer.
- Is there a suitable range of teaching methods and student learning opportunities? Please provide examples.
- Are there any plans to change the programme significantly in the near future (e.g. introduction of a new pathway)? Are there any proposed new ways of delivery the programme content?
- Are there any plans for new initiatives to enhance student support?
- What mechanisms are in place for students to feedback on the programme and modules? What has the general tone of the feedback been? Where problems have been identified, what actions have been taken and how has this been feedback to students?
- What mechanisms are in place for student representation? How do student provide input on the programme? Is there any variation on the standard student representation policy of UoR?
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the student experience at the partner? Is it comparable to student experience at UoR?
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the mechanism for transfer? E.g. registration at UoR.
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the impact of a group of students arriving en-masse into the student body – both for the arriving students and the current cohort?
- Has there been any change in procedures for student discipline, academic appeals and student complaints when studying at UoR and the partner?
- Is there variation in any UoR policies for the programme? How have these been managed?

7. Student information and support

- What is the status of students (in terms of being UoR students) at various points in the programme?

¹ Please note that any fee reduction requests must be submitted to the Sub-group on Fees, University Bursaries and Scholarships.

- What information is supplied to current students? Does this vary between UoR and the partner?
- Do students receive student handbooks which include programme specific information on student entitlement to academic and personal support and learning resources?
- What are the arrangements for academic and pastoral support and the responsibilities of UoR and the partner respectively?
- What UoR learning resources are students entitled to both remotely and locally? Are these adequate, consistent and has the level/type changed?
- What additional services are offered by the partner to students? At which stage of the programme are these offered?
- Have students been able, where required, to access support provided by the Disability Advisory Service? Is the physical learning and teaching environment accessible for all students?
- Are students provided with any additional support (such as pre-sessional or in-sessional English language support, induction and transition events)? Was this planned or have these provisions developed as need arose? Are there plans for support to be developed in the future?
- Have students been able to find suitable accommodation for the duration of their programme at UoR?

8. Assessment, progression and External Examiners

- What are the respective responsibilities/input of UoR and the partner for assessment in relation to:
 - Assessment tasks – setting assignments and exam papers and preparing students for them
 - Conduct of examinations
 - Marking and moderation of student work and examination scripts
 - Feedback to students on assessment performances
- What are the arrangements for Exam Boards and student progression between institutions and Parts at UoR? What is the input of the partner?
- What are the arrangements for External Examiners? Who appoints the external examiner and how are their reports fed back to the partner? How are recommendations of external examiners fed back into the programme?
- What are the student's results? What percentage pass/progress/get 2.1s or fests? Are student results comparable to other cohorts? Do you have any concerns in regards to the students' results?
- Is any specific support given to these students to help them succeed in their assessments?

9. Employability and Destinations

- Have students been able to access the Careers, Experience and Placement Centre at UoR or the Partner?
- Is the programme accredited? If so, what consultations have taken place with the relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB)? Has there been any feedback from the PSRB? Will they need to be contacted prior to any revalidation of the programme?
- Does the programme include placements, Erasmus or study abroad opportunities?
- What is the destination of those who have graduated from the programme? Have any students pursued further study (where applicable)?
- Has any feedback been received from employers? Do employers have any involvement in the programme?

- Are there any plans for engaging employers in new ways and providing students with new development opportunities?

10. Awards and Graduation

- What are the arrangements for graduation, certificates and transcripts? What information relating to the partner is included on the certificate/ transcript?

11. Communication

- Does this programme have a specific Programme Committee or Board of Studies? If so, how often do they meet and are formal records kept of these meetings? What is the membership of the committee and where does it meet? What issues/areas are discussed at the meetings
- How does the programme feed into a UoR Board of Studies?
- What are the on-going monitoring arrangements? How are issues raised and addressed?
- How does the partner input into annual monitoring and what support is provided for this?
- Have any issues been raised in the following, and how have they been addressed?
 - Partner Programme Sub-Report
 - Partnership annual review (Form 1)
- How does UoR and the partner communicate day-to-day?
- How effective is the Operational Handbook?
- What is the management structure and key operational roles for the programme? Who is responsible for what at both UoR and the partner? (See also table below)
- How are student records, student data on progression and achievement kept and maintained?
- How often are visits made between the partner and UoR? Is the number of visits more or less at the frequency anticipated? Will the number of visits stay the same in the future? Are there any formal reports of visits made?

12. Staffing and staff development

- Is there sufficient academic, pastoral and administrative support staff to deliver the programme? Have there been any changes since the programme was established?
- Who is responsible for the appointment and management of staff teaching on the programme? Has this allocation of responsibility changed?
- Do the staff teaching on the programme continue to have academic and professional capacity to teach the programme?
- Have the programme leads for UoR and/or the partner changed? How has this affected the programme?
- Have you reviewed CVs of any new staff teaching on the programme²?
- What is the process for dealing with complaints/concerns about staff?
- What staff support and development is offered? Are there any CQSD courses available? How frequent have these been? How is it ensured that staff are kept up to date with changes in the programme/subject area?
- Are there any plans to support staff development in new ways?

² It is a requirement that the University should formally and in advance of their commencing teaching on University programmes, approve the curricula vitae of all relevant partner institution staff.

13. Areas of responsibility

- Which partner is responsible for the following elements? Please fully complete the following table and indicate the degree of responsibility where it is shared.

Areas of Responsibility	Please state which partner has responsibility for each of these areas, highlighting areas where changes in responsibility have been made and why.
Curriculum design	
Advertising and marketing	
Recruitment activities	
Application advice	
Admissions	
Registration	
Accommodation	
Induction	
Teaching	
Teaching facilities	
IT facilities & resources	
VLE	
Learning resources	
Health and Safety	
Student evaluation	
Setting assessments	
Marking & feedback	
Moderation	
External examining	
Examination Board	
Board of Studies	
Annual Programme Report	
Student representation	
Disciplinary matters	
Appeals	
Complaints	
Collecting tuition fees	
Student support (academic)	
Careers education, information, advice and guidance	

Student support (pastoral)	
Student support (disabilities)	
Staff visits to other partner (informal/formal, for teaching, reviewing programme etc.)	
Staff training and evaluation	
Certificates & transcripts	
Graduation	

14. Partner Status and Operating Context

Partner Status

- Is there a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Partner? When does the MoU with the partner expire? When will the MoA with the partner expire?
- Does the Partner have any other existing relationships with UoR?
- What comments and recommendations have been provided by any *Partnership annual review (Form 1/Partner sub-report)*? For both this programme and any other collaborations with the University.

Have you re-established/checked changes to:

- the partner's status (an HEI with or without degree awarding powers, further education college, or other organisation)?
- the partner's experience of delivering higher education at the relevant level?
- the partner's knowledge, understanding and previous experience with UK higher education?
- the partner's experience of academic partnerships collaborative provision with other institutions with special note of current arrangements with UK HEIs?
- the partner shares the University's educational objectives and expectations for the assurance and maintenance of academic standards and qualities?
- the partners fit and overlap with UoR in terms of qualification levels and subject areas?
- the financial status and stability of the partner which indicates it is demonstrably financially capable of entering into and maintaining the arrangement (*only applicable where the partnership involves a significant financial risk to the University?*)
- the partner has the ability to contract (if a binding agreement is to be put in place) and who the contracting party is?
- the partner has the ability to enter into a partnership for delivery of the type of programme and arrangement in question. Are there any restrictions on what they can and cannot do?
- for jointly awarded degrees: do institutional regulations permit the award of joint degrees *i.e.* does the partner have the requisite legal and regulatory capacity?
- does the partner have any business interests and/or links with private or overseas providers which could present potential risks to the proposed arrangement?
- partner has in place the suitable type and standard of facilities and resources need to meet their areas of responsibility for delivering the proposed programme? Including health and safety, equality of opportunity, student complaints procedure, disability provisions, staff development opportunities, etc.

What kind of profile does the partner have:

- with QAA?
- with their own quality assurance body?
- in the media?
- with their other partners?

Operating Context

Country context:

- What is the level of stability within the country and region in which the partner is based including profile with UK Border Agency?
- What legal and regulatory frameworks and Higher education structures does the partner operate within? Do these remain compatible with the University's?
- Is UoR able to operate within the legislative framework and the political, ethical and cultural context requirements of the region?
- What is UoR's experience working in the partner's HE sector and area of the world?
- Are there any country specific regulations to operate the programme? E.g. Letter of Accreditations, application to the local Ministry of Education. Do these need updating?
- Are there any monetary restrictions including any laws relating to tax, VAT, transfer of money, limit on levels of fees? Are there any laws relating to partners in receipt of public funds where relevant?
- Are there any issues with transferring monies out of the countries concerned?
- What is the official language of the country the partner is based in and to what extent is English is spoken as a second language?

Regulatory considerations:

- Are there any implications for professional accreditation of the programme if it is delivered in partnership?
- What are the implications of current UK legislation affecting the admission of international students (i.e. immigration and visa requirements) for the programme?
- How can UoR be compliant with copyright licenses, library licenses, software licenses and data transfer whilst pursuing academic activity in the region?

Contingency arrangements:

- What arrangements would be made for students were the ownership of a partner, or its status, to change in such a way that might lead to the termination of the arrangements. What would be the costs?

15. Finance

- Please provide details of finances of the programme including:
 - Details of direct costs incurred (travel and accommodation, external examiner costs, institutional quality assurance costs, additional administration etc.)
 - Details of tuition fees with a breakdown of target student numbers split between Home & Overseas
 - Details of associated costs for any additional programme materials including learning resources. Eg additional license requirements
 - Details of any additional lecturer/tutor requirements (e.g. number of days and equivalent grades whether external or internal) eg: flying faculty requirements, international tutor provision etc
 - Overall cost/benefit analysis and projected costs and income for the partnership for the period of the next agreement
 - Any other income/expenditure.
- Is a validation fee charged for this programme? If so, please provide details of this arrangement.

16. Other documentary requirements

Please provide:

- *Partner Programme Sub-Reports* for past three years (produced by the partner) where available:

- *Monitoring Form 1 for progression arrangements and collaborative provision* for past three years
- Any written reports of visits and meetings to or from the partner
- Operational Handbook (where available)
- Original business plan
- Any further documentation relating to the programme delivered with the partner.

17. Renewal

- Have any discussions taken place with the partner regarding renewal of the MoA? Did they have any stipulations or key changes they would wish to make to the contract? Does the UoR School have any stipulations or key changes they wish to include in the contract?
- Will any renewal require local recognition or accreditation requirements for operating in the partner's country (permission from national/regional government authorities, if applicable)?