

**UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**  
**COLLABORATIVE PROVISION POLICY**

## **Index of points**

1. Introduction
  2. Definitions of Collaborative Provision
  3. Development of Collaborative Provision
  4. Principles of Collaborative Provision Arrangements
  5. Further Information and Documentation
- Appendix 1. Collaborative Taught Provision: Classification and Definitions
- Appendix 2. Collaborative Doctoral Researcher Provision: Models and Characteristics

## Collaborative Provision Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy was approved by Senate in March 2007. Senate, in June 2010, also approved the creation of models of collaborative doctoral researcher provision, and associated procedures.
- 1.2 The policy sets out the scope of collaborative provision arrangements for the University, and the principles under which all collaborative provision should be developed.

### 2. Definitions of Collaborative Provision

- 2.1 Collaborative Provision normally involves the University in arrangements with other bodies (or organisations), in the UK or internationally, whereby those bodies deliver modules or programmes of study and/or other support or facilities to students to enable them to gain credit from the University, or to qualify for an award of the University, or to progress to a degree programme offered by the University.
- 2.2 Collaborative provision covers different types of arrangements: for example, accreditation, award of credit, joint awards and validation. A classification and definitions of taught collaborative provision arrangements and the models and characteristics of collaborative doctoral researcher provision are set out in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively, to which reference should be made in the development and planning processes.
- 2.3 The whole range of University awards, from awarding credit for a single module through to a PhD, may be made under these collaborative provision arrangements.

### 3. Development of Collaborative Provision

- 3.1 The University encourages the development of collaborative provision in the UK and internationally as long as it can be shown that it robustly accords with University Strategies:
  - Strategic Framework for 2010-15 sets out five strategic goals that will enable the University to take its place as a leading global university:
    1. enhance the University's research power
    2. provide the University's students with a distinctive, high quality experience
    3. sustain the University's financial strength and use it purposefully
    4. enhance the University's performance and status as an 'engaged university'
    5. be the destination of choice amongst the University's peers.

- One of the tenets of the “International Strategy Statement” in further developing the University’s international profile and reputation states that “the University places particular emphasis upon promoting partnerships with international universities, funding bodies and other private and public organisations”.

#### 4. Principles of Collaborative Provision Arrangements

The following principles **must** be adhered to when developing collaborative provision.

##### A. *All Collaborative Provision Arrangements*

- 4.1 must be consistent with the University’s strategic plans, arise from School/College strategic plans and be congruent with the School’s/College’s academic provision, bringing clear benefits to all those involved;
- 4.2 must support the University’s objective to be internationally recognised as among the world’s best universities;
- 4.3 must support the University’s objective of academic excellence;
- 4.4 must support the University’s commitment to widening participation;
- 4.5 should aim to bring benefits in terms of potential for collaboration in research and scholarship;
- 4.6 should only be with other organisations or bodies, which have the academic standing to successfully deliver programmes of study to appropriate academic standards, the financial standing to sustain them, adequate infrastructure facilities and resources to support them and the legal standing to contract to their delivery;
- 4.7 should be equivalent in quality and standards to comparable awards delivered solely by the University, and must be compatible with any QAA or other relevant benchmark information;
- 4.8 should be comparable in student learning, support and experiences to those in the University;
- 4.9 should be financially viable and feasible, and be fully costed and priced accordingly;
- 4.10 should consider whether the geographical location of the collaborative organisation might affect, for example, regular contact for monitoring academic standards, review and sharing of good practice;
- 4.11 should be compliant with the Quality Assurance Agency’s Code of Practice: Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning), published in September 2004 and amplified in October 2010([www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/section2/default.asp](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/section2/default.asp)), and any relevant external legislation (for example, Data Protection Act) or internal University legislation, and any regulatory body (such as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the General Dental Council);

- 4.12 should not be in competition with University of Birmingham activities already provided internally or in collaboration with other institutions;
- 4.13 should not be over-reliant on an individual member of staff, either within the University of Birmingham or the other organisation or body;
- 4.14 should not be discriminatory, for example, should be compliant with internal and national (UK or EU) legislative requirements including the Human Rights Act, the Equality Act;
- 4.15 should **not be** franchised overseas (i.e. the University does not agree to authorise the delivery of the whole or part of one or more of its own approved programmes by another organisation or body leading to an award of the University);
- 4.16 should not be dual (or double) awards unless there are overwhelming and compelling strategic gains from the creation of such an arrangement;
- 4.17 should not be by the joint formation of a company between the University and another institution or organisation. (The formation of a company cannot proceed without the formal approval of the University's Council.)

**B. Collaborative Doctoral Researcher Provision (CDRP)**

The principles 4.1 to 4.17 above shall apply to the development of collaborative doctoral researcher provision, whether in the UK or internationally. In addition, the following should also be taken into account:

- 4.16 only those models of CDRP, as set out in Appendix 2, shall be available at the University of Birmingham;
- 4.17 CDRP should fit with the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer strategy  
([www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/consultation/research/Research\\_and\\_Knowledge\\_Transfer\\_Strategy\\_-\\_Final.pdf](http://www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/consultation/research/Research_and_Knowledge_Transfer_Strategy_-_Final.pdf));
- 4.18 CDRP should be strategically linked with particular areas of the world, for example, Australia, India, USA;
- 4.19 CDRP should be strategically linked with particular universities, for example, Chicago, with UoB drafting a limited list of universities outside Universitas 21 with which it could collaborate;
- 4.20 CDRP should be strategically linked with the signatories to the U21 Jointly Awarded PhD Degree Memorandum of Understanding, and the emerging University Strategy to focus developing more effective bi-lateral collaborations within the network, which could in turn support collaborative doctoral researcher arrangements with key departments, and on a less *ad hoc*/individual student basis;
- 4.21 consideration should be given to strategic links with other global networks, for example, LERU (The League of European Research Universities), where appropriate;

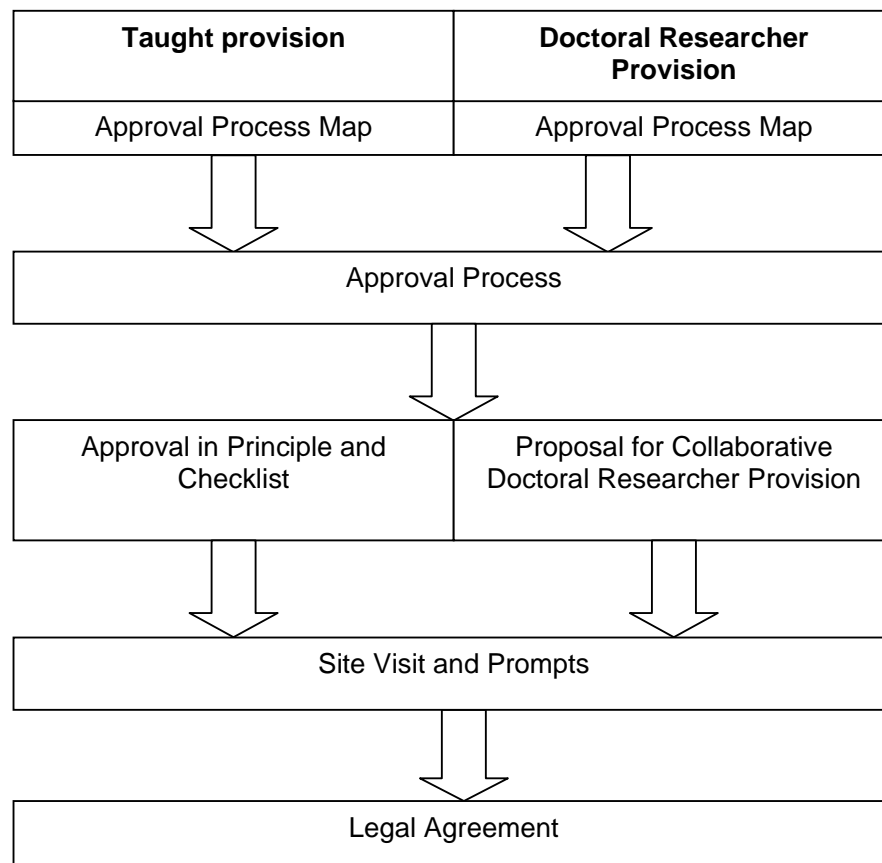
- 4.22 CDRP should provide a real research connection, rather than a speculative venture;
- 4.23 CDRP should be arranged with reciprocity in terms of funding;
- 4.24 CDRP should have set time limits.

**C. Taught Joint Collaborative Provision**

- 4.25 The principles 4.1 to 4.17 above shall apply to the development of taught undergraduate and postgraduate collaborative provision. In addition, there should be adherence to characteristics of taught joint provision, as set out in Appendix 1, together with Precept A13 of the QAA's Code of practice on collaborative provision ([www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/section2/default.asp#partA](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/section2/default.asp#partA)).

**5. Further Information and Documentation**

- 5.1 Procedures, process maps and documentation have been devised to support the development of collaborative provision arrangements, including quality assurance, programme management and review of arrangements. ([www.as.bham.ac.uk/collab/](http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/collab/))
- 5.2 This Policy **must** be read in conjunction with the following documentation:



## Appendix 1

### Collaborative Taught Provision: Classification and Definitions

	<b>QAA Definition of Collaborative Provision</b>	<b>University of Birmingham Definition of Collaborative Provision</b>
<b>1.1</b>	Educational provision leading to an award, or to specific credit toward an award, of an awarding institution delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation.	Collaborative Provision normally involves the University in arrangements with other bodies (or organisations), in the UK or internationally, whereby those bodies deliver modules or programmes of study and/or other support or facilities to students to enable them to gain credit from the University, or to qualify for an award of the University, or to progress to a degree programme offered by the University

	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Key Characteristics</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<p><b>Accreditation:</b> an organisation or body without its own degree awarding powers, or which chooses not to use its awarding powers, is given wide authority by the University to exercise powers and responsibility for academic provision. The University exercises limited control over the quality assurance function. However, it remains ultimately responsible for the quality and standard of the awards made in its name.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The University accredits only one institution: University College Birmingham, which is the product of a longstanding relationship with the University.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation Agreement (legal) made at institutional level, which includes financial arrangements</li> <li>• Agreement is subject to review before expiry; UCB is subject to a range of external reviews, the outcomes of which are reported to the Accreditation Committee</li> <li>• Monitoring undertaken by the Accreditation Committee which reports to the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee</li> <li>• Accreditation Visitor, who is a member of the Accreditation Committee, is appointed by the University</li> <li>• Covers a range of programmes, specified in the Agreement</li> <li>• Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of University of Birmingham</li> <li>• External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University</li> <li>• Student numbers monitored</li> </ul>
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Articulation Agreement:</b> an overseas institution delivers its	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval process will review suitability of the institution to run the programme</li> </ul>

	<p>programme with a curriculum designed in conjunction with the University to meet the specific requirements of a programme at the University. Students are normally recruited to such programmes with the specific aim of progressing to the University of Birmingham. The programme does not necessarily provide a terminal qualification in its own right. Students who successfully complete the programme at the overseas institution can apply to be admitted to the relevant year of the relevant programme at Birmingham with advanced standing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal agreement which may include the roles and responsibilities of those involved, financial arrangements, teaching and administrative arrangements, marketing and publicity and other operational matters</li> <li>• Subject to University Legislation and quality processes</li> <li>• Subject to annual review, as well as review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University</li> <li>• Collaborative Programmes Officer or equivalent individual monitors activity</li> <li>• Any changes to programme in overseas institution reported to University of Birmingham</li> <li>• University may be involved in moderation processes</li> </ul>
1.4	<p><b>APL/Entry Agreement:</b> the curriculum of a programme delivered at an overseas institution is recognised to meet the requirements for Accreditation of Prior Learning to transfer to a specified point of a programme at the University of Birmingham, provided that students meet certain specified criteria. Students may be recruited to such programmes with the aim of progressing to the University of Birmingham at a specified stage on the programme, with the understanding that this is dependent upon meeting all necessary criteria. It is expected the programme at the overseas institution will provide a terminal qualification in its own right, but that students who transfer to the University of Birmingham will receive a University of Birmingham award.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal agreement which may include the roles and responsibilities of those involved, financial arrangements, administrative arrangements, marketing and publicity and other operational matters</li> <li>• Subject to review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University</li> <li>• Any substantive changes to programme in overseas institution reported to University of Birmingham.</li> <li>• Students transfer under APL arrangements, but with suitability of prior learning for the specified programmes already accepted under terms of agreement.</li> </ul>
1.5	<p><b>Joint Awards:</b> the University, together with one or more degree awarding institutions, provides a programme leading to a single award (and certificate with the insignia of all institutions) made</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal agreement</li> <li>• Subject to the quality assurance procedures of both universities</li> <li>• Although there should be equal academic contributions from both universities, normally a lead or co-</li> </ul>



	<p>jointly by all the institutions.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> MA in Italian Studies: Culture and Communication with the University of Warwick.</p>	<p>ordinating university nominated in the agreement to deal with specific administrative and financial matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most operational and management matters are the joint responsibility of both universities, for example a joint Programme Management Committee and a Joint Board of Examiners</li> <li>• Exemptions from University Legislation may be required</li> <li>• Available at all levels of study, and for both taught and research programmes</li> <li>• Students register at both institutions, with the right of access to learning resources at both institutions</li> </ul>
1.6	<p><b>Memorandum of Understanding:</b> is a less formal document than an agreement between the University and another organisation(s) or institution(s) to indicate common aspirations, or principles, or responsibilities of the parties regarding a particular project or venture. It is sometimes a precursor to a formal agreement.</p>	
1.7	<p><b>University of Birmingham Awards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a collaborative organisation delivers some or all of the teaching for the programme or there is some reciprocal teaching and/or facilities arrangement</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples:</i> Foundation Degree in Professional Golf Studies is delivered by the Professional Golfers' Association;</p> <p>NASSEA contributes to the Postgraduate Certificate in Bilingualism in Education;</p> <p>NHS personnel contribute to the Physician Assistant (Anaesthesia Practitioner) programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, particular administrative, financial or operational matters</li> <li>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Flying Faculty”: a University programme is delivered overseas by University staff, but a local “facilitator” undertakes certain defined functions, such as initial recruitment, administrative arrangements and provision of local tutors.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example:</i> Executive MBA delivered in Hong Kong and Singapore.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, particular administrative, financial or operational matters</li> <li>Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research: University registered postgraduate research students are supervised by members of academic staff of the collaborative organisation who meet certain criteria for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example:</i> Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, particular administrative, financial or operational matters</li> <li>Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Council Grants or other similar funding agencies: usually with one or two UK universities with inputs from the relevant industry for research under the Doctoral Training Centre schemes. Universities often award their own qualifications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, particular administrative, financial or operational matters</li> <li>Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards and/or that of the University awarding the qualification</li> </ul>
<b>1.8</b>	<p><b>Validation:</b> the University judges that a programme or module developed and delivered by another organisation or body is of appropriate quality and standard to lead to one of its awards or the award of credit. The University identifies, through the legal agreement, the extent to which it exercises direct control over the quality assurance aspects of the management of the programme or the module.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval process will review suitability of the institution to run the programme</li> <li>Covered by a Validation (legal) agreement, which includes financial arrangements</li> <li>Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards</li> <li>Subject to annual review and review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by University</li> <li>Monitored via appointment by the University of a Collaborative</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Example:</i> BSc Dental Hygiene and Therapy delivered by the School of Dental Hygiene and Therapy</p>	<p>Programmes Officer (CPO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of University of Birmingham</li> <li>• Admission arrangements monitored by the University</li> <li>• Board of Examiners comprise internal tutors, external examiner and CPO</li> <li>• External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University</li> </ul>
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## Appendix 2

### Collaborative Doctoral Researcher Provision: Models and Characteristics

*Note: "the University" refers to the University of Birmingham in all cases below.*

#### 2.1 Occasional Students

- fully registered students of the University while at the University, usually for a few months, but not more than a year
- pay pro rata the full time fees for students for the period of registration at the University
- come within the University Legislation
- receive degree from "home" university only
- the University provides detailed transcript (possibly non-standard) for period of time at the University
- no legal agreement required

#### 2.2 Collaborative Supervision/Studentships

- may cover a range of scenarios, for example, University registered student spends most of their time at a research laboratory and may be an employee of the laboratory, or the University and another University may each contribute to a studentship and provide co-supervision with the student being registered at both Universities for access to library and other facilities, but awarded the degree of only one University, or students are registered at both the University and another university which may not have research degree awarding powers for co-supervision, with the student receiving a degree of the University
- legal agreement required for each type of arrangement, setting out the responsibilities of each university, including which university will be awarding the degree, the financial arrangements, supervision and other details
- doctoral researcher needs to travel between two universities with two supervisors

#### 2.3 Split Location Study for Doctoral Researchers

- an award of the University
- majority of period of registration is spent either in the student's country of residence or another country, with shorter periods at the University, up to a maximum of one year in total
- account to be taken of, among other matters, facilities at the other proposed place(s) of study and contact with other research workers, the proposed arrangements for supervision
- usual University Codes of Practice apply, including split location
- tuition fees are slightly lower than for standard registration
- students may be academic members of staff in their home country who are

looking to upskill as part of capacity building

- no legal agreement required
- a Split Location Checklist must be completed to confirm facilities, supervision and other arrangements for the student

## **2.4 Doctoral Training Centres (DTCs)**

- several universities make bids to the relevant Research Council(s)
- one university is designated the lead university
- each university provides modules
- programme of study must be approved through the usual University programme approval mechanism (the University Programme Approval and Review Committee) (UPARC)
- students are registered at the 'host' university, spend time in the other universities, may spend time in industry, may have supervisors from all universities and from industry or other organisations
- students come under the regulations of the 'host' university, and are awarded a degree from the 'host' university
- legal agreement required

## **2.5 University of Birmingham Joint PhDs (usually with other European Universities)**

- fully registered student at each university, though one university will be designated the lead university
- period of registration spent at each university, with supervisors at each university
- funding arrangements (tuition fees are usually paid to the lead university as it is expected that there will be reciprocal arrangements)
- examination arrangements, normally the European-style defence of one thesis leading to a single degree being awarded, with the student meeting the academic requirements of both universities
- a single degree certificate is issued, bearing the insignia of all the universities
- over-arching legal agreement between the University and the other (European) University
- individual student learning agreement, though sometimes this is incorporated into the main agreement if generated by the other (European) University

## **2.6 U21 Joint PhD**

- on 22 May 2009, the University with 13 other members of Universitas 21 (U21), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for International Jointly Awarded PhD Degrees. These are characterised by:
  - meeting the academic requirements of both universities
  - agreement regarding a lead university

- joint supervision
  - a single degree awarded for one PhD thesis
  - degree certificate issued which indicates that there has been joint supervision and includes the insignia of all universities.
- each U21 collaborative student programme established under the terms of the MoU will be the subject of a separate Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) entered into between the universities and student concerned. The MoA will clarify, for example, the lead university, access to facilities, financial, examination and other arrangements