UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION POLICY

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Collaborative Provision Policy

1. Introduction

This policy was approved by Senate in March 2007. The policy sets out the scope of collaborative provision arrangements for the University and the principles under which collaborative provision should be developed.

2. Definitions of Collaborative Provision

2.1 Collaborative provision normally involves the development and delivery of a programme of study (or module) by another organisation or body, in the UK or overseas, leading to a University of Birmingham award or the award of University of Birmingham credit. Sometimes this leads to a jointly awarded degree, with a single certificate bearing the insignia of both universities.

2.2 Collaborative provision covers different types of arrangements: accreditation, award of credit, joint awards and validation. Although the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has dispensed with definitions of different types of collaborative activity, these can be helpful in the planning process, and are shown in the Appendix.

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.

2.4 Each potential collaborative provision arrangement must be approved in principle by PARC and then via University programme or module approval mechanisms and is formalised by a legal agreement, which constitutes the formal contract between the University and the other organisation or body. Until the agreement is finalised and signed, the programme or module is not fully approved and students cannot be registered on the programme or module.

2.5 Occasionally, collaborative provision can be achieved by the joint formation of a company between the University and another institution or organisation. If this route is considered, the Programme Approval and Collaborations Section (PACS) of Academic Services and Legal Services should be contacted at a very early stage. The formation of a company cannot proceed without the formal approval of the University's Council.

2.6 Additional requirements include compliance 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. (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section2/default.asp), and any relevant external legislation (eg Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA), Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Data Protection Act (DPA)) or internal legislation.

2.7 Other regulatory bodies may also be involved in collaborative provision, such as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the General Dental Council (GDC).

3. Development of Collaborative Provision

3.1 The University encourages the development of collaborative provision as long as it can be shown that it accords with University Strategies:

- "A Strategic Framework for 2005-2010" states that one of the University's key goals over the next five years is to "develop partnerships with other higher education institutions, and public and private organisations, which will enhance the contribution it makes".

- The International Strategy (November 2005) sets out as one of its goals: "To work with strategic international partners to develop quality joint and collaborative programmes".

4. Principles of Collaborative Provision

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

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 support the University's objective to be internationally recognised as among the world's best universities;

4.3 support the University's objective of academic excellence;

4.4 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 partner might affect, for example, regular contact for monitoring academic standards, review and sharing of good practice;

4.11 should not be in competition with University of Birmingham activities already

provided internally or in collaboration with other institutions;

4.12 should not be over-reliant on an individual member of staff, either within the University of Birmingham or the other organisation or body;

4.13 should not be discriminatory, for example, should be compliant with internal and national (UK or EU) legislative requirements including the Human Rights Act, the Race Relations Amendment Act, and the Disability Discrimination Act;

4.14 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.);

4.15 should **not be** dual (or double) awards unless there are overwhelming and compelling strategic gains from the creation of such an arrangements.

5. Processes and Procedures

5.1 All proposals for the development of collaborative provision must have been considered and approved through the normal School/College mechanisms, including the involvement of the Head of School/College. It must fit with the School's/College's strategy.

5.2 All proposals for the development of collaborative provision must be notified to the Programme Approval and Collaborations Section (PACS) at an early stage so that appropriate advice can be given on documentation, including legal agreements. The University's reputation can be at risk from ill-planned and managed activities.

Note: Sufficient lead-in time should be built in for the full development and approval of the collaborative provision proposal and legal agreement. Whilst every effort is made to expedite matters, it may well take a considerable time (up to a year or more) to complete the whole approval process.

5.3 The processes adopted will ensure that:

5.3 .1 the University can take a strategic decision about the proposed collaboration;

5.3 .2 the appropriate academic consideration is given to the programme proposals.

The Programme Approval Review Group (PARC) will take the strategic decisions under (a), following initial scrutiny by the College Board. **No further developments may take place without PARC approval.** PARC will take decisions concerning the academic nature of the programme (b).

Note: **No withdrawal** from an agreement should be undertaken without first consulting PACS. PACS will liaise with Legal Services, as there will be legal consequences resulting from early termination. This decision will also need to be taken in conjunction with other Offices, such as Finance, Marketing and International Relations.

5.4 PACS, in conjunction with Legal Services, draws up legal agreements according to agreed formats for each collaborative arrangement.

5.5 In order to support potential collaborative provision, detailed procedures, a flow chart and documentation have been devised to support these processes, and related procedures such as quality assurance, programme management and review of arrangements. (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/progman/collaborate/ApprovalProcOverview.pdf)

6. Further Information

http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/progman/collaborate/

or Margaret Cannadine, Programme Approval and Collaborations Manager (m.e.cannadine@bham.ac.uk)

7. Other Documents

This Policy **must** be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Collaborative Provision Approval Process Flow Chart
- Collaborative Provision Approval Process Overview
- Checklist
- Principles for Joint Programmes
- Approval in Principle
- Site Visit

Appendix: Collaborative Provision Models

Collaborative Provision Type/Definition	Key Characteristics
Accreditation: is the process by which 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 only limited control over the quality assurance function, however it remains ultimately responsible for the quality and standard of the award. The University accredits only one institution: University College Birmingham (formerly the Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies), which is the product of a long-standing relationship with the University.	• Accreditation Agreement (legal) made at institutional level, which includes financial arrangements • 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 • Monitoring undertaken by the Accreditation Committee which reports to the University • Accreditation Visitor, who is a member of the Accreditation Committee, is appointed by the University • Covers a range of programmes, specified in the agreement • Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of University of Birmingham • External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University • Student numbers monitored
Award of Credit: where another organisation or body, which has demonstrated adherence to the appropriate quality requirements and academic standards, delivers, for example, a module, which is appropriate for the award of University credit. *Example:* delivery through the Hertfordshire County Council Specialist Advisory Service of the Introductory Module in Autistic Spectrum Disorders.	• 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 • Subject to annual and periodic reviews by University • Use of Collaborative Programmes Visitor or equivalent individual to monitor activity • Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of University of Birmingham • Boards of Examiners comprise internal tutors, external examiner and CPV • External Examiner appointed according to University procedures and by the University • Credit may be used towards a University award through appropriate

	APEL processes
Joint Programmes: the University, together with one or more degree awarding institutions, provides a programme leading to a single award made jointly by all the institutions. *Example:* MA in Italian Studies: Culture and Communication with the University of Warwick.	• Legal agreement • Subject to both institutions' quality assurance procedures • Although 'equal' partners, normally a lead or co-ordinating institution nominated in the agreement to deal with specific administrative and financial matters but most matters joint responsibility of both institutions • Programme managed by a joint committee • Joint Board of Examiners • May be separate programme regulations • Available at all levels of study, and for both taught and research programmes • Students register at both institutions, with the right of access to learning resources at both institutions
Validation: the University judges that a programme developed and delivered by another organisation or body is of appropriate quality and standard to lead to one of its awards. 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. *Example:* BSc Dental Hygiene and Therapy delivered by the School of Dental Hygiene and Therapy	• Covered by a legal agreement, which includes financial arrangements • Subject to annual and periodic reviews by University • Monitored via appointment by the University of a Collaborative Programmes Visitor (CPV) • Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of University of Birmingham • Admission arrangements monitored by the University • Board of Examiners comprise internal tutors, external examiner and CPV • External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University • Approval process will review suitability of the institution to run the programme