# UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

# COLLABORATIVE PROVISION POLICY

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# 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 postgraduate researcher provision, and associated procedures. At its meeting held on 20 March 2012, Senate approved the introduction of dual PhD degrees into the University.

1.2 This 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 postgraduate researcher provision are set out in Appendices1 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 doctoral degree, 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 arrangements.

### *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 UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B10 Managing higher education provision with others (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx), 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 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 or the other organisation or body;

4.14 should not be discriminatory, for example, should be compliant with internal, national and international legislative requirements, including commitment to equality as set out in the University's Charter;

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 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.);

4.17 should normally be delivered and assessed in English, unless otherwise approved by the Collaborative Provision Committee or the University Research and Awards Progress Sub-Panel (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/documents/public/collaborative/language-other-than-english.pdf);

***B. Collaborative Postgraduate Researcher Provision (CPGRP)***

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

4.18 only those models of CPGRP, as set out in Appendix 2, shall be available at the University;

4.19 CPGRP should fit with the University's research priorities as articulated in the Strategic Framework, building on existing research connections, rather than as speculative ventures;

4.20 CPGRP should only be entered into with institutions which must be at least of equal reputational standing to the University;

4.21 CPGRP should be strategically linked with the signatories to the U21 Jointly Awarded PhD Degree Memorandum of Understanding, and with other global networks, for example, LERU (The League of European Research Universities).

***C. Taught Joint Collaborative Provision***

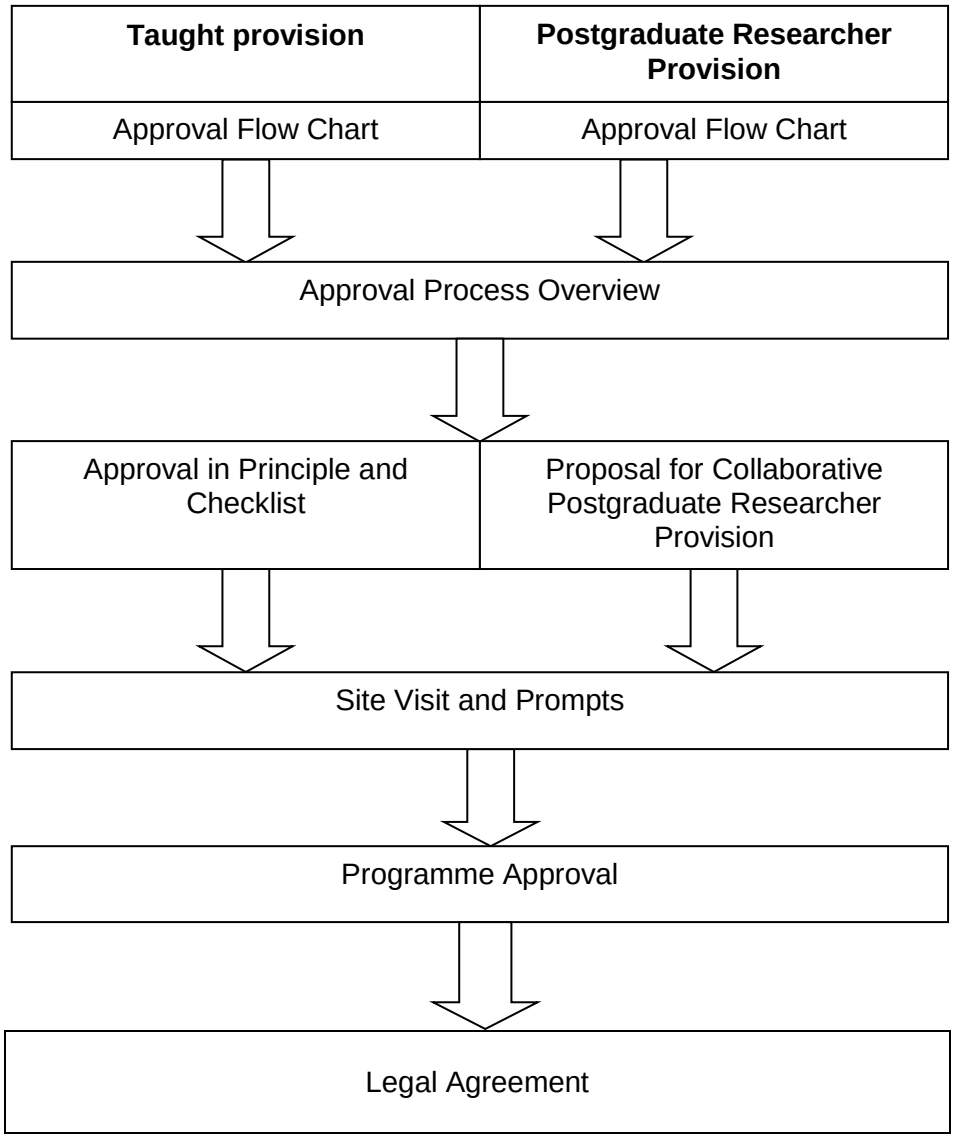
4.22 The principles 4.1 to 4.17 above shall apply to the development of taught undergraduate and postgraduate collaborative provision. In addition, there

should be adherence to the characteristics of taught joint provision, as set out in Appendix 1, together with Indicator 13 of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B10 Managing higher education provision with others (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx).

## 5. Further Information and Documentation

5.1 Procedures, flow charts and documentation have been devised to support the development of collaborative provision arrangements, including quality assurance, programme management and review of such arrangements (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/collaborative/index.aspx).

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



## Appendix 1

## Collaborative Taught Provision: Classification and Definitions

*Note: in this appendix "the University" refers to the University of Birmingham.*

| | QAA: Managing higher education provision with others | University of Birmingham Definition of Collaborative Provision |
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| **1.1** | Chapter B10 Managing higher education provision with others applies to the management of all learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body<br><br>In determining which provision falls within the scope of the Chapter, the critical factor is whether the achievement of the learning outcomes for the module or programme are dependent on the arrangement made with the other delivery or support organisation(s).<br><br>The variety of arrangements for delivering learning and teaching at all academic levels has expanded over recent years, and continues to do so. | 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. |

| | Classification | Key Characteristics |
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| **1.2** | **Accreditation**: an organisation or body without its own degree awarding powers, or which chooses not to use its degree 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. | • Accreditation Agreement (legal) made at institutional level, which includes financial arrangements<br>• 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<br>• Monitoring undertaken by the Accreditation Committee which |

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| | *Example:*<br>The University accredits only one institution: University College Birmingham, which is the product of a longstanding relationship with the University. | reports to the University Collaborative Provision Committee<br>• Accreditation Visitor, who is a member of the Accreditation Committee, is appointed by the University<br>• Covers a range of programmes, specified in the Agreement<br>• Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of the University<br>• External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University<br>• Student numbers monitored |
| **1.3** | **Articulation Agreement:** an overseas institution delivers its 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. 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 the University with advanced standing. | • Approval process will review suitability of the institution to run the programme<br>• 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<br>• Subject to University Legislation and quality processes<br>• Subject to annual review, as well as review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University<br>• Collaborative Programmes Officer or equivalent individual monitors activity<br>• Any changes to programme in overseas institution reported to the University<br>• University may be involved in moderation processes |
| **1.4** | **APL Agreement:** the curriculum of a programme delivered at an overseas institution is recognised to meet the requirements for Accreditation of Prior | • Legal agreement which may include the roles and responsibilities of those involved, financial arrangements, |

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| | Learning to transfer to a specified point that is not the beginning of the first year (see **1.5** below) of a programme at the University, provided that students meet certain specified criteria. Students may be recruited to such programmes with the aim of progressing to the University 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 will receive a University award only. | administrative arrangements, marketing and publicity and other operational matters<br>• Subject to review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University<br>• Any substantive changes to programme in overseas institution reported to the University<br>• Students transfer under APL arrangements, but with suitability of prior learning for the specified programmes already accepted under terms of agreement |
| **1.5** | **Entry Agreement**: the curriculum of a programme delivered at an overseas institution is recognised to meet the entry requirements for first year entry to a programme at the University. It is not necessary for students to have to complete the programme at the overseas institution, so long as they reach a specified stage and attain certain specified entry requirements. Students may be recruited to such programmes with the aim of progressing to the University, with the understanding that this is dependent upon meeting all necessary criteria. The programme at the overseas institution will lead to a qualification, which the students may attain without affecting their qualification at the University. Students who transfer to the University will receive a University award based only on credits attained at the University. | • Legal agreement which may include the roles and responsibilities of those involved, financial arrangements, administrative arrangements, marketing and publicity and other operational matters<br>• Subject to review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University<br>• Any substantive changes to programme in overseas institution reported to the University<br>• Students enter programme on first year. No Accredited Prior Learning is involved, with the arrangement merely reflecting that the students have attained the necessary entry requirements for first-year entry on to specified programmes. |
| **1.6** | **Dual Degrees:** Senate approved the award of dual PhD degrees on 20 March 2012, and was extended to undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees by Senate on 14 November 2012.<br><br>The University, together with one or more awarding institutions, provides programmes leading to separate undergraduate or postgraduate taught | • Legal agreement<br>• must meet the laws of each country, including legal empowerment to award dual degrees<br>• that UoB must be satisfied that, on the basis of what the student has studied, the standard and quality of the award it makes in its name is equivalent to those of |

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| | awards being granted by both (or all of them) for the same work, with certificates from each institution. (ie Students receive a degree certificate from each institution for work undertaken at both institutions.)<br><br>*Example: dual PhD with the Institut d'Etudes de Politiques, Paris* | comparable awards delivered by UoB<br>• approval of associated programmes of study for undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees<br>• subject to annual programme review<br>• students shall normally be registered at both institutions for the duration of the programme<br>• the selection of examiners shall meet the requirements of both universities<br>• the wording on the degree certificates and/or transcripts must state explicitly that the programme led to an award of the collaborative institution, and that the degrees were obtained under a dual degree arrangement |
| **1.7** | **Joint Awards:** 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 jointly by all the institutions.<br><br>*Example: U21 Joint PhD with the University of Melbourne*<br><br>For European Joint degrees reference should be made to: 'Framework for Fair Recognition of Joint Degrees' and 'Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees', available at:<br><br>http://www.ecaconsortium.net/admin/files/assets/subsites/1/documenten/1369925398_guidelines-for-good-practice-for-awarding-joint-degrees---v1-1.pdf<br><br>http://www.ecaconsortium.net/admin/files/assets/subsites/1/documenten/1377102377_joqar-framework-for-fair-recognition-of-joint-degrees.pdf | • Legal agreement<br>• Subject to the quality assurance procedures of both universities<br>• Although there should be equal academic contributions from both universities, normally a lead or co-ordinating university nominated in the agreement to deal with specific administrative and financial matters<br>• 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<br>• Exemptions from University Legislation may be required<br>• Available at all levels of study, and for both taught and research programmes<br>• Students register at both institutions, with the right of access to learning resources at both institutions |

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| | | • the wording on the degree certificate and/or transcripts must state explicitly that the programme lead to a joint degree, naming both institutions |
| **1.8** | **Memorandum of Understanding**: 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. | |
| **1.9** | **University Awards:**<br>• a collaborative organisation delivers some or all of the teaching for the programme or there is some reciprocal teaching and/or facilities arrangement<br><br>*Examples:*<br>Foundation Degree in Professional Golf Studies is delivered by the Professional Golfers' Association<br><br>NASSEA contributes to the Postgraduate Certificate in Bilingualism in Education | • Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, particular administrative, financial or operational matters<br>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards |
| | • "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.<br><br>*Example:*<br>Executive MBA delivered in Singapore. | • Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, administrative, financial or operational matters<br>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards |
| | • 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. | • Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities, administrative, financial or operational matters<br>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards |

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| | *Example:*<br>Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre | |
| | • 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. | • Legal agreement covers roles and responsibilities of the collaborative organisations, particular administrative, financial or operational matters<br>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards and/or that of the University awarding the qualification |
| **1.10** | **Validation:** the University judges a programme or module developed and delivered by another organisation or body as being of appropriate quality and standard to lead to one of the University's awards or 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.<br><br>*Example:*<br>BSc Dental Hygiene and Therapy delivered by the School of Dental Hygiene and Therapy | • Approval process will review suitability of the institution to run the programme<br>• Covered by a Validation (legal) agreement, which includes financial arrangements<br>• Subject to University Legislation and Academic Standards<br>• Subject to annual review and review prior to the expiry of the legal agreement by the University<br>• Monitored via appointment by the University of a Collaborative Programmes Officer (CPO)<br>• Tutors, who meet specified criteria, are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of the University<br>• Admission arrangements monitored by the University<br>• Board of Examiners comprise internal tutors, external examiner and CPO<br>• External Examiners appointed according to University procedures by the University |

## Appendix 2

## Collaborative Postgraduate Researcher Provision: Models and Characteristics

**Notes:**

i. In this appendix, "the University" refers to the University of Birmingham.

ii. Collaborative Provision (Registry) has oversight of the development of these models of collaborative postgraduate researcher provision.

iii. *Note:* Research Student Administration (Registry) administers the student record and related matters, for Visiting PGRs and Academics, Split-Location PhDs and distance learning programmes for postgraduate researchers.

### 2.1 Collaborative Supervision/Studentships

- may cover a range of scenarios, for example, University registered postgraduate researcher 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 postgraduate researcher being registered at both universities for access to library and other facilities, but awarded the degree from 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
- postgraduate researcher will study at two universities with two supervisors

### 2.2 Research Councils: Doctoral Training Centres, Advanced Training Partnerships, etc

- several universities make bids to the relevant Research Council(s), notification of which should be made to the University Collaborative Provision Committee prior to the submission of the bid
- one university is designated the lead university
- each university provides modules or training
- programme of study must be approved through the usual University programme approval mechanism (the University Programme Approval and Review Committee) (UPARC)
- postgraduate researchers are registered at the awarding university, spend time in the other universities, may spend time in industry, may have supervisors from all universities and from industry or other organisations
- postgraduate researchers come under the regulations of the awarding university, and are awarded a degree from the awarding university
- legal agreement required

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

- unless the university is a member of U21, approval in principle for the development of the Joint PhD arrangement must be sought from the University Collaborative Provision Committee
- fully registered postgraduate researcher at each university, though one university will be designated the lead university
- period of registration spent at each university, (a minimum of 30% of the research period of study spent at one university and a maximum of 70% of the research period of study spent at the other university), with supervisors at each university
- funding arrangements (tuition fees are usually paid to the university which is designated the lead university)
- 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 postgraduate learning agreement, though sometimes this is incorporated into the main agreement if generated by the other (European) University
- additional information is also available at: For European Joint degrees reference should be made to: 'Framework for Fair Recognition of Joint Degrees' and 'Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees', available at:

  http://www.ecaconsortium.net/admin/files/assets/subsites/1/documenten/1369925398_guidelines-for-good-practice-for-awarding-joint-degrees---v1-1.pdf

  http://www.ecaconsortium.net/admin/files/assets/subsites/1/documenten/1377102377_joqar-framework-for-fair-recognition-of-joint-degrees.pdf

### 2.4 U21 Joint PhD

- on 22 May 2009, the University with 13 (now 14) 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 postgraduate research 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 postgraduate researcher concerned. The MoA will clarify, for example, the lead university, access to facilities, financial, examination and other arrangements.

**2.5 Dual PhD Degrees**

- responsibility for awards and academic standards remains with each awarding institution and cannot be shared with the collaborative institution(s)
- must meet the laws of each country (including immigration), and the institution must be legally empowered to award dual PhD or equivalent degrees
- must adhere to the legislation of each institution concerning PhD or equivalent degrees
- must be covered by an individual learning agreement, which must be carefully negotiated between the two institutions, including the supervisors, postgraduate researcher and the University Head of School or nominee, and signed by the authorised signatories of each institution, the supervisors at each institution, and the postgraduate researcher. The individual learning agreement will include information concerning: admission, funding, academic training, supervision, progress monitoring, periods of study at each institution, the language and structure of the thesis, the language and examination of the thesis, the award of the degree, the issue of the certificates, the ownership of intellectual property rights, etc
- postgraduate researchers must spend at least 12 months' full time (one year), not necessarily consecutively, at each institution undertaking research, together with any prescribed skills or other training
- postgraduate researchers shall not be permitted to transfer to this mode of study during their period of study
- postgraduate researchers shall be registered simultaneously at two different institutions in two different countries for the full duration of the period of study, with access to all the facilities of each institution, having applied to each institution in the usual way
- postgraduate researchers shall be co-supervised by at least one member of academic staff from each institution. The supervision arrangements must be approved by the University Head of School or nominee with responsibility for research supervision, in addition to discussion between the supervisors of each institution prior to the completion of any legal agreements
- postgraduate researchers shall pay the relevant tuition fees for the relevant period of study spent at each institution
- the selection of examiners shall meet the requirements of both institutions
- the thesis shall be written in English and the viva voce conducted in the language of the other institution or vice versa or another suitable "combination", which shall be approved by the University Research and Awards Progress Sub-Panel

  *(Note:* see also guidelines for programmes of study and/or examination in a language other than English
  https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/documents/public/collab

orative/language-other-than-english.pdf)

- the examination of the thesis must confirm to the requirements of the University and the other institution
- the successful submission of one thesis and completion of one viva voce (oral) examination will result in the award of a PhD from the University, together with the equivalent doctoral qualification from the other institution
- postgraduate researchers shall be entitled to graduate at the graduation ceremony of either or both of the institutions
- the wording of the degree certificates and/or transcripts, Diploma Supplement or HEAR shall state, explicitly and unambiguously, that the programme led to an award of the collaborative institution, and that the degree was obtained under a dual PhD degree agreement