Contents

1. Processes for managing Academic Partnership arrangements 1

2. Support for partnerships and the Academic Partnership Link Tutor 6

3. Annual Review of Academic Partnership arrangements 10

4. Periodic Review of Academic Partnership arrangements 12

5. Assessment and examinations 14

6. Course Management 17

7. Termination of an Academic Partnership arrangement 21

8. Information held by the University 22
1. Processes for managing Academic Partnership arrangements

1.1 Introduction

The University has established processes for the management of Academic Partnership arrangements. In summary, these include the appointment of an Academic Partnership Link Tutor (APLT) to maintain regular contact with and support a partner institution; an Academic Partnership Annual Review partnership; Periodic Review of the operation of a partnership; and specific arrangements and procedures to cover the management of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. There are also procedures for the termination of an Academic Partnership arrangement, and for considering existing partners for Associate College status. This section of the Handbook details the processes and procedures to be followed in the management of Academic Partnerships, and the information that the University holds on Academic Partnership arrangements.

1.2 Overview of the management of Academic Partnerships

1.2.1 Following the agreement of a new Academic Partnership, the relevant School/College is responsible for providing support and guidance to the partner institution. This entails the provision of appropriate academic and administrative support including the appointment of an APLT, who is an experienced member of academic staff in a relevant subject area. Mandatory training is provided on an annual basis for the APLT, for both new and existing role-holders. The role and responsibilities of the APLT are covered in section 2, below. Staff development and training is arranged by Schools/Colleges for Academic Partners, and partner staff may also be able to attend courses arranged for University staff (subject to support from the School/College, and approval by the central staff development office).

1.2.2 Most Academic Partnership arrangements are managed on a day-to-day basis by the partner institution. The University requires that the partner institution nominates a Course Leader to be responsible for the management of the course, and also a member of their staff, who may be the Course Leader, to liaise with the University. The Course Leader is responsible for preparing an annual report on the academic health of the course. This may be undertaken in collaboration with the APLT. The report covers any changes made to the curriculum structure and content; student progression and achievement; learning resources; provides a response to External Examiner comments; indicates any actions arising from student evaluations, and identifies an action plan for the coming year. A template for the Academic Partnership Course Leader annual report is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

1.2.3 The University is always directly responsible for the academic standards of the awards granted in its name, and to ensure these, the School/College establishes arrangements for assessment and external examining, which are described in section 5, below. The University is also responsible for assuring the quality of learning opportunities for students studying for a University award at a partner institution. The management of the student experience is usually delegated to the partner, and may follow either local arrangements or University systems, as agreed during the Approval on Validation Service Events. Arrangements for the regular monitoring of quality and standards are based on University mainstream quality
assurance procedures, which are set out in detail in the University’s Quality Handbook. The additional activities which apply to Academic Partnerships are an Annual Review and a Periodic Review of the institutional relationship, as well as inclusion in the Annual and Periodic academic review of Field/Subjects of study conducted by Schools/Colleges.

1.2.4 The Academic Partnership Annual Review (APAR) is organised by the Academic Quality Office, and reported to the Academic Partnerships Committee (APC) as well as to the relevant School/College Board. The APAR meeting includes consideration of the annual course report prepared by the Course Leader at the partner institution, the APLT report, and External Examiner report(s). It is the responsibility of the School/College to follow up any actions arising from the annual report, and the School/College Board monitors the completion of actions. On an annual basis, the School/College Board provides an overview of annual monitoring to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC), and the Academic Quality Office also provides an annual report on Academic Partnership provision to the AQSC. Further details on the documentation required for an APAR and the matters considered are given in section 3, below.

1.2.5 Periodic Field/Subject Review is managed by the Academic Quality Office in liaison with the Schools/Colleges using the procedures specified in the University’s Quality Handbook. Periodic Review of Academic Partnership arrangements is managed by the Academic Quality Office, using the procedures covered in section 4, below. It is the responsibility of the School/College to follow up and monitor the completion of any recommendations or conditions following Periodic Review, in liaison with the Head of Quality Assurance. The Academic Quality Office provides a summary of matters to the APC and the AQSC through the annual reporting mechanism. If issues arise that are in breach of the Institutional Agreement, the Vice-Chancellor will be informed for immediate action.

1.2.6 A flowchart illustrating the quality management of Academic Partnership arrangements is shown overleaf.
New Academic Partnership arrangement approvals received and noted by APC

- School/College based processes
- Assessment and marking schemes to External Examiners for approval
- Sample of work with assessment, marking scheme and full list of first and second marks for the cohort sent to External Examiner

- Assessment Board and minutes
- Academic Partnership Tutor and other academics
- External Examiner reports

- Annual report from partner to School/College and the Academic Quality Office
- Academic Partnership Link Tutor Report to School/College and the Academic Quality Office

- Academic Partnership Annual Review organised by the Academic Quality Office

- Reports to the APC and School/College Board and AQSC
- Annual report on Academic Partnership provision to AQSC (prepared by the Academic Quality Office)

- Academic Partnership Periodic Review (every 5 years) organised by the Academic Quality Office

- Reports to the APC, School/College Board and AQSC
1.2.7 Responsibility for Information regarding Academic Partnership provision
The QAA Quality Code Part C ‘Information about Higher Education Provision’ is concerned with the quality of the information regarding Academic Partnership provision in terms of whether it is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

The University is therefore responsible for the information provided by Partnership Institutions about the learning opportunities leading to University Awards.

The QAA Quality Code Part B Chapter B10 ‘Managing Higher Education Provision with Others’ also requires the University to demonstrate effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to learning opportunities delivered with partners which lead to awards.

The following checks are therefore made in this respect:
- School Academic Website Check by the APLT and Academic Quality Lead
- Sign off by the Head of School/College
- In-Year Check by the APLT
- Annual Partner Check including use of logo and branding by the Marketing Department
- Academic Partnership Annual Review

A flowchart illustrating the Partner Information check flowchart and timeline is shown overleaf.
Section 3 – Management of Academic Partnership Arrangements

Partner Information check flowchart and timeline

**School/College Academic Website check**
Academic Partnership Link Tutor (APLT) / Academic Quality Lead (AQL)

**Sign Off**
Head of School/College

**In-Year Check**
Academic Partnership Link Tutor

**Annual Partner Check**
(use of the logo & branding)
Marketing Department

**Academic Partnership Annual Review**
Standing Agenda Item

**Final Sign Off**
Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)

**September**

**In Year Checks**
Academic Partner Link Tutor

**September** Final Sign Off

**January – May** Academic Partnership Annual Reviews

**July** Annual Partner Check (Marketing)

**August**
Prospectus, student facing documents check
2. Support for partnerships and the Academic Partnership Link Tutor

2.1 School/College support for Academic Partnerships

Schools/Colleges are responsible for providing support and guidance to partner institutions through the appointment of academic and administrative staff to cover specific duties, depending on the nature of the partnership. The Head of School/College in each School/College holds senior management responsibility for the quality of the student experience and the assurance of academic standards. The Head of School/College ensures that effective arrangements are in place for the delivery of courses, and the effective deployment of School/College staff, including the appointment of an APLT. Heads of Subject contribute to quality assurance and enhancement, and Course and Module Leaders liaise with partner institution staff over the provision of learning materials including annual updates to the course specification and module study guides. The Head of School/College provides a lead on matters relating to student enrolment, registration and awards, and advice on regulatory matters. The School/College nominates a member of staff to be the main administrative contact for the partnership.

The Quality Lead in each School/College has the following role in the management of Academic Partnership; overview and monitoring of School/College Academic Partnership provision, and acting as advanced warning point of contact for challenges; contribute to due diligence and site visits as appropriate and as directed by Head of School/College/Head/Deputy Head of Quality.

2.2 The responsibilities of the APLT

The role of the APLT is a significant one in that it has the oversight of:
- academic standards
- quality of the Academic Partnerships students’ learning experience
- reliability of the related information.

All courses delivered by an Academic Partner are assigned an APLT by the relevant School/College at the University. The APLT is an academic member of the School/College with the main function of ensuring that the delivery of academic courses and the student experience are appropriately supported by both the partner and the University. As academic lead for operational oversight of the partner institution, the APLT has the following key responsibilities:

- Maintaining regular contact with the partner institution, including visits, to ensure that the course is appropriately supported by the partner and the University;
- Maintaining oversight of the partner’s management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience, identifying any necessary actions;
- Supporting the partner in its development of the course(s) and its staff expertise;
- Communicating and discussing current regulations and changes to any University policy to partners and the students and ensuring that the partner has been provided with updates on procedures and regulations;
Section 3 – Management of Academic Partnership Arrangements

- Overseeing and supporting partners and the School/College in all ‘transition’ arrangements, and the documentation and all attendant information - namely course Validation; contractual arrangements; course closure; academic reviews
- Monitoring and enabling students’ complaints, with reference to complaints that fall into the responsibility of School/Colleges
- Liaising with appropriate members of University staff as necessary to seek advice on problems or issues that may emerge within the partnership;
- Monitoring publicity, marketing and information (hard and electronic copy) including regular checks of the partner’s website and prospectuses;
- Contributing to relevant partnership review events; a preparation of an annual report.
- Providing leadership/direction where relevant on course developments and quality enhancement of the subject, in line with University expectations of the student experience, and sector development;
- Monitoring all arrangements to see that the course is operating as agreed at Validation/ Approval; including annual visits (termly visits in the first year of the partnership) to partners in the APLT schedule. A visit includes a review of all arrangements; discussions with students independently of the presence of a partner representative; monitoring and acting on student evaluations; and providing a report at the end of each visit
- Liaise regularly with the legal, registry and quality functions of the University – including through attendance at APLT Forums
- Where relevant, take a lead role in reviewing and selecting course applicants
- checking conformity to Key Information Sets (KIS) statements, and ensuring that courses are run to the agreed timetable for teaching and assessment;
- monitoring that applications for entry and admissions procedures, including accreditation of prior learning (APL) meet with University requirements;
- checking induction materials are appropriate and that students are briefed on matters relating to the University;
- monitoring the quality of the learning environment to ensure it is adequate to support the course of study, included through annual visits and interview with students;
- monitoring that an adequate communication framework is in place between course leaders and module leaders at the University and the partner;
- monitoring the provision of learning materials including Module Study Guides, Course Specification and Course Handbook, and that the Course Leader and Module Leaders provide annually updated learning materials;
- monitoring and progress-chasing assessment processes such as approval of assessments, marking arrangements (including moderation, double marking, and sampling), invigilation, mitigation and deferral;
- liaison with the External Examiner(s) to ensure that assessments are conducted in line with university regulations;
- checking that the partner has received copies of the External Examiner report and response;
- Ensuring that partner responses to External Examiner reports are included in the course/module team response
- attending student group meetings at least once a year;
• attending partner course committees, and ensuring that the partner’s Course Leader is invited to the University course committee meetings and assessment boards;
• checking that complaints are dealt with appropriately;
• highlighting to the Head of School/College any partner needs for staff development;
• informing the Head of School/College and the Academic Quality Office of any Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) or other external agency visits, such as Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), where the university course(s) are being scrutinised and where necessary, providing support for the partner before, during, and after the visit.

2.3 APLT visit
The APLT usually undertakes two visits in the first year of a partnership agreement, and at least one visit per year in subsequent years. This is in addition to regular email and telephone contact. Below is an indicative list of the issues which may be covered when visiting an Academic Partner; the headings match those of the visit report template.

2.3.1 Checks
• check marketing and publicity produced by the partner;
• check any new staff CVs and forward for approval by the Head of School/College or designate;
• confirm that all University materials used by the partner (Handbooks, Module Study Guides, etc.) are up to date.

2.3.2 Discussion with academics and administrators
• any changes - in either partner - that may affect the delivery of the course(s) – e.g.
  ▪ organisational
  ▪ staffing
  ▪ resources
  ▪ forthcoming inspections or reviews
  ▪ results of module evaluations and any surveys of student opinion;
  ▪ continuing relevance of the curriculum and its assessments – any planned changes;
• any changes to student support arrangements;
• student academic performance;
• assessment arrangements (including Boards);
• External Examiner and University moderation reports;
• communication and administration;
• annual reporting arrangements;
• any forthcoming annual or Periodic Review Events;
• professional development opportunities, e.g. workshops, guest lectures, visits, and staff exchanges.

2.3.3 Discussion with students (members of staff from the partner are not present)
• accuracy of information prior to entry;
• expectations and reality;
• relevance of the course;
• induction;
• academic guidance;
• personal tutors/access to staff support;
• skills support;
• quality of teaching/support for learning;
• clarity of/support for assessments;
• timeliness and quality of feedback;
• quality of learning resources including:
  ▪ laboratories and technicians,
  ▪ access to Library,
  ▪ access to Blackboard; PebblePad and Turnitin
• Course Handbooks and Module Study Guides;
• student views and student representation;
• best things; things which could be improved.

2.3.4 Other possible activities
Other possible activities include: guest lecture, workshop, and briefing of students about the University (especially any who may be looking to progression e.g. to an Honours year).

2.3.5 Templates for the APLT visit report and student feedback questionnaire are available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk

2.4 APLT annual report

2.4.1 The APLT is required to prepare an annual report drawing on the visit report(s) which are available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk. This report covers any actions taken as a result of the recommendations made in the previous year’s report; a summary of the APLT’s activities in support of the partnership; a commentary on management and administration, management of academic standards, the student experience, and on any risks arising; and concludes with recommended actions for the University/School/College or the partner institution during the forthcoming year. Appendices may include a summary of student feedback.

2.4.2 A template for the APLT annual report is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

2.5 Support for Articulation Agreements

2.5.1 Where an Articulation Agreement results in a significant group of students (a cohort of ten or more) entering the University, support and follow-up arrangements are required, including provision of information, an annual visit, and regular communication with the partner institution.

2.5.2 A set of information should be prepared (ideally electronically) to inform the partner, potential students of the University and their families, and include such details as:
• the University – location, special characteristics, and access to London;
• the course(s) – timing, content and methods, and special features;
• accommodation options and likely costs;
Section 3 – Management of Academic Partnership Arrangements

- academic and pastoral support, including arrival and orientation;
- any information relating to work placement;
- information relating to visas, work permits and regulations;
- careers options, including industry fairs.

2.5.3 Articulation Agreements do not usually require an APLT, but an academic visit is normally made once per year, for the purposes of building a better understanding of the partner and its curriculum in action; updating the partner on the University and its academic courses; and helping to prepare students who may be entering the University. The visit may include:
- A check on the curriculum content and level in relation to the articulation route(s);
- A check on marketing and publicity materials;
- A check on records relating to any partner involvement with students enrolling at the University, e.g. recruitment, qualifications checks, organisation of visas and work permits;
- A meeting with managers to update information about the partners.

Additionally the visit will include where possible:
- Discussions with academic staff and students;
- Guest lecture(s)/teaching sessions;
- Discussion about opportunities for partner staff development, including partner staff visits to the UK.

2.5.4 The School/College is responsible for arranging visits to the partner institution and for monitoring the academic progress of students when they are at the University. As with other forms of partnership activity, responsibility for overseeing articulation arrangements rests with the Head of School/College. The Head of School/College is also responsible for ensuring that articulation arrangements are monitored for academic fit, and that communication with partner institutions is effective.

2.5.5 A template for the Articulation Agreement visit report is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

3. Annual Review of Academic Partnership arrangements

3.1 Process

3.1.1 An Academic Partnership Annual Review meeting is held with each partnership. The minutes of the meeting are reported to the APC, as well as to the relevant School/College Board. The review meetings are organised by the Academic Quality Office and alternate between the University and the partner’s premises. The review considers the management and strategic direction of the partnership, the assurance of quality and standards, and includes a check on the information about the partnership held on the University’s Academic Partnerships Register. Matters for discussion include:

- any changes within the partner institutions, during the previous year, e.g. mergers/changes of ownership, structural reorganisation, or changes of key personnel in the organisation;
• the University’s management of the Academic Partnership provision;
• the partner’s management of the Academic Partnership provision;
• effectiveness of academic liaison and administrative links between the partners;
• the assurance of academic standards through assessment processes;
• information from monitoring processes including External Examiner reports, annual reports, and student evaluations;
• student numbers, student progression and achievement;
• the quality of student learning opportunities;
• sufficiency of resources including staffing, staff development, and learning facilities;
• any proposed new courses or other developments; and
• contractual modifications or extensions. (Any re-contracting takes place separately to the review meeting.)

3.1.2 The partner’s Course Leader and relevant senior colleagues are invited to attend the Academic Partnership Annual Review. The University review team includes:

- The Head of Quality Assurance (or designate) as Chair;
- Head of School/College and/or Head of Subject
- APLT

3.2 Review documentation

3.2.1 The documentation for the Academic Partnership Annual Review is distributed to the review team and the partner at least one week prior to the Annual Review meeting and includes the following:

- agenda;
- minutes of previous year’s Annual Review (where applicable);
- information held on the University’s Academic Partnerships Register for checking and updating;
- print-out of the information on the University from the partner's website for checking;
- Course Specification;
- Course Handbook;
- External Examiner(s) annual report(s);
- response to the External Examiner(s) annual report(s);
- APLT annual report and visit reports;
- course annual report from the partner.

3.2.2 A template of the agenda for an Academic Partnership Annual Review is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

3.3 School/College Business Planning Meeting

3.3.1 A School/College business planning meeting is held on an annual basis to review and renew the contractual agreement between the University and the Academic Partner. The topics for discussion include:

- New or revised academic courses and associated development costs
• Renewal of contract and contract terms in relation to Service Level Agreement - access to University facilities by partner students and staff
• Student numbers
• Termination of courses and associated costs
• Financial schedule

A template for an indicative agenda for the meeting is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

4. Periodic Review of Academic Partnership arrangements

4.1 Processes for Periodic Review

4.1.1 Academic Partnership Periodic Review is the process whereby a peer review panel evaluate the operation of an Academic Partnership, the management and delivery of the course(s), and the achievements of the students over a period of years. It provides for greater reflection on the operation of the partnership than the Annual Review. All partnerships are normally subject to a Periodic Review every five years. This section of the Handbook details the purpose of the review, the conduct of the review, and the documentation required for consideration during the review.

4.1.2 In addition, the University has a Periodic Field/Subject Review procedure. Where the course being delivered by the partner is a franchised University course being delivered at the University (and in some cases at other partnerships), the course will have a Periodic Review every five years as part of the University cycle of Periodic Field/Subject Reviews, the procedures for which are detailed in Section 5 of the University’s Quality Handbook. Partner’s staff attend the relevant Periodic Field/Subject Reviews held at the University.

4.2 The purpose of Academic Partnership Periodic Review

4.2.1 The overall purpose of the Periodic Review is to consider the operation of the Academic Partnership and the procedures in place for quality assurance and enhancement and the maintenance of academic standards. Matters for review include:

• the quality management and enhancement of the Academic Partnership by the University;
• the delivery and standards of achievement of the course(s);
• resourcing of the course(s);
• student support and guidance;
• the quality of the teaching and learning and methods of assessment; and
• staffing and staff development of the staff delivering and supporting the course(s).

4.2.2 The review enables an external subject expert or experts to contribute advice on the Academic Partnership and course delivery. The outcome may include identification of good practice for wider dissemination, or areas for enhancement.
4.3 Conduct of the Academic Partnership Periodic Review

4.3.1 Documentation about the partnership, normally for the last two years, is prepared by the Academic Quality Office. Advance documentation is sent to the review panel via the Academic Quality Office, and further documentation is available on the day of the review event.

4.3.2 The review is held at the partner institution and considers how the University is managing the partnership and how the partner is managing and delivering the course(s). The review Panel meets the senior managers, the course team(s), and a group of students and employers (where appropriate). A formal report is prepared with any recommendations about the future of the partnership and the course(s) offered. The report is presented to the APC.

4.3.4 The review Panel includes:

- Head of Quality (or designate) as Chair;
- An external subject specialist for each subject area being reviewed;
- A senior member of staff from the relevant University School/College;
- A senior member of staff from another University School/College;
- A senior member of staff from the partner.

4.3.5 Student participation is an essential feature of the Periodic Review processes. A cross section of students on the course(s) will be invited to meet with the review Panel during the event held at the partner institution. As part of the review, the Panel may request in advance an opportunity to see examples of student work, for example where External Examiners have commented negatively on the academic standards of a particular course.

4.3.6 Further guidance for review Panel members and the agenda for the Academic Partnership Periodic Review are available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk.

4.4 Documentation for the Academic Partnership Periodic Review

4.4.1 The documentation is provided to the review Panel at least one week before the date of the event, and further documentation is made available to the Panel on the day of the event.

Advance documentation:
- Course Handbook(s);
- Course Specifications;
- Student statistical data;
- External Examiner reports and responses to those reports;
- APLT annual and visit reports;
- Academic Partnership Annual Review minutes;
- Annual monitoring reports, module and course.

Documentation available on the day of the event:
- Institutional Agreement (contract) and schedule(s);
government recognition (for overseas partnerships where necessary);
Assessment Board minutes;
relevant Committee minutes;
Field/Subject Review reports;
any PSRB accreditation or external review reports;
evidence of approval of marketing and publicity;
evidence of approval of staffing;
staff development details;
example of certificate and transcript.
structure and management of the courses (flow chart);
management and committee structure of the partner institution (flow chart);
sample range of student work covering all courses and classifications;
sample of assessment feedback to students;
student admission and (where applicable) APL procedures;
student statistical data – entry, progression, retention and completion, disability, ethnicity, age, gender etc. ;
quality management file;
sample of student evaluations and overview;
student Information, for example:
  • Student Charter
  • Student Handbook
  • learning support information (including English language support)
  • student welfare
  • placement information and guidance (if relevant);
marketing and publicity information including:
  • HE prospectus
  • course leaflets
  • website
  • adverts;
minutes of course team meetings;
staff development details including CVs;
course(s) timetables;
resource details for the course(s);
any other relevant information specified at stage one.

5. Assessment and external examining

5.1 Assessment arrangements

5.1.1 The University has responsibility for the integrity of the assessment and examination process taking place in Academic Partner institutions, and also to ensure that students enrolled on a course of study leading to a University award, achieve the same learning outcomes, regardless of where the learning may take place. In order to maintain academic standards in Academic Partnership courses, the relevant School/College establishes arrangements for the setting of assessments and examination papers, marking, and the conduct of assessments and examinations. In practice, these arrangements will vary according to the type of Academic Partnership provision. Partners may, in some cases, be delegated
with responsibility for designing coursework assessment tasks and examination papers. However, all partner-designed assessments have to be approved by the relevant Head of School/College or Head of Subject and the appropriate External Examiner, prior to the assessment taking place. The APLT together with the University course team will provide advice and guidance on what is appropriate use of Module Study Guides, with reference to the University's Assessment Policy and the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

5.1.2 Schools/Colleges are responsible for ensuring that partner institutions are supported in developing appropriate systems for the collation and storage of any examination papers, scripts, and assessment data, in order to ensure the appropriate conduct of examinations and assessment boards. This includes providing advice to partners on the legal implications of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act (guidance is available on the University website). Schools/Colleges are also responsible for monitoring assessment and examination procedures on a regular basis.

5.1.3 An assessment schedule for each course is drawn up in consultation with the partner institution and indicates responsibilities and timescales, the dates of examinations and Assessment Boards, External Examiner visits, and coursework submission deadlines. Assessment Boards are conducted according to University regulations, and where appropriate, assessments are considered by the University’s Module Assessment Boards. Where an Assessment Board takes place at the partner institution, the University requires that it is attended or chaired by a member of University staff, and that the terms of reference of the Assessment Board are the same as for the Assessment Boards held at the University. However, if the Chair of the Assessment Board is a member of University staff, this must not be the APLT. The External Examiner is also a member of the board, with additional membership to be agreed with the partner. Schools/Colleges are able to provide partner institutions with an Assessment Board agenda and guidance.

5.2 Marking and moderation arrangements

The organisation of marking, moderation and external examination of students’ work is the responsibility of the University Course Leader, with assistance from the APLT, where necessary. The following general principles apply to the marking and moderation of students’ work:

First marking
First marking is undertaken by the partner institution, usually by the Module Leader or tutor responsible for delivering the module, using the assessment criteria and grade descriptors in the relevant Module Study Guide.

Second marking
A sample of marked work is selected for second marking within the partner institution, by a member of the course team with knowledge of the subject area. The sample is usually a minimum of 20% plus all failures. However, in some circumstances, it is appropriate to select a larger sample for second marking, for example for a course in the first year of delivery or when the first marker is inexperienced. All dissertations to be second marked.
In the event of a disagreement regarding the marks between the first and second markers, this should be resolved by discussion, with the reason for the disagreement and its resolution being recorded on the assessment cover sheet, prior to forwarding for moderation. If a disagreement between first and second markers cannot be resolved, the work should be referred to a third party, nominated by the Head of School/College or Head of Subject.

**Moderation of coursework**

Moderation is the process of ensuring that the appropriate quality assurance systems are in place to maintain the academic standards of the University award. It is useful to compile an annual sampling grid for a course, at the start of the academic year, to ensure that a range of tutors, students and types of assessment activity are included in the moderation process. Moderation takes place internally between the University and its partner(s), and also externally.

For Academic Partnerships, a sample of double-marked work is normally moderated by the University Module Leader (who may be the APLT), prior to the work being forwarded to the External Examiner. The exception is where a partner has demonstrated the ability to manage assessment to University standards. If an Academic Partnership consists of several institutions, it is usual to arrange moderation of marked work across the partnership, by assigning moderators from institutions other than where the delivery takes place.

External Examiners moderate the assessment process across the partnership and comment upon the standards achieved by students, in relation to relevant external benchmarks and other comparable institutions within the UK. This function is conducted through the scrutiny of marked students' work, visits to the course teams, meeting students, observing practical assessments, and attending Assessment Boards.

### 5.3 External examining

#### 5.3.1 The selection and appointment of External Examiners

The University retains overall responsibility for the selection and appointment of External Examiners, and the External Examiners for Academic Partnerships are appointed in the same way as for in-house courses. Procedures for the nomination, selection, appointment and termination of External Examiners, and their role, are set out in Section 6 of the University's Quality Handbook. The University may agree a procedure whereby the partner institution is able to nominate potential External Examiners. For franchise courses, it is usual to appoint the same External Examiner as for the University internal course.

The University applies the same criteria for the selection of External Examiners for Academic Partnership courses, but additionally the University requires that:

- prospective External Examiners must have had no recent connections (in the previous five years) with the partner institution;
- in the case of overseas partnerships, External Examiners must have a clear understanding of the UK higher education system, including the role of External Examiners;
• in the (exceptional) case of an overseas partnership where the language of instruction and/or assessment is not English, External Examiners must have written and oral fluency in both English and the language of assessment.

5.3.2 Preparation for external examining

The University provides induction and briefing to External Examiners on their role and responsibilities. This includes the University’s guidance for External Examiners, Course Specifications, benchmark information and (if appropriate) PSRB requirements, and information on the Academic Partnership arrangement. Partner organisations may be involved in the preparation of External Examiners, particularly with regard to informing them about the organisation. The Head of School/College or Head of Subject provides an annual written agreement to External Examiners, which specifies duties regarding curriculum coverage, sampling and attendance at Assessment Boards.

5.3.3 Reporting arrangements

External Examiners are required to report annually to the Vice-Chancellor. The Academic Quality Office forwards a copy of the report to the Course Leader at partner institutions. The University through the relevant School/College responds directly to the External Examiners’ reports. Academic Partners are invited to formally comment and contribute to the response, and the Head of School/College or Head of Subject sends the overall response directly to the External Examiner. A copy of the response is sent to the partner institution and the Academic Quality Office. Schools/Colleges have procedures for dealing with any concern raised in an External Examiner report in conjunction with the partner institution.

5.4 Certificates and transcripts

The University retains authority for awarding certificates and issuing detailed transcripts of study in relation to student achievement. As the awarding body, the University is responsible for ensuring that certificates and transcripts are accurate and that they are only issued to those who have satisfied the assessment and examination requirements for the award. The certificate and/or record of academic achievement will state the principal language of instruction and/or assessment where this is not English. Subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and/or the record of achievement records the name and location of any other higher education provider involved in the delivery of the course. Place of actual study will be indicated.

6. Course Management

6.1 The School/College establishes a range of arrangements for the management of the student experience by Academic Partners. This section of the Handbook covers the arrangements for admissions, enrolment and registration; student progression; discipline, complaints and appeals; information for students and student support; and publicity and marketing. There is also information on financial arrangements and resolution of disputes.
6.2 Admissions, enrolment and registration

6.2.1 In most types of Academic Partnership arrangements, admissions are normally the responsibility of the partner institution, although the University gives guidance on acceptable requirements and monitors to ensure that the approved admissions requirements and acceptable entry qualifications are met by entrants to the course. The delegation for responsibility of admissions is detailed in the individual partnership agreements.

6.2.2 Any student enrolled on a course leading to an award of the University must be registered with the University. Where the process of enrolment and registration has been delegated to a partner organisation, the latter is required to communicate regularly to the University on matters affecting students’ registration details and status, i.e.:

- suspension of registration,
- permanent withdrawal,
- extensions of registration period,
- repeat periods of study.

6.2.3 The University maintains a student record which is used as a source of management information and as the means of submitting data to the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA), and to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) for funding purposes, except where students are registered with partners who make their own returns to these bodies. The University’s Data Protection Policy, which is provided in the Student Handbook, applies to partnership activities.

6.2.4 In registering for a University award, students confirm that they undertake to observe the University regulations applicable to their course of study. Students are also subject to the regulations of the partner institution, and the partnership agreement indicates under which circumstances each set of regulations take precedence. Students are bound by the course regulations in force at the time of their initial registration unless they have been notified of, and have agreed to, subsequent changes.

6.3 Student progression

6.3.1 The University is responsible for the progression of all students on Academic Partnership provision courses and maintains up-to-date records on student progression and achievement for review purposes. Partner institutions are expected to inform the University on a regular basis of all cases of withdrawal or non-progression and of the reasons. This is usually done through Assessment Boards and regular returns to the University.

6.3.2 In Articulation Agreements, students are registered with the partner institution and student progress is the sole responsibility of the partner institution, unless the Articulation Agreement guarantees progression to a University course.
6.4 Discipline, complaints and appeals

In Academic Partnerships, responsibility for handling student discipline and complaints is normally delegated to the partner institution and their procedures apply. These procedures are checked for compliance with University protocols during Academic Partnership Audit, which is described in Section 2 of the Academic Partnership Handbook, and the delegation of responsibilities is detailed in individual partnership agreements. Students are entitled to a review of the handling of a complaint by the University, once the local process has been completed. Appeals against the outcome of an assessment board and cases of alleged plagiarism are handled by the University. The University’s procedures are provided in the Student Handbook and on the University website: http://uwl.ac.uk/

6.5 Information for students and student support

6.5.1 Schools/Colleges are responsible for ensuring that students are given accurate and comprehensive information about their course, which is comparable to the information given to students studying similar courses at the University. Information for students on Academic Partnership courses includes details about:

- the Academic Partnership arrangement, including responsibilities of the different parties;
- the status of the student with regard to the University;
- the opportunities for students to use the University’s learning and other resources (as agreed in the partnership agreement);
- the complaints procedure and how to use it;
- the appeals procedure and how to use it;
- the nature of the relevant University award and the information which a successful candidate can expect on the certificate or transcript;
- named contacts at the University and the partner organisation;
- Academic Regulations;
- Student Handbook;
- Course Handbook;
- Course Specification.

6.5.2 In the case of Articulation Agreements, information for students should also include details about:
- progression to a University degree, including any relevant terms and conditions;
- fees and any other expenses payable to the University, and when these are to be paid.

6.5.3 For overseas Academic Partnership arrangements, additional information should include details about:
- the language of instruction and assessment;
- the location(s) of study;
- the recognition of the course or award in other countries or by PSRB’s in the UK and elsewhere;
- the features of studying at the University, including costs, where appropriate.
6.5.4 The University may supply course information directly to students, or it may be supplied by the partner organisation. In the latter case, Schools/Colleges need to make the partner organisation aware of their requirements and to agree a procedure for the approval of information prior to it being distributed to students. This task can be undertaken during an APLT visit.

6.5.5 Student support including academic, administrative and pastoral support must be in place at the partner organisation, in order that students studying on Academic Partnership courses have a comparable experience to University students, although the scale of provision of services may differ. Students will also have access to University services as part of their status as students of the University; the responsibility for provision of student resources and support is set out in the partnership agreement.

6.6 Publicity and marketing

6.6.1 Recruitment, publicity and marketing materials for Academic Partnership arrangements may be produced by the University or by the partner organisation, but in all types of partnership, the partnership agreement indicates that the University approves all publicity and marketing material. By means of the approval process, the University seeks to ensure that publicity and marketing materials avoid:

- inappropriate or misleading comparisons with other providers;
- derogatory statements about other providers;
- misleading statements about recognition of awards by public or other authorised bodies;
- misleading advice about the recognition of awards by PSRB's or bodies in other countries;
- bringing UK higher education into disrepute.

6.6.2 The University will agree with the partner organisation whether it will publish all publicity and marketing materials or, if this is to be undertaken by the partner, mechanisms for the approval of materials prior to publication. Approval of materials is undertaken by Schools/Colleges, with the text normally checked by the APLT, in consultation with the Marketing Department at the University.

6.6.3 Course publicity must be considered using the following guidance:

- the text does not mislead potential students as to the nature of the Academic Partnership arrangement and the standing of the award offered;
- the material should be consistent with course entries in the University prospectus and other centrally-produced literature, and with any other material issued by the School/College and partner organisation;
- the material should state how the course is to be offered (for example, by distance learning or face-to-face tuition), identify the location and specify the learner support which will be available;
- it should clearly state the course entrance requirements, including, for overseas recruitment, the standard of English required to gain entry to the course;
- information about fees and payment methods should be clear and accurate;
• the University logo should be used in the approved format and should be placed conspicuously on all recruitment material and in all newspaper advertisements;
• publicity materials produced by the partner organisation (including advertisements) must be copied to the University for reference and monitoring purposes.

6.7 Financial and legal arrangements

6.7.1 Financial arrangements between the University and the partner institution are agreed and detailed in the financial schedule of the Institutional Agreement. The financial arrangements will:

• comply with statutory and funding council requirements, including the requirement that overseas provision should not be cross-subsidised by HEFCE funding;
• provide for the recording and accounting of all transactions in connection with the transfer of funds between the University and the partner organisation;
• provide safeguards so that, in the event of changes in the financial environment, academic standards and the interests of students are protected;
• where appropriate, in overseas provision, cover contingencies for dealing with currency fluctuations, including meeting obligations to students adversely affected by changes.
• detail who is responsible for expenses, arising from the management of the Academic Partnership link.

6.7.2 All legal details including the resolution of disputes are detailed in the Institutional Agreement. Any disputes will be resolved within the jurisdiction of English law.

7. Termination of an Academic Partnership arrangement

7.1 Process

7.1.1 To terminate an Academic Partnership arrangement (agreement and/or schedule), the School/College must complete a proposal to the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive (VCE). A template for the proposal is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk. Prior to preparing the proposal, the School/College is advised to discuss with the partner the reasons for termination, the management of the period leading up to termination, and any changes to the financial arrangements. The School/College should also seek advice from the Academic Quality Office and the University Legal Adviser and Solicitor. The proposal must be sent to the VCE for approval, and copied to the Academic Quality Office for comment on the suitability of the arrangements for safeguarding standards and quality while the contract is managed out.

7.1.2 Once the proposal to terminate is approved by the VCE, the University Legal Adviser and Solicitor will send a formal letter to the partner organisation asking the partner to confirm acceptance of the termination, and send a copy of this letter to the Academic Quality Office. The Academic Quality Office will then organise a partnership closure meeting to discuss the “teaching-through” arrangements and
any lessons learned from the management of the relationship. A template for the agenda of a closure meeting is available from the Academic Registry SharePoint site https://quality.uwl.ac.uk

7.2 Guidance

7.2.1 Termination of Academic Partnership agreements can involve substantial costs – especially if the University’s legal right to terminate is challenged, or if a “breach of a material term” requires emergency action by the University (e.g. re-marking all scripts or investigating maladministration). The preferred route to termination is by mutual agreement. If the Institutional Agreement has not been breached, but the School/College has good reasons (financial, logistical, curricular etc.) for not continuing, then a formal notice to terminate may be given prior to enrolment for the next academic year, otherwise the Institutional Agreement will continue as it stands for a further year.

7.2.2 The University continues to be responsible for the academic standards of the award(s) and the quality of learning opportunities available to students, and arrangements for “teaching-through” must be robust. Different models exist, for example, the partner may continue with teaching; it may be possible to bring students into the University, redesign the curriculum to allow for negotiated/distance learning, or arrange for another University to take over the Institutional Agreement.

7.2.3 Any arrangement for “teaching-through” has associated delivery and monitoring costs related to the timeline for termination. University regulations specify the maximum period allowed to achieve a qualification. As it can be many years before students have exhausted their opportunities, the School/College must ensure that all necessary academic and administrative arrangements are in place, including assessment arrangements (double marking, assessment boards, external examining, etc.), internal review and reporting arrangements and any APLT support. The School/College will also need to know whether the fees/income split between the partner and the University will continue on the same terms; revisions may be necessary depending on the “teaching-through” arrangements.

8. Information held by the University

8.1 Academic Partnership Register

8.1.1 Once an Academic Partnership has been approved, the details will be entered onto the University’s Academic Partnership Register by the Academic Quality Office. The information held on the register includes:

- the name and address of the partner organisation;
- the course(s) and awards involved;
- the School/College responsible for the Academic Partnership;
- the details of the Head of School/College
- the details of the APLT;
- the details of the individuals at the partnership responsible for overseeing the arrangement;
Section 3 – Management of Academic Partnership Arrangements

- the partnership Course Leader(s);
- the details of the External Examiner(s);
- the date the course(s) commenced with the partner;
- the date for the previous and next Annual Review meetings;
- the date for the next Periodic Review;
- contract details regarding student access to University services;
- Institutional Agreement (contract) expiry date;
- QAA/PSRB Visits;
- Type of Partnership (Validation or Franchise only).

8.1.2 The Academic Partnership Register is updated annually at the Academic Quality Office meeting with the School/College. Any changes to the details held on the register must be reported at the earliest possible opportunity to the Academic Quality Office, in particular where a partnership is terminating or where it is proposed to extend the Academic Partnership.

8.1.3 The information held on the register will be published on the Academic Registry SharePoint site. A list of the University’s Academic Partnerships will be published on the University website under the Governance section: http://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-works/partner-institutions

8.2 Documentation held by the University in relation to Academic Partnership arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Academic Partnership Register</td>
<td>Academic Quality Office <a href="https://quality.uwl.ac.uk">https://quality.uwl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Accredited Partner Courses Register</td>
<td>Academic Quality Office <a href="https://quality.uwl.ac.uk">https://quality.uwl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Institutional Agreement(s) (contract(s))</td>
<td>University Solicitor and Head of Legal Services (master) Academic Quality Office (copy) School/College (copy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Current schedules (financial appendices)</td>
<td>University Solicitor and Head of Legal Services (master) Academic Quality Office (copy) School/College (copy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Articulation Agreements</td>
<td>University Solicitor and Head of Legal Services (master) Academic Quality Office (copy) School/College (copy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Agent agreements</td>
<td>University Solicitor and Head of Legal Services (master) School/College (copy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Approval Documentation: 1. School/College Executive agreement to enter into negotiations</td>
<td>School/College (master) University Secretary copy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 3 – Management of Academic Partnership Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. Academic Partnership Business case approval form including risk assessment and financial costings | VCE (master)  
School/College (copy)  
Academic Quality Office (copy) |
| 3. Academic Partnership Audit/new centre Audit/Approval report               | Academic Quality Office (master)  
School/College (copy) |
| 4. Validation/Periodic Field/Subject review report of the event and response to conditions and confirmation of Chair’s action to approve any conditions. | Academic Quality Office (master)  
School/College (copy) |
| 5. Evidence that all Academic Partnership reports, Annual and Periodic, have been considered by School/College Boards. | School/College (master) |
| 8 APLT visit and annual reports                                             | School/College (master)  
Academic Quality Office (copy) |
| 9 Articulation Agreement visit reports                                      | School/College (master)  
Academic Quality Office (copy) |
| 10 Annual monitoring reports - course and modules                            | School/College (master)  
Academic Quality Office (copy) |
| 11 External Examiner reports                                                 | Academic Quality Office (master)  
School/College (copy) |
| 12 Responses to External Examiner reports                                    | School/College (master)  
Academic Quality Office (copy) |
| 13 Partnership student cohort lists                                          | School/College (master) |
| 14 Approval of local tutors – CV plus evidence that process of approval at School/College level is followed (e.g. minutes of School/College Board) | School/College (master) |
| 15 List of modules approved for delivery at partnership and details of those being delivered in the current session. | School/College (master) |
| 16 Copy of validated Course Specification and Module Study Guides.          | School/College (master)  
Academic Quality Office (copy APAR) |