
Humanities Student Service, Success and Development

Title: Faculty of Humanities Policy and Procedure for Collaborative Activity – revised October 2022

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The Faculty of Humanities' Collaborations Policy was last revised in February 2016. Since then the number of collaborative agreements being signed with partner institutions has increased at pace, in line the university and faculty internationalisation strategy and concerns have arisen within the faculty that the required process of approval of such partnerships is not being routinely followed. The Faculty Teaching, Learning and Student Experience (TLSE) teams are as such not able to accurately determine the number and nature of all collaborative activity being undertaken. This is a risk should there be an external audit.

Principles or guidelines for Schools to follow when considering whether to enter into a collaborative activity (including progression agreements, teaching arrangements and validations) with another organisation are referred to in:

- The University Transnational Education Policy¹
- The University Internationalisation Strategy
- The Faculty of Humanities Internationalisation Strategy
- University Policy and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision
- Policy for Split-Site PhD Arrangements
- Joint Award procedures for postgraduate research programmes

This document outlines the updates to the Faculty policy and framework so that it reflects the principles outlined in both university and faculty policy and strategy documents, incorporating the impact of the Student Experience Project in the redistribution of policy and task ownership. The aim of the policy and the revisions is designed to further inform School activity and to guide the Faculty and Schools in approval and review of proposed and continued activity. The document has been produced in collaboration with the Faculty Associate Dean for Internationalisation, Faculty Admissions Managers and Head of Teaching Learning and Student Experience.

¹ Due to be reviewed by the Director of Flexible Learning in 2022-2023

Faculty of Humanities Policy and Procedure for Collaborative Activity

This document sets out the strategic framework within which the Faculty of Humanities will seek to develop collaborative provision in pursuance of its strategic goals. The strategy will be operationalized through Faculty and School Operational Priorities and align with [the university policy and framework](#) for collaborative activity

Definition of Collaborative Provision

Collaborative provision can be defined as any type of educational opportunity that is dependent on the arrangement made with a Partner. Examples of types of collaboration include franchise; validation; split-site PhD; Erasmus Mundus; consortium agreements; joint programmes; distance delivery; partner delivering a unit; articulation/progression; hybrid of different types. The full definitions as to types of collaborative activity can be found within the [university framework for collaborative provision](#)

The University and Faculty are required to manage associated risk involved with collaborative provision. For award bearing activity, the [University's Guidance and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision](#) provides a governance framework. However due to the associated reputational risk the Faculty of Humanities extends this responsibility beyond UG, PGT and PGR activity to non-award bearing provision, encompassing programmes or services delivered with a collaborative partner within the boundaries of an agreement so as to provide a quality assurance framework for all activity involving external partner organisations.

Therefore, this framework applies to all collaborative arrangements in which the Faculty designs, develops or delivers taught provision with the input of an external partner organisation and for which the partnership is normally enacted through a contract (Memorandum of Agreement) or a more informal Memorandum of Understanding.

Strategic Oversight

It is acknowledged that collaborative partnerships develop through localised connections between an individual or a subject area and the partner organisation, as well as through strategic institutional alliances. Any partnerships entered into must align with the School, Faculty and University strategic priorities and any success of these partnerships should not be reliant upon a single individual. An ongoing commitment to the development of strategic collaborative partnerships is therefore retained. Heads of School, the Faculty and where appropriate, the University, will maintain oversight of the activities in order to ensure that the University discharges its responsibilities to the partner and any students ²appropriately and in accordance with the regulations and policies of the University of Manchester. Such oversight should ensure the strategic development of partnerships and the efficient use of resources, enabling Schools and the Faculty to identify partner organisations:

- a. With whom there is potential to develop further activities

² Not all collaborative activities will involve students

- b. With which the Faculty/School already has multiple agreements for different activities and could take a more strategic approach to the relationship with that partner organisation
- c. Where existing activity no longer fits strategically with School, Faculty and University goals it should be discontinued

International activity will additionally be monitored through the Faculty Internationalisation Group

Additionally, the University's current Transnational Education Policy states:

“Schools must take a proactive and strategic approach when selecting potential partners and developing TNE activities. Evidence shows that relationships are more productive if Schools focus on a small number of partnerships with potential not only for income generation but also longer term collaboration in research and/or teaching. Schools must take a proactive and strategic approach when selecting potential partners and developing Collaborative/TNE activities.”

Managing the risk

Approval to enter into or renew a collaborative agreement with another party must be given by the Dean and Vice President, following recommendation from the relevant Head of School, Vice Dean, and for international partners, additional recommendation from the Associate Dean for Internationalisation and the International Development Office.

International, award- bearing provision will also require the approval of the Vice President for Teaching and Learning or the Associate Vice-President (Internationalisation).

It is not permissible for individuals to sign official agreements or renewals binding the Faculty (and the University, School and Department) and doing so could constitute a disciplinary matter without the appropriate approvals. This would not prevent individuals from giving a statement of intent, provided that it is made clear to the other party(ies) that such a statement is not legally binding.

There are two exceptions:

1. Consultancies which are covered by a separate University policy
2. Study Abroad Agreements (managed by the International Programmes Office)³

Collaborative activities require significant investment of time and resource by both parties if they are to be successful and they must be fully costed to take account of academic and administrative time, site visits and any other costs. It is also important to recognise collaborative activity carries risks in terms of impact on research, finance, academic quality (including progression), reputation management and cultural and political sensitivities. Failure to control these risks may in turn impact on our reputation. The principles outlined within this framework should be used in determining whether to take forward a potential collaborative activity or renew an existing agreement, and aligns with the principles relating to collaborative activity set out in:

³ Approval of study abroad agreements is considered part of the faculty approval process for new programmes/major amendments

- [Guidance and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision;](#)
- [University of Manchester Our Vision - Global Influence](#)
- [Faculty of Humanities Internationalisation Strategy.](#)
- [Policy for Split-Site PhD Arrangements](#)
- [Joint Award procedures for postgraduate research programmes](#)

Collaboration Principles

The University will only consider collaboration with partner institutions which have/can demonstrate the following:

- An the overall academic standing of the prospective partner institution and Research standing for postgraduate research links;
- A robustness of its overall quality control and assurance procedures at the institutional level;
- A soundness of its quality management at all levels;
- An adequacy of its overall administrative support for quality assurance at the institutional level;
- An adequacy of its overall provision for academic and pastoral support and guidance and supervision arrangements for research students;
- An adequacy of the overall learning support and infrastructure in relation to the ability to meet requirements for awards;
- An adequacy of overall staffing in relation to the ability to meet requirements for awards;
- Experience of delivering comparable programmes at a similar level, or is capable to delivering programmes at that level;
- Where appropriate, it has an acceptable record of partnership with other institutions;
- The prospective partner institution is financially stable;
- The prospective partner institution can contract legally with it.

In the case of proposed overseas partnerships, the rationale for these must align with the University's Internationalisation Strategy and follow the principles set out in the procedure and guidance for Transnational Education as well as:

- The prospective partner institution has an understanding of the current practices of UK HE, e.g. in connection with external examining, assessment arrangements, and quality assurance arrangements;
- Has the capacity to address differences in cultures and expectations between HE systems in such a way as to ensure that the requirements of the arrangement can be met;

Approval procedures

The procedures for the approval of collaborative activity are outlined on the [Humanities Teaching and Learning website](#) (includes PGR) and are also detailed below in Appendix A. Additionally, the procedure for the approval of award bearing collaborative activity is also detailed on the [University's Teaching and Learning Development](#) website.

In all cases, approval to proceed should be sought from the Dean and Vice President at an appropriate stage in discussion and negotiation in order to be assured of strategic support for the activity and to enable the School, Faculty and University to direct appropriate support and expertise to the activity. This approval to proceed **must** be granted before entering into any further conversations with prospective partners that would lead a formal agreement to pursue.

Whilst overall approval sits with Dean and Vice-President (where applicable), any proposed collaboration should be discussed with the Head of School, School Director of Teaching and Learning, Vice-Dean and Associate Dean for Internationalisation in the first instance and taken to Faculty Quality Standards Design and Enhancement Committee where appropriate.

The Humanities Collaborative Database will hold details of all agreements (formal and informal) with partner organisations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All collaborative provision should be monitored on a regular basis by the Schools and a full evaluation undertaken when considering whether an agreement should be renewed. This process should involve both the admissions teams and programmes teams. The Faculty Internationalisation Group, consisting of the AD for Internationalisation and School level leads should be made aware of all international agreements and their suitability and progress discussed accordingly.

The monitoring and evaluation of award bearing provision is governed by the procedures outlined in the University's Quality Framework. However, for all other agreements, Schools and Faculty are responsible for initiating a review ahead of the renewal date. As with the approval of a new collaborative partner, approval to proceed with the renewal, presenting the business case for renewing a partner, must be given by the Dean and Vice President.

Areas that should be considered as part of the monitoring and evaluation process included:

Numbers admitted as part of the agreement; financial contribution – including numbers on scholarships; progression rates of students entering as part of progression agreements or exchanges; overall enhancement of the programme, student experience and benefit to the university.

Appendix A - Faculty of Humanities Approval Process for Collaborative Activity

Faculty policy and procedure requires that approval to enter into any **agreement involving other parties outside the University (see exceptions below)** must be given by the Dean, following a recommendation from the relevant Head(s) of School. For agreements with organisations from outside the UK, a recommendation must also be provided by the Director of International Development.

Under this procedure, it is not permissible for individuals to sign official agreements binding the Faculty and School (and the University) and doing so could constitute a disciplinary matter without the appropriate approvals. This would not prevent individuals from giving a statement of intent, provided that it is made clear to the other party(ies) that such a statement is not legally binding, and that only the Dean has the right to commit the Faculty to agreements.

There are two exceptions:

(i) Consultancies which are covered by a separate University policy; and

(ii) Study Abroad Agreements

- Study Abroad agreements where more than one School is involved: approval must be sought from the Associate Dean for Portfolio Development who will also be responsible for signing such agreements. A copy will be sent to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Officer (EDPPP) so that a record can be kept.
- Study Abroad agreements where only one School is involved: approval must be sought from the Head of School who will also be responsible for signing such agreements. The Study Abroad Unit will send copies to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Officer (EDPPP) so that a record can be kept.
- All study abroad proposals must go through the Faculty Approval Process for new programmes or major amendments before being signed off via the above process

Process for the approval of collaborative agreements:

Agreements involving an award of the University: The University's policy and procedures for the quality assurance of collaborative provision must be followed. The policy can be viewed at (<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/map/collaborationsandpartnerships/>)

Further information and guidance should be sought from your Faculty Teaching and Learning Officer (Education Development, Policy, Procedure and Practice - EDPP) in advance of any proposal being submitted.

All other agreements: Any proposal for an agreement with another party outside the University should be brought initially to the attention of the Head of School (HoS) and for international proposals, the School Internationalisation lead.

The Head of School will arrange for the proposal to be considered within the School and to be tested against a number of criteria including:

- What will the proposal bring to the School(s), e.g. in terms of PGR recruitment, teaching enhancement, research?
- What financial benefits will the proposal bring to the School?
- What will the full economic cost be to the School (bearing in mind that many of the costs associated with supporting such agreements are hidden under current arrangements)?
- Has any consideration been given to arrangements for terminating the agreement, if necessary?

Proposals for international collaborative agreements not involving an award of the University must be accompanied by a business plan including a full costing carried out by the Head of School Finance. This would usually take the form of the Approval to Proceed document and, for international agreements, should be discussed first with the School Internationalisation Lead and then at the Faculty Internationalisation Group prior to being submitted to the faculty for agreement in order to explore whether there is potential further collaborative working across the faculty.

If the proposal involves more than one School this process should be followed in each contributing School and approval given by all HoS involved.

Once the proposal has been approved by the HoS, it should be sent to the Teaching and Learning Officer (EDPP) who will arrange for it to be discussed at the Faculty Quality, Standards, Design and Enhancement Committee to check the above process has been followed and that the proposal fits with the Faculty strategic plan.

Once signed off by the Vice Dean or Associate Dean for Portfolio Development, the proposal will be forwarded to the Vice-President and/or Dean for consideration.

Once approval has been given for the collaboration, a formal agreement must be developed which will be signed by the Dean for implementation by the School. Advice should be sought on the development of formal agreements from the University's Contracts Office.

All approvals will be reported to HTLC and FLT⁴

Flowchart for the approval of all collaborative activity:

The proposed collaboration should be discussed with School colleagues in the first instance. This should include your UG / PGT / T&L Director, School Lead for Internationalisation if appropriate and Head of School



⁴ PGR Committee for reporting to be confirmed

Programme proposer should contact their School's Faculty T&L Officer (EDPPP) who will set up an initial discussion to advise of the paperwork required, dependant on the nature of the collaboration so that support can be sought from the relevant colleagues.



Once agreement is received from Head of School to pursue the collaboration, proposers should complete the 'Approval to Proceed to Next Steps' form, outlining the proposed collaborative activity. All Approval to Proceed proposals must be accompanied by the appropriate costing template as determined by the Head of School Finance

For collaborative activity involving an overseas partner, a business case should be taken to the Faculty Internationalisation Group for discussion to ensure any cross working activity and that the proposal fits with the Internationalisation Strategy



Approval to Proceed form is submitted to Faculty QSDE for 'Approval in Principle'. Documentation to be submitted with the AtP form is dependent on the nature of the collaboration and the Faculty TLO will advise as necessary but is expected to include the financial costing form as determined by the Head of School Finance

'Approval to Proceed' is given by the Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students/Associate Dean –Portfolio Development and subsequently the Dean once it has been considered by QSDE. For collaborations involving a joint award of the university, the Vice-President for Teaching Learning and Students should also sign the approval form



Collaborative activity involving the creation of a new programme should now adhere to the university approval process for new programmes

All other types of collaborative activity should adhere to the university approval process for collaborative arrangements, this includes all types of progression agreements and should go through the Faculty QSDE process

Appendix B – Process for Monitoring and review of collaborative arrangements

As part of the Collaborative Policy Review, Faculty has created an updated Collaborative Activity Database. This has been devised working in conjunction with Schools, the International Programmes Office and University Teaching and Learning Delivery Office.

In order to meet the requirements around monitoring and review as outlined in this policy, the Faculty EDPP team have built in the review of collaborative partner status to their annual cyclical activities.

Faculty Teaching and Learning Officers (EDPP) will, as part of the annual cycle of review, each September establish partnerships due to be renewed and will contact Schools accordingly to advise that an agreement is due for renewal within the next 12 months.

Schools/departments are then expected to liaise with relevant colleagues within admissions and teaching and learning to consider the following with respect of the partnership:

- Has the partnership achieved its aims as outlined in the Approval to Proceed pro-forma?
- Have the numbers/targets (for articulation agreements) been met?
- What has the proposal brought to the School(s), e.g. in terms of additional recruitment to PGT/PGR programmes, teaching enhancement, research?
- What financial benefits has the proposal brought to the School? Has the delivery of the collaboration been cost-effective?
- Is there data available on the quality of the intake and students, and what impact has this had on completion and degree classification?

The Faculty has provided a Collaborative Activity Monitoring and Review Pro-Forma to support this activity.

Proposals involving international collaborations, should be discussed further ad the Faculty Internationalisation Group to establish if there is future cross working opportunities or whether the retention of the partnership would have future strategic benefits.

On completion of the above, if the School deems the collaborative activity as suitable to continue, then the full Approval to Renew process should be undertaken, as outlined in the flow chart in appendix A.

Document Control Box	
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Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations / Policies	
Related Procedures and Guidance	https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/quality/collaborative-provision/
Policy Owner:	HTLC HUMS PGR Committee
Lead Contact:	Emma Rose, HoTLSE Jared Ruff, HoRBES