

# Section 11: Collaborative Provision

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## Introduction

- 11.1 Key priorities in the University's 'Being Westminster' strategy 2022-2029 and sub-strategies are reliant on sustainable strategic partnership working with stakeholders on a local, national and international level. Whilst the University will be engaged in a variety of collaborative and development activities, this section of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook focuses solely on **academic credit bearing** Transnational collaborative provision.
- 11.2 The policy and underpinning procedures have been written in accordance with Office for Students On-going Conditions of Registration, European Standards and Guidelines and the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education. It is also informed by the QAA's Characteristics Statement 'Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body' and sector good practice.
- 11.3 Collaborative credit bearing provision falls into a number of categories and models. A description of each of these models is provided in Annex 1.
- 11.4 The University is responsible for the academic standards of all awards or credit granted in its name. The quality of learning opportunities offered under the collaborative arrangement must be comparable with those offered across the University and enable students to achieve the appropriate academic standards for the award. This is in line with QAA Quality Code '[Key Practices](#)' which state:
- “ Where academic provision is delivered through partnership, all partners agree, understand, communicate and take responsibility for the maintenance of academic standards and enhancement of quality”*
- 11.5 In addition, the University is also responsible for awards marketed and advertised in its name which must adhere to Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines.
- 11.6 All proposals for new or extended partnerships are subject to formal approval processes. Individual members of University staff are not authorised to develop partnerships outside of formal processes.
- 11.7 The University takes a risk-based approach to each collaboration and both proposed and approved collaborations are managed in line with the assessed risk. To manage risk and secure quality and standards of collaborative provision there are a number of approval stages and governance control points.

## Notification of a proposed new collaborative partnership

- 11.8 Following the identification of a potential partner, initial discussion will normally take place at College or School level between the proposing team, the partner and if necessary relevant professional services. This culminates in a Collaborative Proposal which is presented to the College Executive Group (CEG) for approval.

- 11.9 For international proposals that involve more than one College the coordination role will be undertaken by the Director of Transnational Education who will ensure sign off from the relevant Heads of College. Cross-College UK developments will go to each relevant CEG for approval prior to being submitted.
- 11.10 The expectation is that the collaborative proposals will contain:
- Rationale for entering the partnership including alignment with strategic priorities.
  - Detailed proposal of the type of partnership.
  - A financial analysis of the development including proposed student numbers.
  - Market research identifying any reputational risk factors and market demand.
- 11.11 If approved by CEG the proposal form will then be submitted to the Partnership Scrutiny Committee (PSC) for approval to proceed to the next stage of development, due diligence. If approved the Collaborations Team will contact the partner to initiate due diligence.
- 11.12 Where approval is not given by PSC, the Associate Head of College (External Relations) will inform the prospective partner of the decision.

## Due Diligence Process

- 11.13 The due diligence process is a two-stage process, the first being desk-based research, followed by the second stage visit to the proposed partner's site(s).
- 11.14 The purpose of the due diligence process is to identify whether the proposed collaboration is in the University's best interests, aligns with the *Being Westminster 2022-2029 Strategic Plan*, and to analyse the level of risk in approving the partner.

## Due Diligence Report

- 11.15 Where approval is given, the PSC will instruct the Collaborations Team within the Quality and Standards department to undertake due diligence. This is not required for all collaborative models and is normally only undertaken for Transnational Education (TNE) proposals. The Partnership Scrutiny Committee will confirm the requirements for approved proposals.
- 11.16 The first stage will be a desk-based report and will cover:
- academic and/or professional reputation and having the ability to enter into the collaboration and deliver HE provision;
  - existing collaborative arrangements;
  - legal and financial standing;
  - compatibility of mission and aims with those of the University;
  - strategic fit;
  - existing QA systems and external QA and/or professional body reviews; and
- 11.17 Based on the above, the PSC will:
- Approve the report and authorise the due diligence visit to proceed (subject to Portfolio Planning Committee (PPC) approval of the course proposal); or
  - Request additional information; or decide that the proposed partnership should not proceed. In this case, the College(s) will inform the prospective partner.

## Portfolio Planning Committee (PPC)

- 11.18 If the PSC approves the desk based due diligence, then prior to the due diligence visit taking place a submission to the Portfolio Planning Committee (PPC) should be made. This will outline the proposed collaborative provision in more detail, including the proposed course structure, demand and alignment to the University strategy. This is to ensure a university-wide strategic perspective on additions to the University portfolio.

## Heads of Agreement (HoA)

- 11.19 A draft HoA may be prepared by the Collaborations Team, where appropriate in liaison with College(s) and approved on behalf of the University by the PSC as part of the desk based due diligence stage.
- 11.20 The HoA confirms the intention of both parties to enter into a collaborative relationship, the nature of the University's quality assurance requirements and the agreed financial implications and requirements. It is supported by an outline of the proposed provision and the University award(s) involved.
- 11.21 The draft HoA should be sent to the partner prior to the due diligence visit and any negotiations need to be resolved before the visit. The due diligence panel does not have the authority to renegotiate the HoA. The HoA should be signed during the visit.

## Due Diligence Visit

- 11.22 The purpose of the due diligence visit is to establish that the prospective partner has:
- the academic standing to successfully deliver to the appropriate academic standards consistent with the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and in line with the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, relevant subject benchmarks, Office for Students B Conditions, and the requirements of professional and statutory bodies as appropriate;
  - the resources (staffing and facilities) to sustain the proposed provision;
  - appropriate systems and resources (both physical and electronic) to ensure a high and equitable level of student experience;
  - systems and processes sufficiently compatible with those of the University to allow the two institutions to exchange data and work well together;
  - senior management commitment to the proposed collaboration; and
  - to investigate any issues raised during the desk-based stage.
- 11.23 The Deputy Registrar ( Quality and Standards), or nominee, will nominate a Panel to carry out the due diligence visit to the prospective partner sites(s). As a minimum, the panel should consist of:
- a Chair from the University's standing panel list;
  - an internal member of staff, independent from the College (or at a minimum, the subject area), from the University's standing panel; and
  - an advisor from the Quality and Standards Department.
- 11.24 Where relevant, additional members may be co-opted.

## PSC Consideration

- 11.25 The final due diligence report, which considers both the desk based and due diligence visit findings, will be presented to PSC and will include:
- a summary of the due diligence findings;
  - a risk assessment;
  - recommendations for PSC to discuss and consider; and
  - detail any action points which need to be finalised ahead of the validation or approval event, with clear roles and responsibilities identified.
- 11.26 Upon review of the report, PSC will take one of the actions below:
- approve the partner at institutional level and authorise the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards), or nominee, to progress to the next approval stage; or
  - request more information; or
  - advise the Head of College(s) that it does not consider it to be in the best interest of the University to proceed with the proposed collaboration and request the Associate Head of College(s) (External Relations) to inform the prospective partner of this decision.
- 11.27 The decision reached by the PSC will be reported to the University Executive Board (UEB).
- 11.28 Relevant sections of the due diligence report will be shared with the validation or approval panel as part of the next stage of the approval process.

## Collaborative Provision Approval

- 11.29 Once the partnership is approved by PSC at institutional level, and by PPC for the planned provision, the next stage will be to approve the academic content, so the partner can deliver the proposed collaborative provision. The College(s), in liaison with the Quality and Standards department, will prepare for the validation or approval event.
- 11.30 The type of event will depend on the collaborative provision category and whether the course has already been validated by the University.
- 11.31 Where a course not offered by the University is to be validated for delivery by a Partner Institution the process detailed in paragraphs 11.35 – 11.55 should be followed.
- 11.32 Where a course has already been validated by the University as an existing part of the Westminster portfolio and is to be franchised to a partner institution the process detailed in paragraphs 11.56 – 11.68 should be followed.
- 11.33 Should a collaborative development require the approval of a partner to deliver an existing validated University course and for the University to validate an award written by the partner institution, this can be completed as one event. It may be necessary to rationalise the processes, roles and documentation to avoid duplication.
- 11.34 The event will normally be held at the partner's site; however, at the discretion of the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards), or nominee, the event may take place at another location or via correspondence.

## **New Course Approval (i.e. Validation) and Partner Approval to Deliver - Development Team and Documentation**

- 11.35 Following approval to proceed by PSC, a course development team will be established to prepare each new course for validation. In most cases the course(s) will be written by the partner institution and therefore it is the responsibility of the partner to produce a coherent and academically sound course and associated documentation.
- 11.36 When developing a new course, teams must ensure that proposals adhere to the University [Academic Regulations](#). There are also a range of external reference points for course teams to consider when undertaking curriculum design for a validation or in designing new modules.
- 11.37 The [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) (FHEQ) is based on the premise that qualifications should be awarded on the basis of achievement of outcomes rather than years of study. Qualification descriptors set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. These are embedded into the University's Undergraduate and Postgraduate Frameworks set out in the Handbook of Academic Regulations.
- 11.38 [The QAA Quality Code](#) provides guidance on maintaining quality and standards in Higher Education Institutions. The University takes the guidance set out in the Code into account when developing its own policy and procedures in the relevant areas. Programme Specifications also form part of the Academic Infrastructure and the QAA provides guidance to institutions on producing specifications.
- 11.39 [European Standards Guidance for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#) (ESG) were adopted by the Ministers responsible for higher education in 2005 and revised in 2015. The focus of the ESG is on quality assurance relating to learning and teaching in higher education, including the learning environment and relevant links to research and innovation. The University of Westminster processes have been mapped to the ESG expectations.
- 11.40 [Subject Benchmark Statements](#) (SBS) provide a means for the course team and the wider academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of degrees in a specific subject area. They set out expectations about the standards of awards. They describe what gives a discipline its coherence and identity and define what can be expected of a graduate in terms of the abilities and skills needed to develop understanding or competence in the subject. Interdisciplinary awards may need to reference more than one SBS.
- 11.41 The documentation that must be produced for an externally validated award is
- Covering document / overview describing the partnership and course development rationale;
  - Programme Specification;
  - Module Descriptors for new modules;
  - Module Descriptors for existing modules that will be included in the new course;
  - Draft course handbook;
  - Teaching staff details (short CV's);
  - Draft staff development plan;
  - Draft of the Administrative Annex from the contract;

- Copy of the non-confidential due diligence report (for information);
  - Copy of PPC submission (for information)
- 11.42 The Programme Specification and Module Descriptors are the definitive descriptions of a course and set out the intended learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve, the level of study, the credit allocation of the course and modules and the teaching and learning strategies to enable students to achieve them. They are the key documents in course validation, as well as being an important source of information for students.
- 11.43 The academic level of any course is determined by its aims, learning outcomes, syllabus content, its assessment methods and assessment criteria for judging student achievement and in line with the FHEQ (or international equivalent). All validated awards must have clear subject specific course outcomes, which inform the definition of aims and learning outcomes for each module.
- 11.44 Care must be taken to ensure clarity of definition in learning outcomes of Level 7 postgraduate modules, especially in terms of higher-level analytical skills and the expectation of students' abilities to sustain advanced independent critically evaluative work, which also underpins much Level 6 undergraduate work.
- 11.45 The role of the University academic staff is to act as external scrutiny for the partner team and to use their expertise in ensuring that the academic content, assessment and learning outcomes are of the appropriate level and standard for a University of Westminster award. It should be noted that formal externality from the University and the Partner will be present during the validation event (detailed from 11.47).
- 11.46 Documentation must be signed off by the relevant Associate Head of College(s), who must be satisfied that the proposed partnership provision meets all internal and external requirements and is sufficiently robust to be submitted to the validation panel.

## Partner Validation – Event

- 11.47 This event both validates the academic provision as well as approving the partner to deliver that provision. The focus of the validation event will be to determine if:
- the course is appropriate in terms of its level and content, and in the light of current practice and development in the discipline;
  - the course is pedagogically sound
  - the course is capable of enriching the student experience
  - the partner can deliver the course in such a way as to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the course;
  - partner staff have the appropriate experience and expertise;
  - confirmation that equipment and other learning resources are committed to the course, where relevant;
  - evidence that the respective responsibilities outlined in the contract, specifically the Administrative Annex, are understood and can be satisfactorily discharged;
  - show that clear communication channels are established between the University and the partner and identified strategic leads and Liaison Tutors from both parties;
  - there is a staff development plan in place, if required; and

- where relevant produce an action plan to minimise any identified risks.

## Validation Panel Membership and Remit

- 11.48 The Panel will be appointed and managed by Quality and Standards, in liaison with the College(s), using the University standing panel members.
- 11.49 The Panel should consist of, as a minimum:
- a Chair from outside the College(s) from the standing panel;
  - one Learning and Teaching representative from outside the proposing College(s) from the standing panel;
  - at least one independent external representative(s), with subject or industry expertise. This external's input may be undertaken via correspondence with approval from the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards);
  - a Quality and Standards Advisor and Secretary from Quality and Standards.
- 11.50 Where relevant, additional members may be co-opted.
- 11.51 The key members of the Partner responsible for managing and delivering the provision are integral to the approval process and will be expected to attend the event in support of the proposal, together with supporting members from the University College(s) including the Liaison Tutor(s).
- 11.52 The remit of the Panel is to:
- review the documentation;
  - check that the required criteria have been met;
  - reach a conclusion and determine any conditions and recommendations;

## Outcome of Validation Event

- 11.53 The Panel may recommend:
- approval with no conditions or recommendations;
  - approval with conditions and/or recommendations to be met within a specified time limit;
  - suspension of the process with conditions for recommencement; or
  - non-approval with feedback.

## Conditions and Recommendations

- 11.54 Where a Panel identifies conditions, they must be met and approved before final approval of the course will be given. The Partner (working in collaboration with the College(s)) is responsible for providing sufficient evidence to the Chair to satisfy the conditions. The Chair will sign off the conditions, or request further evidence or work, on behalf of the Panel working closely with the Panel Secretary. Exceptionally, if the Chair is unavailable then the Deputy Registrar (Academic Quality and Standards), or nominee, will sign off the response. This process can be completed via correspondence.
- 11.55 If recommendations are set by the Panel, then the course team will report actions in response as part of Annual Monitoring.
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## **Existing University Provision (i.e. Franchise) - Partner Approval to Deliver - Development Team and Documentation**

- 11.56 The purpose of the development team is to manage the on-going development of the proposal and the required documentation, and to ensure that any recommendations from the PSC, PPC and due diligence report are taken into consideration.
- 11.57 The membership of the team should consist of the Liaison Tutors (UoW and partner), the Collaborations Manager and partner equivalent, and relevant professional services staff from both institutions.
- 11.58 For an event where the partner needs approval to deliver a course under the terms of a franchise arrangement the materials to be produced for the Panel, will include:
- Covering document / Overview document describing the partnership and course rationale
  - Programme specification;
  - All module descriptors;
  - Draft course handbook;
  - Draft staff development plan;
  - Course mapping documentation, where appropriate;
  - Teaching staff details (short CVs);
  - Draft of the Administrative Annex from the contract
  - Copy of the non-confidential due diligence report; and
  - Copy of PPC submission (for information).
- 11.59 Documentation must be signed off by the Associate Head of College(s), who must be satisfied that the proposed partnership provision meets all internal and external requirements and is sufficiently robust to be submitted to the approval panel.



## Partner Approval to Deliver

- 11.60 The focus of the event will determine if the proposed partner course team(s) can:
- deliver the course in such a way as to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the course;
  - ensure that partner staff have the appropriate experience and expertise;
  - confirm that equipment and other learning resources are committed to the course by both parties, where relevant;
  - evidence that the respective responsibilities outlined in the Contract, specifically the Administrative Annex, are understood and can be satisfactorily discharged by staff from both parties;
  - show that there are clear communication channels established between the University and the partner and identified strategic leads and liaison tutors from both parties;
  - illustrate that there is a staff development plan in place; and
  - where relevant produce an action plan to minimise any identified risks.

## Approval to Deliver Panel Membership and Remit

- 11.61 The Panel will be arranged and managed by Quality and Standards, in liaison with the College(s), using the University standing panel members.
- 11.62 The Panel should consist of, as a minimum:
- a Chair from outside the proposing College(s) from the standing panel;
  - one Learning and Teaching representative from outside the proposing College(s) from the standing panel;
  - one, or more, independent external representatives, with subject or industry expertise. This external's input may be undertaken via correspondence with approval from the Deputy Registrar (Academic Quality and Standards);
  - a Quality and Standards Advisor and Secretary from Quality and Standards.
- 11.63 Where relevant, additional members may be co-opted.
- 11.64 The key members of the Partner responsible for managing and delivering the provision are integral to the approval process and will be expected to attend the event in support of the proposal, together with supporting members from the University College(s) including the Liaison Tutor(s).
- 11.65 The remit of the Panel is to:
- review the documentation;
  - check that the required criteria have been met;
  - reach a conclusion and determine any conditions and recommendations;

## Outcome of Partner Approval to Deliver Event

- 11.66 The Panel may recommend:
- approval with no conditions or recommendations;
  - approval with conditions and/or recommendations to be met within a specified time limit;
  - suspension of the process with conditions for recommencement; or
  - non-approval with feedback.

## Conditions and recommendations

- 11.67 Where a Panel identifies conditions, they must be met and approved before final approval of the conditions will be given. The College(s) (working in collaboration with the Partner) is responsible for providing sufficient evidence to the Chair to satisfy the conditions. The Chair will sign off the conditions, or request further evidence or work, on behalf of the Panel. Exceptionally, if the Chair is unavailable then the Deputy Registrar (Academic Quality and Standards), or nominee, will sign off the response. This process can be completed via correspondence.
- 11.68 If recommendations are set by the Panel, then the course team will report actions around these as part of Annual Monitoring.
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## Notification to Course Validation Standing Panel (CVSP)

- 11.69 CVSP will receive confirmation from the Chair of the Panel, or exceptionally the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards), or nominee, that all conditions have been met and that the partner has been formally approved to deliver the course for the agreed proposed start date.
- 11.70 Quality and Standards will keep a record of all partner approval reports and will report annually to Academic Council.

## Period of Approval

- 11.71 For new collaborative provision approval may be:
- Without time limit (6 years) approval
  - For a specified period (up to six academic sessions)
- 11.72 A Partnership review date will be set at the start of the relationship and this will be undertaken irrespective if there have been changes to the provision at the time the review date is reached.

## Exceptions

- 11.73 Exceptionally, as part of the course development and design process, a perceived requirement for a course to be exempt from parts of the Academic Regulations, Curriculum Framework or other academic policies and regulations may emerge. In such circumstances the request for an exception, with supporting evidence, should be submitted by the Associate Head of College (Education and Students) to the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards), or nominee, who will consider requests and take action on behalf of the Teaching Committee. Where such an exception is sought, a course may not be presented to the validation panel until the outcome of the exemption request has been resolved.
- 11.74 A summary of approved exceptions is presented to the Teaching Committee annually.

## Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) and Collaborative Register

- 11.75 A draft MoC should be prepared by the Collaborations Team in conjunction with the College(s), the partner and other relevant stakeholders.
- 11.76 This is a legally binding document, signed by the Partner and the Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) on behalf of the University. This confirms the respective rights and obligations of the University and the collaborative partner for the delivery and quality assurance of the agreed provision. A University template will be used for all collaborative activities detailing these responsibilities and agreed terms.
- 11.77 A MoC will remain valid for a period normally not exceeding five years.
- 11.78 Once the MoC has been signed by both parties the arrangement will be added to the University's collaborative register. If it is a new partner, then it will also need to be reported to the Office for Students as a 'reportable event'.

## Approval of a Proposed Addition to Provision within an Established Partner

- 11.79 All proposed additions will require a proposal, which will be submitted to PPC for approval.
- 11.80 Where a partnership already exists, if a due diligence process has been undertaken within the last 3 years or the resourcing requirements are not significantly different from existing provision then no further due diligence needs to be completed. However, should further evidence (such as student feedback or annual monitoring) suggest investigation should be undertaken then this will be carried out regardless of timeframe or provision. If this is the case, then this should be made clear in the PPC submission to ensure it is recorded for audit purposes. If this criteria has not been met, a desk based, and/or due diligence visit will need to be undertaken and submitted to PSC who will then:
- re-approve the partnership and authorise the Deputy Registrar (Academic Quality and Standards), or nominee, to progress to the next approval stage; or
  - request more information and/or a further report; or
  - advise the College(s) that it does not consider it to be in the best interest of the University to proceed with the proposed additional provision and request the College(s) to inform the partner of this decision.

## Monitoring and Review for Approved Provision

- 11.81 Quality and Standards will monitor the quality assurance and review of the contractual requirements of collaborative provision during the period of approval, in liaison with the College(s).
- 11.82 Quality and Standards will also manage the full partnership review before the end period of the agreement, in consultation with the College(s), partner organisation and relevant internal stakeholders.

## Strategic and Operational Overview

- 11.83 Each validation and franchise partner will have an Academic Development and Operational Group (ADOG). The quality and standards remit of the ADOG is to monitor and safeguard the standards and quality of the provision and the student experience. For partnerships which have provision across multiple Colleges a Partnership Board may be created to ensure collective and consistent oversight and corporate governance.

## Course Committees

- 11.84 As per the terms of the administrative annex within the Memorandum of Collaboration, course committee meetings should be held at partner institutions to capture student feedback. The minutes of these meetings will be reported to the Partnership Management Group and feed into Annual Monitoring.

## Annual Monitoring

- 11.85 **Modules** - The Module Leader report will be produced after the module has run and will form part of the evidence base for the Course Annual Monitoring report. The Module Leader report will provide an overview of the operation of the module, a reflection on module completion and achievement metrics against Annual Monitoring Measures and a consideration of student module evaluations. The report will also outline any changes planned to the module.
- 11.86 **Courses** - Annual Monitoring reports are required from each partner for all collaborative courses. Course Leaders are responsible for producing a Course Annual Monitoring report that considers an overview of Module Leader reports, feedback from student surveys (in place of NSS and PTES), External Examiner reports, analysis of management information, identification of good practice and an action plan to respond to issues identified through previous Annual Monitoring processes.
- 11.87 It is important that the Course Annual Monitoring report constitutes a collective reflection on the Course and not the views of a particular individual and should include information compiled from a range of other meetings held throughout the reporting period.
- 11.88 Partners that have collaborative provision which involves more than one College should have an Annual Monitoring meeting to consider the data at a holistic institutional level. Liaison Tutors, as the University representative for the provision under review, are expected to attend and play an active role in this process.
- 11.89 All Annual Monitoring reports should be submitted to the Quality and Standards Department, with franchise reports then being disseminated to the relevant College for review. Please refer to section 7 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.

## Course/Module Modification

- 11.90 The expectation is that the course team, in conjunction with the Liaison Tutor, will seek to continually enhance the curriculum, course design and learning experience for students in the light of annual monitoring review, professional body or other stakeholders' requirements or changes in discipline or pedagogic practice.

- 11.91 Course and module modifications to franchised or validated provision will be processed in line with section 5 (course and module modification) of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.
- 11.92 Modifications to franchised provision must be formally initiated by the Westminster course team. Prior to submission for approval by the College Teaching Committee the partner should be consulted to ensure they are clear on the proposed changes and can deliver the modified course or modules.
- 11.93 Modifications to validated provision should be submitted directly to the relevant Liaison Tutor for onward approval on behalf of the College Teaching Committee. It is fully expected that partner institutions engage fully with the approval process as detailed in section 5 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.

## Annual Review of Agreement

- 11.94 The Administration Annex within the contract will be reviewed annually by the Collaborations Team, Partnerships Team, relevant internal stakeholders and the partner.

## Suspension of Recruitment

- 11.95 As a result of low demand, short-term operational issues, adverse annual monitoring review or revalidation, a Head of College or Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) may request permission from the Chair of Partnership Scrutiny Committee to suspend recruitment to a course.
- 11.96 If approved, the Quality and Standards Office will inform relevant professional service departments and the partner so that University systems can be updated to reflect the suspension and relevant external bodies can be informed. The suspension will be reported to the next meeting of Partnership Scrutiny Committee.
- 11.97 Any students who have been offered a place must be informed and where possible offered a suitable alternative course.
- 11.98 Courses which have failed to recruit students must be officially suspended for that academic year. Courses can only be suspended for a maximum of two years, after which time they will be withdrawn.

## Withdrawal of a Course

- 11.99 When a College or Partner believes a course has come to the end of its life, it should be formally closed, and recruitment stopped. In most cases, this will coincide with the end date in the contract. The proposal to withdraw the course should be considered by PPC and submitted to the Teaching Committee for approval.
- 11.100 Exceptionally, it may be necessary to close a course prior to the end date and in these cases, the process is defined within the Memorandum of Collaboration. A Leaving Institution Working Group will normally be convened on behalf of the Partnership Scrutiny Committee to manage the closure process.

## Cyclical Review Process

- 11.101 All University awards are subject to an agreed cyclical review process. This includes course(s) delivered under collaborative arrangements, which will normally be subject to an Internal Scrutiny Event. See Section 3 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for details.
- 11.102 In the case of franchise courses where the curriculum is fundamentally linked to the host course run in London, the University course team should consult with the partner(s) on any substantial planned changes. This will enable the partner(s) to properly plan for potential changes to the curriculum, however it must be made clear that the University course team and subsequent University decision is final. It is normally expected that a collaborative course Internal Scrutiny Event will be held shortly after the host course re-approval to ensure the partner can continue to deliver the provision as validated at the University.
- 11.103 The following documentation will be required to be produced for Collaborative Course(s):
- Programme Specification
  - Module Descriptors
  - Draft course handbook
  - Reflective Document
  - Schedule of Changes
  - Teaching Staff details (short CVs)
  - If appropriate an action plan to address enhancements or improvements to the course(s) should be provided.
- 11.104 It is the responsibility of the partner to produce the documentation in accordance with the expected templates, policies and timescales, working closely with the Liaison Tutor and Quality and Standards Office as appropriate. The Panel should normally expect the documentation to be submitted four weeks in advance of the event. The documentation must be signed off by the relevant Associate Head of College prior to submission to the Panel.
- 11.105 The revalidation event Panel will comprise:
- Chair from outside the proposing College(s) from the standing panel;
  - Learning Teaching / Quality Representative from the standing panel;
  - External Subject Adviser;
  - Quality and Standards Adviser.
- 11.106 A meeting with current students (and alumni if available) is an important part of the process.
- 11.107 The Panel will consider the ability of the collaborative partner to continue to deliver the proposed course. The Panel may attach conditions or recommendations, with confirmation and evidence that these conditions have been met being required before formal approval is granted and reported to Academic Council. The panel can determine if the Chair can act on its behalf to consider the response to the conditions/ recommendations.
- 11.108 Re-approval may be:
- without time limit (6 years) approval
  - for a specified period (up to six academic sessions)

- 11.109 Following the conclusion of the revalidation event, the Memorandum of Collaboration will be updated to take into account the outcome of the review process. This will be co-ordinated by Quality and Standards.

## Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)

- 11.110 The College(s), in consultation with the Quality and Standards department, will inform any PSRB which has approved or recognised a course that it is the subject of a collaborative arrangement, of its proposal and of any final agreements, which involve the course. The status of the course in relation to PSRB recognition will be made clear to prospective students through the published course information.

## External Examiners

- 11.111 The University is responsible for the appointment and functions of External Examiners, which will be co-ordinated by the Quality and Standards department. For full details of the External Examiner role and remit, please refer to Section 9 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.

## Certificates and Diploma Supplement

- 11.112 The University will have sole authority for awarding certificates and diploma supplements relating to courses delivered through collaborative arrangements.
- 11.113 The certificate and/or diploma supplement will record the principal language of instruction and assessment, only where this is not English. Where this information is recorded on the diploma supplement only, the certificate should refer to the existence of the diploma supplement.

## Annex 1: Main Categories of Collaborative Provision

- **External Validation:** A course not offered by the University is validated for delivery by a Partner Institution. The course could be designed and developed jointly with the University or wholly by the Partner Institution. The partner institution recruits their own students who must meet the agreed admission and language requirements. In some instances, the partner institution may be granted access to specific University resources and/or facilities for students, subject to conditions and charges. The University is responsible for the standards of awards and quality assurance of the approved provision. Students will receive an award from the University of Westminster
- **Flying Faculty:** A University programme is validated to be delivered or co-delivered by Westminster academic staff, often in block mode, at a partner institution. The University is responsible for the standards of awards and quality assurance of the provision. Students will receive an award from the University of Westminster.
- **Franchise:** The University, as the awarding institution, authorises the whole or part of one of its own validated course(s) for delivery by a Partner Institution. The partner institution recruits their own students who must meet the agreed admission and language requirements. In some instances, the partner institution may be granted access to specific University resources and/or facilities for students, subject to conditions and charges. The University is responsible for the standards of awards and quality assurance of the franchised provision. Students will receive an award from the University of Westminster
- **Dual Award:** The University works with another degree-awarding body to design a programme to include a joint curriculum, which will lead to two separate awards. The awards can be at different levels, e.g. at PhD level this could be an MPhil from one institution and a PhD from the other. The qualifications attest to the successful completion of both programmes, with separate programme outcomes.
- **Double Degree:** The University works with another degree-awarding body to jointly develop and deliver a single programme (either taught or research) leading to separate qualifications (and separate certification) being granted by both institutions. In some cases, the partner can agree to award the same qualification, but to issue a separate certificate. The volume of credit and assessment would be greater than that of a single award.