UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH
ACADEMIC REGISTRY

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES

June 2026

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Summary

What is this document about?

This document sets out the University's policy and standard operating procedures for, and expectations of, collaborative partnerships that lead to an award and/or an award of credit by the University. It sets out the University's sub-contractual, UK and Transnational Education (TNE) collaborative strategies. It details the characteristics of different types of collaborative partnerships; the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing and delivering partnerships; and provides an overview of the different stages of the collaborative partnership lifecycle.

Further information, guidance and supporting documentation can be found at the following university web pages:

- Collaborative Programmes
- Course Approval
- Review Cycle

Who is this for?

This document is primarily for university and partner staff who are or will be engaged in collaborative partnerships. It will also be of interest to our collaborative students, the Office for Students and the wider public.

How does the University check this is followed?

The document is checked through the processes it sets out, and operationally through Academic Registry.

Who to contact if you have any queries about this document?

If you are external to the University and you have any questions about this document, please contact Academic Registry at the following email address: academicregistry@port.ac.uk

1. Introduction

1.1. This document sets out the agreed framework through which the University manages collaborative provision, across all academic levels, of the credit and awards it delivers in partnership with other organisations. Its purpose is to ensure that robust arrangements are in place to underpin the initiation, development, operation and review of collaborative partnership activities, and to affirm that students studying for University of Portsmouth credit and awards, delivered in partnership with others, are of high quality and benefit from an excellent student experience. For more information on the types of collaborative arrangements, please see Taxonomy of Academic Partnerships of the University of Portsmouth

1.2. The University's collaborative partnerships extend the range of learning opportunities available to prospective and current University of Portsmouth students, both within the UK and internationally. These partnerships encompass a diverse set of arrangements designed to deliver mutual benefits, enhancing the student experience, supporting the University's strategic goals, strengthening partner institutions, and contributing positively to the communities in which they operate.

1.3. https://www.port.ac.uk/about-us/our-ambition The Collaborative Partnerships arrangements approved by the University reflect the University Ambition and Strategy. The importance of fruitful and mutually beneficial partnerships is recognised, particularly in facilitating access to higher education, supporting research, curriculum development and enhancement, and reciprocal staff development. All partnerships will be considered for approval in light of their alignment with the University's overarching strategies. Underpinning these strategies are the University's UK and Transnational Education (TNE) strategies, which are articulated below.

UK Collaborative Provision Strategy

The University of Portsmouth (UoP) works with UK partners who share our commitment to widening participation, delivering transformational learning and meeting regional and national skills needs. Partnerships are pursued to provide and enhance student opportunities, employability and progression for our local and regional communities. We select partners that share our values and can provide high-quality, locally accessible or specialist provision. Courses delivered through these partnerships are designed to meet or exceed sector standards and OfS regulatory expectations, enabling students to study close to home or in professional settings while earning a University of Portsmouth award.

UoP Collaborative provision aligns with national and local policy, including post-16 skills

reforms, industrial strategy priorities and Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) for Hampshire and the Solent. Partnerships focus on areas where complementary strengths and employer links address skills gaps and support progression routes. We maintain strategic oversight through rigorous approval, monitoring and review processes to ensure academic standards, student experience and access commitments match on-campus provision. Partnerships are long-term and mutually beneficial, with joint investment in curriculum and staff development. Where arrangements no longer serve students' interests or strategic priorities, we manage change or exit in a controlled way that protects students' ability to complete their studies.

TNE Collaborative Provision Strategy

As part of the University of Portsmouth (UoP)'s Strategy, it establishes international collaborative partnerships to extend the reach and impact of its high-quality education globally. These partnerships are founded on a shared commitment to academic excellence, the enhancement of student opportunity and the development of global graduates.

We select partners whose strategic objectives, values, academic ethos and commitment to student support align with our own. All collaborative provision is developed and delivered to the same rigorous academic standards as our on-campus programmes, ensuring that students receive an equivalent learning experience and a UoP award that is valued worldwide.

Our international partnerships are subject to a robust framework of approval, oversight and review in line with the best practice in the sector including the approach to risk management and due diligence. The management of academic standards, quality of learning and student welfare is undertaken in line with both the UK and host country regulatory requirements and framework. Partnerships are nurtured for long-term, mutual benefit, with a focus on curriculum enhancement and academic collaboration.

Should any arrangement no longer align with our strategic academic goals or fail to uphold our commitments to students, we implement managed changes or exits with a primary focus on protecting the interests of enrolled students and enabling them to complete their studies.

1.4. Collaborative Partnerships will make a substantial, valued, and long-term contribution to the sustainability of the University. Depending on the type of arrangement, a successful partnership, will contribute to the achievement of one or more of the following aims:

- to enhance reputational benefits through association for both the University and its

partners;

- to support both the University's and the partner's contribution to research and innovation;
- to support both the University's and the partner's contribution to civic and global society by contributing to economic growth:
- to provide a strategic response to local, national and international employer or workforce needs;
- raise the educational aspirations of our communities by facilitating and embracing different modes of delivery, through widening access and increasing progression opportunities, and by promoting lifelong learning;
- offer greater opportunities to students in terms of enhanced and varied courses, developing language competence and cultural awareness, and improved employability skills and opportunities;
- develop a global mindset in staff and students through mobility, collaborative projects and other activities that enable learning with and from other cultures;
- enable collaborative contribution to the development of educational and research capacity and capability in emerging economies.

1.5. This Policy document primarily refers to procedural arrangements for subcontracted and validated types of collaborative partnerships. It provides information to university and partner staff involved in the development, operation and review of Collaborative Partnership arrangements, and outlines the requirements for the managerial, contractual and academic oversight elements. By adhering to this document, staff involved in the delivery of partnerships must take shared responsibility for ensuring that the University continues to operate in line with sector-wide expectations and practices, as outlined in the Office for Students' ongoing Conditions of Registration.

1.6. The document includes guidance for partner staff concerning the University's expectations of its partners and the provisions that are required to:

- ensure academic standards and outcomes are maintained in alignment with both the University's and the sector's expectations, ensuring the delivery of high-quality education that meets the regulatory and accreditation requirements;
- benefit from the support that the University offers concerning partner staff development, fostering an equitable, supportive and engaging learning environment

aimed at enhancing teaching and administrative practices;

- ensure that the University continues to be able to discharge its responsibilities to relevant external bodies, maintaining compliance with accreditation bodies and the Office for Students;
- protect the reputation of both the University and its partner in the delivery of Collaborative Partnerships, ensuring consistent delivery of high-quality academic courses that reflect the values and standards of the University.

2. Subcontracting Information Source

2.1 The University meets the OfS expectation for maintaining a Subcontracting Information Source (SIS) through this document which provides up-to-date information on all partnership arrangements, policies, and processes. This Collaborative Partnerships Policy and Procedures, relating to collaborative provision, ensures that staff, partners, and external stakeholders can access authoritative guidance on the approval, management, and review of collaborative provision. By publishing this information, the University demonstrates its commitment to openness, accountability, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

3. University's Expectations of Partners

3.1. The University is responsible for ensuring that the standards of its awards are credible and secure, and that the student experience remains of high quality, irrespective of where or how courses and credits are delivered or by whom. To support this, the University has defined a set of expectations for partner institutions, which will be applied during initial approval and monitored throughout the partnership lifecycle, including contractual renewal and due diligence reviews. These expectations include:

Supporting our mission and strategy by:

- being of good repute and academic or professional standing amongst their peers;
- having a strategic plan and direction complementary to the University's;
- working ambitiously, responsibly and openly, in line with our values.

Offer security and scope for sustainable development of our relationship by:

- demonstrating sound financial management and financial security;
- having the legal capacity to enter into, and deliver against, a contractual arrangement with the University;

- having the resources (learning environment, support structure, facilities, staff) in place to be able to support the partnership arrangement and the learning opportunities being delivered;
- demonstrating their commitment to the partnership and understanding their responsibilities;
- supporting our commitment to an ethical, anti-corruption and equal opportunity culture;
- having mechanisms in place to identify and manage risks arising from subcontractual and other UK and TNE arrangements to protect both students and taxpayers;
- having in place strong governance and oversight structures, with clear lines of responsibility and control;
- working with the University to ensure compliance with OfS ongoing Conditions of Registration.

Actively support our vision to enhance the student experience by:

- having in place appropriate qualified academic and/or professional staff who have the expertise, experience, capability and capacity to deliver to the appropriate standards;
- establishing and maintaining effective staff development processes that promote continuous improvement, inclusive teaching practices, and adherence to the latest pedagogical advancements;
- ensure high standards in recruitment, student attendance, assessment and support;
- recognising the value of, and actively supporting, student engagement in quality assurance processes, ensuring that students' voices are heard, valued and integral to the continuous improvement of the academic courses;
- providing the appropriate environment that prioritises the safety, welfare, and well-being of students and staff, with policies and support mechanisms that promote mental health, physical safety, and overall well-being;
- promoting an inclusive and equitable learning environment where diversity is celebrated, ensuring that all students, regardless of background, are supported to achieve their full potential and are treated with respect and fairness, acknowledging national legal frameworks and cultural considerations;
- embedding inclusive practices in curriculum design, teaching methods, and support services, ensuring that barriers to learning are identified and addressed proactively, recognising that tailored guidance and capacity-building may be required;

- actively contributing to the University's broader goals of fostering global citizenship, social responsibility, and sustainability, ensuring students are prepared to engage with diverse perspectives in an interconnected world.

4. Collaborative Arrangement Types

4.1. Collaborative partners can be based either in the UK or internationally. International partnerships are often referred to as Transnational Education (TNE) partnerships.

4.2. Whilst the list of different collaborative types set out in the Taxonomy of Academic Partnerships of the University of Portsmouth is not exhaustive, as it is recognised that individual partnerships can offer different types of provision tailored to meet the specific needs or circumstances of the arrangement. This section is concerned primarily with the Collaborative Partnerships model, not the classification of its funding type.

4.3. The University requires a contractual agreement to be put in place for the following types of arrangements:

- University credit or award that is delivered by or with a partner organisation in whole or part (often referred to as a Collaborative Partnership);
- Contractual agreements to recognise qualifications at a partner for admission or advanced standing to a university course;
- University student mobility to study at a partner or receive students from a partner institution to study at the University;
- Arrangements that confer Associate College, or Associate Academic Department status;
- An arrangement where the University is the subcontracted partner to another provider.
- A split-site delivery arrangement, typically for research degrees
- Arrangements to explore the discussion of topics with a partner.
- Branch Campus (delivery of a suite of university courses at another campus, only where this involves a partner either for part or all of delivery or support of delivery). A Branch Campus that was 100% owned and delivered by the University would not fall under the ambit of this document as no partner would be involved;
- Support provider (partner provides learner support or facilities to students on a university award, module or course).
- Collaborative Specific Credit (delivery of part of a University of Portsmouth course by a partner, but not a whole course/award)

- Collaborative Credit-bearing Short Course (credits delivered by, or with, a partner)

4.4. Courses and awards delivered with a partner include subcontractual and validation arrangements, which include the following academic types. This Policy document primarily refers to procedural arrangements for these types of collaborative partnership:

Franchise academic type – this includes partner delivery of a course/award, at an external location, which is the same as the delivery of the course/award at the University;

Validated academic type – this includes partner delivery of a course/award, at an external location, which is not delivered or not the same as the course/award at the University;

4.5. Awards involving a partner may include one of the following:

- an award solely by the University of Portsmouth (single award);
- a dual/double award which may lead to both the University and the partner organisation separately conferring their awards;
- a joint award whereby the University and the partner organisation jointly confer a single award.

4.6. For further guidance on arrangements for dual and joint awards, refer to the QAA Characteristics Statement for Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body.

4.7. The Office for Students (OfS) categorises collaborative partnership arrangements involving delivery by a partner into two core groups: **subcontractual** and **validation.**

Sub-contractual Arrangements

4.8. In subcontractual arrangements, the University retains overall responsibility for the course, while delegating certain aspects of teaching, assessment, or support services to the partner (also referred to as the Delivery Provider).

- Included in the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP)

- Funding is typically routed through the University, with a proportion allocated to the partner. The University remains the primary recipient of student tuition fees
- Students can access a student loan via the University, subject to their eligibility/course eligibility
- Applicants apply directly to the University or through UCAS using the University's institutional code
- Students are fully enrolled with the University
- The University bears full responsibility for quality assurance, regulatory compliance, and reporting to the OfS via its external returns
- Usually only for English based partners (possibly others on a case-by-case basis)

Validation Arrangements

4.9. In contrast, validation arrangements involve the University approving a partner's course as meeting the University's academic standards, with the partner responsible for the delivery, while the University maintains oversight to ensure quality and compliance with sector standards.

- The partner usually receives tuition fees directly from the student.
- The University has a separate financial agreement with the partner under a business plan model
- Applicants apply directly to the partner or if applicable, the partner's UCAS institution code
- The partner assumes greater responsibility for operational management, and the University maintains oversight of academic quality and standards through approval, monitoring and review

4.10. Contractual agreements with a partner to recognise qualifications at a partner for admission or advanced standing to a university course include:

- Advanced Standing (non-guaranteed entry to a university course with credit transfer from a partner);
- Articulation (guaranteed entry to a university course with credit transfer from a partner).

4.11. Agreements to facilitate mobility of university students to study at a partner institution

or receive students from a partner institution to study at the University include:

- Student Exchange;
- Study Abroad.

4.12. Arrangement to explore discussion of topics with a partner to implement formal written agreements in future:

- Cooperation agreement.

4.13. The titles of 'Associate College' or 'Associate Academic Department' are conferred by the University on a partner educational, research or practitioner organisation. These arrangements follow the Associate College and Associate Academic Department approval and renewal process and are captured in a contract.

4.14. Although not a partnership type in itself, flying faculty arrangements, whereby university staff travel to deliver at another site, may or may not involve a partner organisation. If the activity depends on the partner's supply of a service, resource or equipment, without which it is impossible or difficult for the student to complete the intended learning outcomes, then typically, a contractual agreement drafted by the University's Partnerships team in Corporate Governance (support provider or service agreement) will be needed with the partner. An exception to the foregoing is if the provision only requires a generic room for an activity to take place, then the Partnerships team will not normally need to draft a contract, and a simple invoice-based booking can be made between the University and the supplier of the room.

4.15. New courses, or proposals to offer arrangements via an alternative mode of study (e.g. the addition of a full-time route to an existing part-time delivery) or alternative methods of delivery (e.g. change of campus-based to block delivery or distance learning), will need to be considered via the relevant course approval or modification process.

4.16. Degree Apprenticeships (DA) may involve the University working as a Lead Provider with a partner to subcontract parts of the taught provision to a partner. The University may also work as a subcontractor to another Lead Provider's DA. In addition to the University's Collaborative Partnerships and course approval processes, all DAs must be conducted according to the Department for Education (DfE) rules as set out in its grant

to the University (or the DfE grant to the partner if the University is a subcontractor). The DfE has to approve the arrangements and the partners in advance of delivery of the DA and must specify the amount and nature of the subcontracting.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Governance

5.1.1. Collaborative Partnerships are a formal, contractual relationship between the University and the partner organisation. Whilst individual members of staff can initiate and liaise with colleagues regarding negotiating a contractual agreement, they alone cannot approve the arrangement.

5.1.2. Approval is a collective decision taken in line with the University's strategic plans, quality assurance, contractual and financial processes. Only individuals with the authority to sign contracts (also referred to as an Agreement) on the University's behalf may do so, and a contract must be signed based on an independent approval process. Formal oversight, approval, and review of partnerships are enacted through the University's corporate and academic governance structures. More about our structures, Board of Governors and Academic Committees can be found at: Organisational Structure | University of Portsmouth

5.2. Funding and Fees

5.2.1. Funding arrangements for subcontractual arrangements (irrespective of academic type) are set by the University and communicated to collaborative partners. Student targets and fees are agreed with each College or provider and leading faculty under guidance set by the University's Tuition Fees and Scholarships Group.

5.3. Professional Services Support

5.3.1. The University has a well-embedded organisational structure in place for the management and support of partnerships, which includes formal committees (governance), academic faculties and schools, and professional services. Proposals for new partnerships may be initiated through strategic opportunities identified at the University Executive level, or through school and faculty activities.

5.3.2. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education Partnerships) have responsibility for the strategic development of our Collaborative Partnerships, internationally and in the UK, respectively.

5.3.3. Business development activities and opportunity leads are also typically supported by Associate Deans, other global leads appointed in faculties, Heads of Schools. The Strategic Transnational Partnerships Office (STPO) and the Institute for Professional and Flexible Learning (IPFL) supports transnational education partnership and UK retrospectively, development and operation, particularly in terms of partner liaison.

5.3.4. The ongoing quality and operational management of our partnerships is typically fulfilled by Associate Deans and/or Heads of School (with their designated Academic Contacts). Some larger, more complex partner arrangements will necessitate operational groups (see section 5.11) to coordinate the various activities.

5.4. Academic Registry

5.4.1. Academic Registry offers a central point of contact for advice and guidance regarding all aspects of the national regulatory frameworks governing collaborative partnerships, and the quality of the collaborative student experience and outcome, this includes: course and partnership approval, and all aspects of annual monitoring and review of collaborative partnerships. This also includes keeping the partner and university staff informed on relevant university policy changes.

5.5. Strategic Transnational Partnership Office (STPO)

5.5.1. The Strategic Transnational Partnerships Office (STPO) evaluates, and where appropriate, develops potential TNE partnerships, provides detailed institution-level research for colleagues and collaborates across the University to ensure effective engagement and support of projects. Additionally, the STPO supports and manages incoming delegation visits to Portsmouth and coordinates visits to current and prospective partners abroad.

5.5.2. The Global Mobility Team (GMT) coordinates all student mobility activities at the University of Portsmouth, working closely with academic faculty and school staff liaison, providing administrative and operational support for international programmes such as study abroad

placements, dual degrees, and summer schools. The team manages UK Turing Scheme (and from 2027, Erasmus+) funding, serving as the primary source of information on financial support for UoP students. In addition, the team ensures compliance with programme requirements, supports students throughout the mobility process, and maintains partnerships with institutions worldwide.

5.6. Institute for Professional and Flexible Learning (IPFL)

5.6.1. The Institute for Professional and Flexible Learning (IPFL) is overseen by the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education Partnerships (APVCEP) and is managed on an operational basis by the Director of Work Integrated Leaning and Business Development. The Institute is primarily established to provide a bridge between business, and the work of the APVCEP in his engagement with UK education partners alongside its own business development and delivery activity, which includes but is not limited to FE colleges, sixth forms, schools/academies, and private education providers.

5.7. Corporate Governance

5.7.1. The Partnerships Team in Corporate Governance are responsible for the management of, and drafting of, contracts with appropriate advice sought from the University Solicitor, Executive Director of Corporate Governance, external legal counsel as appropriate, and/or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global Engagement and Student Life, Executive Deans and other faculty stakeholders, and securing relevant sign-off.

5.8. Academic Services

5.8.1. Academic Services support academic schools and courses across their lifecycle. Responsibilities lie with various teams across their Central, Cross Faculty Support Office (CFSO) or Service Centres.

5.8.2. Academic Services ensure students are registered on the University's student records system, and maintenance of the student's record and their achievements as appropriate to the type of partnership;

- Ensuring student status (i.e. withdrawals, study break/interruption, transfer, amendments) are correctly recorded;
- For partnerships where the partner pays a proportion of the fees it collects from the

student to the University, invoicing;

- Liaising with partner administrative staff, university and partner academic contacts as required;
- Undertaking administrative duties in supporting academic teams in the marking/moderation of assessments, where required, and input of marks into the University's student record system;
- External Examiner liaison, administrative duties concerning Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies, as appropriate to the partner arrangements;
- Producing award transcripts and parchments for university awards and verifying these.

5.8.3. The Cross-Faculty Support Office (CFSO) provides a comprehensive service supporting student and academic administration for most of the courses delivered by a partner under academic partnership agreements. The team handles various activities, including curriculum management, student records management, assessment coordination, examination boards, progression, and awards. In addition, the CFSO responds to student and academic queries and signposts partners to key university services. The CFSO provide the University Administrative Contact(s) for partners (see 5.15).

5.8.4. Education courses are administered by the Faculty Administrative Services Centres (FASCs).

5.9. Faculty and School Support

5.9.1. Faculty and school members play a critical role in managing collaborative partnerships, ensuring alignment with the Collaborative Partnerships document and relevant university policies. Responsibilities include implementing quality assurance measures, engaging with due diligence, and overseeing course approval and modification processes, including input into business planning. They review and comment on contracts in consultation with the Corporate Governance team and participate in the evaluation and development of partnerships. Faculties must ensure partnership management is embedded in faculty and school-level academic committees so that they can monitor the quality of education provision along with the student experience and outcomes. They are also responsible for allocating staff and resources, keeping the partner informed on relevant university changes, delivering training for partners on university policies, and sharing best practices to address common challenges, all to maintain a high-quality student experience. More details can be found at the University's Academic Roles and Responsibilities. (also see 5.15)

5.10. Recruitment, Marketing and Communications

5.10.1. The Recruitment, Marketing and Communications department provide support and guidance to collaborative partnerships and the level of this may vary depending on the contract arrangements and type. The Admissions team advise on process and entry requirements and where subcontracted arrangements work with faculties, schools and partners in processing applications and offer making in line with university admissions policies. For validated partnership admissions, marketing provide advice and guidance to support partners as required under agreed contract arrangements.

5.11. Finance

5.11.1. The Department of Finance are responsible for providing support in developing financial models with appropriate advice sought from Corporate Governance, external financial advisors such as tax and audit when appropriate, and/or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global Engagement and Student Life, Executive Deans and other faculty stakeholders, and ensuring financial governance is followed. The department is responsible for ensuring that financial budgeting and reporting is accurate, debt is managed and partnership financial arrangements are reviewed regularly.

5.12. Library

5.12.1. The University Library supports collaborative partnerships by ensuring students and staff have appropriate access to high quality learning resources whether delivered on campus, online or at partner locations. This includes providing access to permitted digital collections, guidance on licensing and copyright compliance and support for resource discovery through the Library's platforms. The Library also advises partners on reading list development, information literacy, academic referencing, and the effective use of scholarly materials. The nature and extent of Library support to students varies according to the partnership model and contractual commitments.

5.13. Information Services (LIS)

5.13.1. Information Services enables collaborative partnerships by providing secure, reliable access to the University's approved digital platforms and systems. This includes digital identity and access

management, digital communication tools and adherence to information governance, cybersecurity and data protection requirements in collaboration with the Corporate Governance Team. IS works with partners to ensure that digital provision aligns with University policy and regulatory obligations, supporting system integration, technical assurance and the effective use of institutional technologies. The nature and extent of IS support varies according to the partnership model and contractual commitments.

5.14. Student Services

5.14.1. The Student Services department provides a comprehensive range of support to University of Portsmouth students including Student Wellbeing, Disability Advice, Student Life, Residence Life, Student Money, International Student Advice, Chaplaincy and the Student Centre (MyPort). Student Services also leads cross-institutional workstreams including Safeguarding, Prevent, suicide prevention, sexual misconduct, student safety, and EDI initiatives.

Student Services staff can provide advice to colleagues at Partner Institutions to support and enable the effective delivery and governance of support services.

5.15. Partnership Operations Group

5.15.1. Once a partnership is approved, for cross-faculty arrangements or arrangements that are particularly complex or large in provision, an appropriately constituted partnership operations group, or similarly titled, may be formed with staff from the University and the Partner to coordinate the operation of the partnership across different subject areas, and/or faculties as the case may be, to ensure consistency and equity across the partnership on an ongoing basis. The Collaborative Partnerships Governance Structure (available internally) captures the various partnership operational groups.

5.16. University Academic Contacts

5.16.1. At a course level, and for partnerships developed at a school rather than a multi-faculty level, the University Academic Contact in the school is the first line of contact for the partner's academic contact and is responsible for the day-to-day oversight, quality assurance and enhancement, and health of the partnership arrangement for academic issues, and offers

support for the student experience. In some arrangements, the term Link Tutor can be used instead of Academic Contact. The Academic Contact Role Description is available at: University Academic Contact. This role is responsible for ensuring the partner fulfils their obligations with respect to the university's policies and processes, ensuring students obtain a high quality student experience and oversees and support all quality assurance activities throughout an academic year.

5.16.2. The Head of School ensures that the University Academic Contact has sufficient time allocated to the staff workload to undertake this role.

5.16.3. The University Academic Contact is supported in their role by the Cross-Faculty Support Office/Academic Service Centre(s), Associate Deans, Heads of School, Executive Deans, and where appropriate to the provision, Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research (FDPGR) and STPO. More details about these academic roles can be found at the University's Academic Roles and Responsibilities.

5.16.4. For each strategic (multi-faculty, multidiscipline partnership), an Academic Lead is appointed to act as the main lead for the partnership, providing essential oversight of partnership at institutional and strategic level which is in addition to the Academic Contact role.

5.17. University Administrative Contacts

5.17.1. The University Administrative Contact (UAC), staff member, is a key administrative liaison point between the academic staff in the University and the partner, and the administrative staff at both institutions. This role supports the core partnership administrative functions relating to the student's journey. Specific activities may vary from partner to partner and are detailed in the dedicated Collaborative Operational Handbook for the partnership.

5.18. Partner Staff

5.18.1. Partner staff who are involved in the delivery or support of the partnership provision should be in place before delivery commences, and CVs of all staff who will be involved in the delivery forms part of the formal approval and review documentation.

5.18.2. The roles of Partner Academic Contact and Partner Administrative Contact should be those as mirrored at the University and it is the responsibility of the University Academic Contact and if

cross-faculty or cross-department, the University Academic Lead and schools to ensure the Partner Contacts are clear on their respective roles and responsibilities. Specific details of these activities are confirmed in the Collaborative Operational Handbook document for each partnership arrangement.

5.18.3. The University ensures that all partner staff teaching or providing academic support to students on a course delivered by the partner are adequately qualified and experienced to do so. This is achieved through the Partner Associate Lecturer (PAL) Scheme which formally recognises and approves staff employed by the partner to teach or provide academic support on partnership courses. PAL accounts are set up for 12 months and must be renewed annually, with approvals and renewals being confirmed by the University Academic Contact and the Associate Dean (Academic). University Academic Contact will work closely with the Partner Academic Contact to have oversight of current partner teaching staff. Guidance on PAL process can be found on the Academic Registry, Collaborative Programmes website.

5.18.4. A PAL is typically in a lecturing role at the partner institution and contributes to the delivery and/or support of the partnership course. PALs are entitled to a variety of benefits provided by the University including staff development opportunities and access to various online library resources (where licences permit). PAL status does not constitute any form of legally binding contract of employment between the named PAL and the University.

5.18.5. More detailed information on the roles and responsibilities for collaborative arrangements leading to a university award are set out in the partner specific collaborative operational handbook.

5.19. Partner Staff Development for Staff Teaching on a University Course or Award

5.19.1. The University's commitment to supporting staff to Teach Well and Consistently Well also applies to collaborative partners.

5.19.2. For partners, where practicable, the University will offer partnership staff the opportunity to develop their professional knowledge and personal skills.

5.19.3. The University offers a varied range of academic seminars and workshops, consultancy services, professional development events and advice on a wide range of academic areas, specifically tailored for university partners and more details can be found on the Support for Partner Staff website. Partners are expected to support their staff in accessing development opportunities, where possible, to ensure the effective and efficient management and operation of the partnership. It is acknowledged that the distance of some overseas partners presents challenges for providing staff development, and thus opportunities for providing partner staff development during staff visits, or the use of technology, should be exploited. Staff development activities should be costed for those partnerships that require a business plan.

5.19.4. The University will consider all staff curricula vitae, staff development plans, partner staff development policies, and details of partner staff engagement at teaching at the Higher Education (HE) level through the different stages of the course approval process. The Periodic Review also considers staff development activities undertaken by partner staff since approval/ preceding review, including those offered by the University.

5.19.5. It is recognised that additional staff development, mentoring or supervision may be required for those partner staff who are less experienced in delivering HE-level courses, and who will be involved in formative or summative assessment.

5.19.6. The University's school and faculty should work with the partner to ensure that appropriate training, briefing and mentoring is provided to those partner staff, to ensure their competence to undertake the necessary roles and responsibilities, and that assessment is robust. The requirements should be tailored to the nature of the arrangement.

5.19.7. Partner staff contributing to research supervision are approved by the University during the admissions process for postgraduate research degrees. Appropriate training in University of Portsmouth supervision processes and responsibilities is provided via the Graduate School Supervisory Workshops.

5.19.8. The University, through the Centre for Academic Development and Innovation (CADI) also offers partner staff the opportunity to engage with online resources, training and study guides in essential skills, supporting the adoption of appropriate approaches and assessment. Online training modules include planning and enhancing student learning, assessment feedback and marking, and evaluation of practice.

5.20. Management and Support of Student Exchange and Outbound Study Abroad

5.20.1. Student mobility is overseen by the Global Mobility team in STPO and coordinated at the faculty level by Associate Heads (Global Engagement/Partnerships) or Global Engagement Office (BAL). Work placement activities overseas are coordinated by Faculty Placement offices.

5.20.2. The University and the partner, each as 'home' and 'host' to students, as the case may be, have a duty of care to students undertaking a student exchange or other mobility between the respective institutions. The University must ensure that an adequate risk assessment is carried out before the activity takes place, including establishing appropriate insurance requirements, immigration and, and that students are aware of the risks of studying in the host country before they embark on their mobility. An appropriate written contract must be signed between the University and the partner before the exchange or outbound study abroad can take place.

5.21. Student Voice

5.21.1. As registered students of the University, students automatically have associate member status of the University of Portsmouth Students' Union.

5.21.2. The University expects all partners to provide students with formal mechanisms to provide feedback on their learning experience and to promote and support a student representation system. Whilst there may be agreed partner variation in student feedback and representation processes, the principles set out in the University's Student Voice Policy should be applied.

6. Partnership lifecycle

6.1. Establishing a new partnership - Consultation

6.1.1. Proposals may come from within a faculty or school, or from senior executives. Before undertaking any formal approval processes, the person wishing to initiate a Collaborative Partnerships the proposer or nominated individual(s) must discuss this with appropriate stakeholders within the faculty and university to establish appetite, feasibility, alignment and strategic fit for the proposal. At the earliest opportunity in discussions with potential new collaborative partners, University staff leading on the discussion should ask the partner to complete and return a New Partner Collaborative Course Proposal Questionnaire to help support development discussions. For potential TNE partners, a Memoranda of Understanding is initially put in place between the University and the potential partner whilst discussion and proposals develop (see 6.2.6 for further details).

6.1.2. The proposal should be discussed with the contracts team in Corporate Governance and the quality team in the Academic Registry to ensure that the University is aware of proposals from the very beginning and to advise on approval processes and stakeholder consultation.

6.1.3. During the discussions of planning a new partnership that is significant in terms of scale and/or complexity, the University Executive Board (UEB) would receive early proposal papers and regular updates. UEB would seek to inform and gain approval from the University Strategy , Transformation and Resources Committee (USTaRC) or the Board of Governors, as appropriate depending on the size and type of partnership. The levels of approval can be found in the Scheme of Delegation.

6.2. Approval of Partnership Provision

6.2.1. For partnerships that involve the setup of a new course awarded by the University (the course being delivered by a partner), Academic Registry manages the University's Portfolio Approval, Modification and Closure Policy by supporting Portfolio Approval, Modifications and Closures within the course lifecycle. These processes include all award-bearing collaborative courses. Course and partnership approval are underpinned by a structured strategic portfolio approval cycle. The process is designed to be strategic, robust, supportive, inclusive, and where necessary, flexible. The overall structure of the process revolves around three distinct gateways, serving as

pivotal points to guide the approval process. These are:

- Strategic Approval Gateway
- Marketing and Admissions Approval Gateway
- Curriculum Approval Gateway

This section highlights the key elements for collaborative partnerships.

6.2.2. Strategic Approval Gateway

The Strategic Approval Gateway comprises three key elements: strategic consideration and planning of the University-wide academic portfolio, the approval of individual courses and collaborative partnerships, and confirmation of the financial viability and availability of resources necessary to support the proposal. These elements are conducted through the University Portfolio Approval Group (UPAG). UPAG is also responsible for evaluating individual course and partnership proposals and providing strategic approval for their implementation. By granting strategic approval, UPAG ensures that each course and partnership proposal contributes to the broader goals of the University. Resources Approval confirmation is submitted to UPAG as part of the strategic approval. The Resources confirmation is designed to be led by the faculty and is focused on assessing the financial viability and availability of resources necessary to support the proposal. These discussions must include how existing resources can be redirected to support the new proposal. It considers the recruitment targets set as part of the Strategic Approval Gateway and aligns with the intended teaching, learning and delivery strategy for the course and/or partnership.

6.2.3. Marketing and Admissions Approval Gateway

The Marketing and Admissions Gateway is an administrative Gateway to gather the information required to correctly set up the course within the University's systems. The course will not be marketed until this has been completed.

6.2.4. Due Diligence Activities for New Arrangements

The University undertakes a rigorous due diligence process before launching new collaborative courses and partnerships to ensure that academic standards, financial probity, and regulatory compliance are maintained. This process includes an initial risk assessment report to the University Portfolio Approval Group (UPAG), with oversight from the Executive Director of Corporate Governance. This reviews the partner's legal status, governance structures, financial stability, strategic alignment, and any social or political risks. Following initial strategic approval at UPAG and

prior to Curriculum Gateway, the Quality Due Diligence Assessment takes place. The focus is on academic and student experience, covering the proposed learning environment, staffing qualifications and experience, student and external feedback and reporting, assessment of the partner's policies and practices.

Risk assessments are documented and reviewed through the Portfolio Approval process, supported by specialist input from Academic Registry, Corporate Governance, and Finance. These activities culminate in a formal Curriculum Approval Gateway, which includes a partner site visit to assess the learning environment, and to meet with staff and students, ensuring that all identified risks are mitigated and that the partnership can operate in line with sector-wide expectations and the Office for Students' regulatory requirements.

Guidance and forms are available via the Course Lifecycle website and Quality Officers will provide the latest form templates within the approval drive.

6.2.5. Curriculum/Partner Approval Gateway

Preparations for the Curriculum/Partner Approval Gateway can commence at any stage, but it is recommended that the earliest point is after the Strategic Approval Gateway. The Curriculum/Partner Approval Gateway will typically consist of a panel review to allow for both partner and course scrutiny in line with the University's Quality Assurance processes.
Approval of a new collaborative partnership, or a new site for an existing partner, requires a partner site visit and a report from the site visit would be included in the panel documentation.
Further detail and support for this process can be found within the Portfolio Approval Process Guidance document and on the Academic Registry webpage**.**
Where additional approval or accreditation is required from any external body, it is the responsibility of the relevant university school/faculty to ensure that formal approval is sought, and any conditions made by external bodies are met before the University's approval process is finalised. Subject to the requirements of external bodies, it may be appropriate for them to have input into the formal university approval and/or review process, which could include a presence on the panel or additional documentation for submission for approval and/or review. The school should therefore ensure that effective liaison is undertaken with the relevant body/bodies at an appropriate early stage to ensure that the University's approval and/or review processes may be completed promptly. Any reports and/or action plans produced by

external bodies, or to meet their requirements, need to be provided to the Academic Registry for formal submission to the University Education and Student Experience Committee (UESEC). The school/faculty should also keep appraised of any ongoing requirements set by the external body and the status of any formal recognition should be made clear to the partner and prospective students. Guidance on providing documentation and information for external bodies can be sought from the Academic Registry. The school/faculty is responsible for advising the Academic Registry regarding any prospective or agreed changes to external body requirements, particularly where these have the potential to impact academic standards or the quality of students' learning opportunities.

6.2.6. Approval of Articulation, Student Exchange and Support Provision

Arrangements that do not require the setup of a new university course, but involve arrangements such as student exchange, articulation, or support provision then there is a two-step process to approve the arrangement, as follows:
A Memoranda Strategic Approval (MSA) form is completed by the proposer, signed off by the ADG/ADGEEP or Head of UoP Global, and submitted via the partnerships team in Corporate Governance to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life). If the MSA is approved, then a Memoranda Approval Form (MAF) will need completing for the appropriate arrangement.
A MAF01 is completed for Articulation arrangements. For new partners, the MAF01 is submitted for approval by UPAG. Amendments to existing partners are not submitted to UPAG. A MAF03 is completed for Student Exchange partners. A MAF04 is completed for Support Provider and Collaborative Specific Credit arrangements. For Split Site PhD provision, a Split Site PGR Proposal form and checklist are completed. The guidance for these forms is provided on eRecords (included in the above links).

6.3. Contractual arrangements

6.3.1. The contractual agreements that lead to, or involve, an award or credit of the University are drafted and managed by the Partnerships team in Corporate Governance. Contracts for the supply of services around innovation, research, knowledge transfer, and development of learning materials by a partner that do not lead to, or involve, an award or credit of the University are typically drafted and managed by the RI Legal team also in Corporate Governance.

6.3.2. All partnerships, within the scope of this document, between the University and a partner are subject to a formal fixed-term contractual agreement which sets out the responsibilities and obligations of each partner. The contract assures that the parties understand and agree to undertake their respective responsibilities. The form of agreement will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the partnership and will vary according to the scope, coverage and the intended outcomes of the partnership. The activities contemplated under the contract must be agreed in writing and signed by the authorised signatory of the parties involved before the activities can commence.

6.3.3. Contractual agreements are drafted in liaison with the relevant faculty and/or school, and other university stakeholders such as members of the University Executive Board (UEB), Planning, Finance Department, Academic Registry, University Solicitor, as applicable, and discussions and negotiations with the partner.

6.3.4. Contractual agreements between the University and the partner must include details of any financial arrangements that may apply to the activity. Where financial arrangements apply, appropriate and proportional considerations must be given to the following:

- financial due diligence is undertaken periodically to establish the partner's financial probity, currency and taxation risk if overseas, and other financial and reputational risks to the University;
- appropriate business planning is undertaken before the activity commences to establish the expenditure and income;
- the periodic review and re-evaluation of business planning is undertaken by the University / Faculty to ensure that the activities are, and continue to be, correctly costed.

6.3.5. In addition to the above, where the activity involves partner delivery of a university award and is conducted on a full economic cost basis:

- credit checks are undertaken periodically by the University to monitor financial and credit risk;
- direct and indirect costs to the University are evaluated and understood;
- business plans are formulated in consultation with internal stakeholders and the Finance Department, agreed and signed off by the Head of School, Executive Dean of Faculty, or UEB;

- email confirmation from the Finance Department to signify that the proposal has been considered by the business partner for the relevant faculty;
- invoicing arrangements are established with the partner.

The Finance business partner for the relevant Faculty can advise anon the appropriate business planning methodology for other arrangements.

6.3.6. Once agreed, both partners sign and execute the formal agreement before the partnership commences, and where applicable to a university award, before any students are registered on a course and/or award. These agreements assure that each party:

- understands the other party's requirements, particularly the University's requirements where an award of the University is involved;
- agrees to fulfil its responsibilities and obligations to the other party;
- understand the specific details of the educational or support activities and an overview of the management and administrative arrangements relating to the University and the partner.

6.3.7. The only persons permitted to accept (i.e. sign) a contractual agreement that bind the University are set out in the University's Financial Regulations.

6.3.8. Signed (executed) contractual agreements are held centrally on the University's eRecords system - this is done by the Partnerships team in Corporate Governance. The parties exchange electronic copies of the signed contractual agreement for each other's records.
The signing process is typically organised by the Partnerships team.

6.3.9. Contractual agreements contain a standard clause relating to re-negotiation and/or extension. The contractual agreement renewal process is initiated and managed by the Partnerships team and in discussion with the relevant senior managers and other university colleagues, as appropriate.

6.4. Collaborative Operational Handbook and Partnership Roles and Responsibilities

6.4.1. The Collaborative Operational Handbook is a definitive digital document that sets out in detail the operational arrangements of both parties in support of the partnership and delivery of the

course(s). It is produced for individual partnerships that involve delivery or research supervision of a university award (in part or in full) by a partner organisation, and as such, should be discussed and agreed with the partner. It is initially produced as part of the documentation requirements for the collaborative course approval process. Operational arrangements for cross-faculty, extensive or complex partnerships should be captured consistently across the partnership. It is also advised that a more detailed roles and responsibilities checklist is produced.

6.4.2. Noting that partnerships evolve, it is important that key operational documents evolve accordingly. As a definitive document supporting the management of a partnership, the Collaborative Operational Handbook should be reviewed annually and updated accordingly, to ensure reflects the complexity and nature of the changing arrangements, and ongoing operational enhancement, audit/inspection arrangements and best practice. Templates for Collaborative Operational Handbooks are made available at Collaborative Programmes | Academic Registry | University of Portsmouth

6.5. Annual Monitoring of Partnership Arrangements

6.5.1. The annual monitoring and review of collaborative partnerships is a core component of the University's quality assurance framework and is designed to ensure that all courses under subcontracted and validated provision meets sector-wide expectations and regulatory requirements. This process provides robust oversight of academic standards, the quality of learning opportunities, and the delivery of positive outcomes for students studying through partnership arrangements. Monitoring activities are risk-based and proportionate, focusing on areas such as student achievement, continuation, progression, and satisfaction, as well as compliance with the Office for Students' ongoing conditions of registration, including the proposed E10 requirements for subcontractual arrangements.

6.5.2. The University evaluates quality collaboratively, engaging both university and partner staff in the review process to ensure transparency and shared responsibility for enhancement. Annual monitoring draws on comprehensive data and evidence, including student performance metrics, external examiner reports, student voice feedback, and partner self-assessment. Where risks or areas for improvement are identified, targeted action plans are agreed and monitored through formal governance structures.

6.5.3. Our approach to assuring standards and driving continuous improvement is:

- Data-informed – using robust evidence to inform decisions and interventions.
- Transparent – ensuring clarity of process and accountability for outcomes.
- Risk-based – prioritising oversight where the potential impact on students is greatest.
- Proportionate – tailoring requirements to the scale and complexity of the partnership.
- Timely – responding quickly to emerging issues to protect students' interests.
- Action-focused – ensuring that monitoring leads to measurable improvements.
- Inclusive – involving partners and students in shaping enhancements.

6.5.4. From the 2025/26 academic year onwards, the University will produce a dedicated annual Collaborative Partnership Report, providing a comprehensive analysis of the performance, risks, and enhancements across all subcontracted and validated provision. This report will be submitted to the University Education and Student Experience Committee (UESEC) for formal oversight and assurance. Prior to this point, monitoring and evaluation of collaborative provision has been embedded within the overarching University Annual Monitoring Report, ensuring that partnership activity has been considered as part of the institution-wide quality assurance processes.

6.5.5. Quality Priority Plans (QPPs) are used as a mechanism to capture good practice and prioritise actions for improvement. Collaborative Partners will be supported to complete the equivalent course-based partner QPPs for all courses as detailed in the Annual Monitoring and Academic Review Policy and Operational Handbook. Depending on the courses delivered by the partner, grouping of courses may be agreed with the Associate Dean (Academic). All partners will be required to maintain quality assurance monitoring on an annual basis.

6.5.6. Where a subcontractual arrangement course is identified for Academic Review as part of the annual monitoring and reporting, the Academic Review policy and process is followed as outlined within the Annual Monitoring and Academic Review Policy and Operational Handbook.

6.6. Continuous Due Diligence and Risk Assessment

6.6.1. Academic Registry maintains a dedicated ongoing Quality Risk Register for all subcontracted and validated collaborative provision. This register captures and evaluates key quality risks ,

including academic standards, student outcomes, compliance with regulatory requirements, and operational performance. It forms part of the University's wider risk management framework and is submitted quarterly to Corporate Governance for oversight and assurance. Where urgent or significant risks are identified, these will be escalated immediately to relevant internal stakeholders including the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Executive Director of Corporate Governance to ensure timely intervention and mitigation.

6.6.2. Internal audits take place to provide the assurance that the University's risk management, governance and internal control processes are operating effectively. In line with the annual areas identified, collaborative partnerships are involved, as and where appropriate. Further information can be found at Internal Audit | Corporate Governance | University of Portsmouth.

6.7. University Staff Membership on Partner's Board of Governors

6.7.1. University staff may, from time to time, take on roles as members of a Board of Governors or Trustees at external education providers delivering University of Portsmouth courses and awards under a collaborative agreement

6.7.2. Any member of staff wishing to accept such a role, either with an existing partner or with an organisation seeking approval as a new partner, must first discuss the proposed appointment with the Executive Director of Corporate Governance. This is to ensure that any actual or potential conflicts of interest are identified and appropriately managed prior to accepting the position.

6.8. Partnership Review

6.8.1. The University is committed to ensuring that all collaborative courses are successful, sustainable, and compliant with regulatory requirements. To achieve this, every sub-contractual and validated UK or transnational collaborative award-bearing course and partnership is subject to a formal Collaborative Course and Partnership Review (CCPR). These reviews provide a rigorous evaluation of academic standards, student outcomes, and operational effectiveness, ensuring that provision delivered through partners meets the same high-quality expectations as on-campus delivery. CCPRs are scheduled on a default five-year cycle, aligned with and preceding any contractual renewal, to provide assurance that partnerships remain strategically aligned, financially viable, and educationally robust. The

CCPR process includes, where necessary, a partner site visit to review the learning environment and meet with students and staff. Where risks or areas for improvement are identified, targeted action plans are agreed and monitored through formal governance structures. Full details of the CCPR process are set out in the Collaborative Partnership Review Guidance document.

6.8.2. Scheduling of reviews may be brought forward, and or specific audits may be undertaken, if there is evidence to suggest there is a concern with the partnership arrangements, the curriculum, and/or the student experience. Periodic reviews of partnerships and courses can also be rescheduled or combined if there are benefits to the partner and/or the University to schedule the review alongside otherprocesses, such as combining with PSRB events or combining reviews for partner and home equivalent courses.

6.8.3. Academic Registry maintains a register of periodic review activity and produces the review schedule for all courses, confirming the schedule for each Faculty with the Associate Dean (Academic) annually.

6.8.4. Student Protection Plans will be implemented wherever there are concerns or risks that could seriously impact the student experience or outcomes. Partnerships identified as high-risk or subject to special review may be suspended or terminated if the University determines that academic standards or student interests are at risk. Where a decision to suspend or terminate is taken, the University will ensure robust teach-out arrangements are in place, aiming to safeguard the quality of learning and assessment for all affected students and enabling them to complete the requirements for their award – depending on the circumstances this may take different forms under the Student Protection Plan. Clear communication plans will be agreed with partners to keep students informed and supported throughout the process.

6.9. Reviewing Partnership Contractual Arrangements

6.9.1. For partnerships that involve the delivery of a course that leads to a university award, the effectiveness of the contractual arrangements is reviewed before contract renewal; this is in addition to the annual and periodic quality assurance review processes that apply to the partnership and courses or awards. Before the renewal, the Partnerships team produces a paper containing information about key performance areas which is provided to the Faculty Executive

and copied to the relevant Deputy-Vice Chancellor to assist the renewal decision.

6.9.2. Other types of contractual agreements follow a renewal process (part of the approval paperwork) that is dependent on the nature and risk of the activity. The renewal process requires that the effectiveness of the arrangement is considered and documented on the paperwork and forms part of the Faculty or University's decision to renew.

6.10. Closing Courses and Ending Partnership Arrangements

6.10.1. In line with the University's Portfolio Approval, Modification and Closure Policy, course(s) delivered at or with a collaborative partner will need to be considered for closure at the University Portfolio Approval Group (UPAG) by submitting a Closure Form. The closure form and guidance on the closure process can be found on Academic Registry's Course Lifecycle webpages.

6.10.2. A Collaborative Teach Out Student Protection Plan (Teach Out SPP) must be completed and submitted to Academic Registry via the collab-qa@port.ac.uk email account along with the closure form to UPAG or at the point a course closure is known (whichever is the earliest).

6.10.3. Depending on the length of the teach out period, subsequent versions of the Teach Out SPP form may need to be completed containing any subsequently agreed changes to the plan and submitted to collab-qa@port.ac.uk.

6.10.4. When it comes to terminating a partnership arrangement, regardless of the reason, both the University and the partner have a duty of care to students undertaking studies leading to a university award, delivered at or with a collaborative partner.

6.10.5. The particular arrangements for ending a partnership will depend on the circumstances, the agreement reached with the partner, and for UK-based partners, the University's Student Protection Plan submitted to the OfS. Where university awards are delivered by or with a partner, the University's contractual agreements contain run-out clauses with either teach-out or run-out arrangements to enable students to complete their studies if either organisation wishes to end the arrangement.

6.10.6. A closure form, must be completed to cover the course(s) and partnership closure and follows the closure process detailed above with submission to UPAG and completion of the Collaborative

Teach Out Student Protection Plan (SPP) form, submitted to collab-qa@port.ac.uk. Further guidance and support can be found on Academic Registry's Collaborative Programme website

6.10.7. The University will work with the partner to ensure that students registered on a university award can complete their course, including any referral assessments and repeat opportunities. The University will agree on a supportive student communication strategy for students registered at a partner studying for a university award. The communication strategy reassures students that the University and the collaborative partner are committed to teaching the course, supporting the students throughout and communicating the final date for completion of referrals/repeat modules.

Annex 1: The University's Obligations to External Bodies

1.1 The Office for Students

1.1.1 The Office for Students (OfS) is the statutory regulator for English higher education provision. It regulates the sector on behalf of all students, in line with its published regulatory framework. As an English higher education provider, the University of Portsmouth is subject to the requirements set out in the OfS regulatory framework. The priorities of the OfS are as follows:

- Helping students get into and succeed in higher education;
- Helping students stay informed;
- Making sure that students get a high-quality education that prepares them for the future;
- Protecting students' interests.

1.1.2 The University of Portsmouth is required to maintain registration with the OfS to be able to:

- Where appropriate, access public grant funding (such as funding to support teaching), and/or student support funding (such as enabling our home students to access student finance);
- Operate under a Home Office licence, which enables recruitment of international students (those students that are not UK nationals or do not have leave to remain in the UK);
- Maintain degree-awarding powers and University title.

1.1.3 UK-based partner organisations wishing to provide international students with visa clearance to join courses at the UK National Qualification Framework level 3 or above will also need to be registered with the OfS if they wish to apply for or maintain a Home Office Tier 4 licence.

1.2 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

1.2.1 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is world leading agency providing impartial regulatory and collaborative quality assurance and enhancement to the UK Higher

Education and beyond in the quality of, and standards applied to, higher education worldwide.

1.2.2 The QAA publishes the UK Quality Code, which sets out principles for standards and quality of UK higher education. The principles and practices outlined in the UK Quality Code capture structured ways that promote and support effective management of quality and standards, and which underpin the delivery of positive outcomes for students.

1.2.3 The University of Portsmouth's systems and processes are designed to reflect and contribute to sector-wide good practice and underpin the delivery of a positive experience for all of our students, including those studying with us via a partnership arrangement.

1.2.4 The UK Quality Code identifies specific core practices to be evidenced by the University when working in partnership with other organisations. These include having in place effective arrangements that ensure that the standards of our awards are credible and secure and that the academic experience is high quality, irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

1.3 UK Visas & Immigration

1.3.1 The University of Portsmouth holds a licence issued by the Home Office to enable the recruitment of international students. The licence allows the University to sponsor international students via issuance of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for them to obtain a study visa to join courses at the University at RQF Level 3 or above. The University must risk managing its licence to ensure compliance and is responsible for international students from the point of CAS issuance, until course completion or if the student withdraws from the course. To retain its licence, the University must fulfil certain criteria relating to the recruitment, arrival, monitoring, and reporting of international students (including mobility periods). The University's obligations to the Home Office are specified in further detail in its UKVI Student Route Compliance document.

1.3.2 Incoming exchange or study abroad international students must adhere to UK immigration regulations before commencing their mobility period at the University.

1.3.3 Partners or partnerships that do not support or sponsor international students to enter the UK to study for all or part of their course are not affected by UK Home Office requirements.

1.3.4 UK-based partners that recruit international students must adhere to OfS and Home Office regulations.

1.4 The Information Commissioner's Office

1.4.1 The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the UK's independent body set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals. In complying with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), the University follows the principles set out by the ICO to ensure that personal data is collected and used fairly, processed properly, and stored securely. The University's commitment to adhering to the data protection principles of the GDPR and the DPA 2018 and the responsibilities of everyone who handles personal and special category data within the University are outlined in its Data Protection document.

1.5 UK statutory external agencies

1.5.1 The University is responsible for submitting several statutory returns to key external agencies (such as the Higher Education Statistical Agency, HESA), comprising data relating to the students registered on its awards. This can include students undertaking their award via a partner institution.

1.6 UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)

1.6.1 The University is accountable to the CMA. Consumer protection legislation applies to UK universities' relationships with applicants and students, wherever they study. The CMA requires the University to:

- give applicants the information they need to make an informed decision before they enter into a contract with the University;
- operate clear and transparent terms and conditions, including rules and regulations;
- operate fair and transparent complaints processes.

1.7 Other external bodies

1.7.1 External bodies such as Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) or overseas Governmental or Ministerial bodies may have to accredit, approve, or validate the

provision for delivery at the partner before delivery can commence. Their decision-making process may depend on the nature of the proposal, the course/award, the country, and the partnership agreement itself. The University will need to have formal written confirmation from the external body that this recognition for delivery has been granted before the University's formal approval process is complete and delivery can commence.

1.8 Expectations

1.8.1 The University expects that partners fully adhere to the requirements and expectations of the above external bodies as they apply to the partnership and as required by the University.

Annex 2: Collaborative Partnership Lifecyle

Collaborative Partnership Lifecycle

Annex 3: Associated Policies

All publicly available policies can be found at: Policies and standards | University of Portsmouth

Policy
Academic Misconduct
Admission of Under 18s
Admissions policy
Appeals Procedures
Applicants & students with a Criminal Record
Approval, Modification & Closure
Attendance & Engagement Policy
Awards of the University of Portsmouth
Code of Practice: Research Degrees
Code of Student Behaviour
Collaborative Partnerships Policy and Procedures
Connected Curriculum
Curriculum Framework 2019
Data protection Policy
Declaration of Interest Policy
Examination and Assessment Regulations
Exclusion and Appeals
External Examiners' Regulations
Fitness to Study Policy
Flexible Curriculum Framework

Framework for Dual awards 2024
Framework for Flexible PGR Provision
Guidelines: Student Death
Mental Wellbeing: Students Causing Concern
Programme Monitoring & Review
Recognition of Prior Learning
Regulations: Credit Bearing Short Courses
Regulations: Higher Degrees by Research
Regulations: Professional Doctorates
Research Misconduct
Student Complaints
Student Mental Health Wellbeing Policy
Student Voice Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Withdrawal and Suspension (Regulations)

Annex 4: Partnership OfS Registration Principles

Principles for Engagement with Academic Partners Seeking Office for Students Registration

Introduction

The University of Portsmouth recognises that academic partners may choose to pursue registration with the Office for Students (OfS) and respects their autonomy in doing so. The University will not seek to prevent or discourage a partner from making an application for registration.

The University is committed to engaging constructively with partners throughout the registration process and will provide reasonable support, advice and clarification where appropriate.

Where a partner delivers programmes leading to University awards, aspects of an OfS registration application may provide evidence of the effectiveness of arrangements for academic quality, standards, governance and student outcomes operating within the partnership. As a result, an application may have implications not only for the partner institution, but also for the University's regulatory responsibilities and reputation as an awarding body.

These principles therefore establish a framework through which the University can support partners seeking OfS registration whilst ensuring that risks associated with the quality, standards and oversight of partnership provision are appropriately understood and managed.

Core Principles

1. Partners are free to pursue OfS registration and the University will not seek to prevent or discourage and application for registration.
2. Responsibility for preparing, evidencing and submitting an application rests with the partner.
3. The University has a legitimate interest in matters arising from the application which may affect its oversight responsibilities, regulatory obligations, reputation, academic quality and standards.
4. Partners must engage with the University openly and at an early stage.
5. Partners must provide relevant application documentation to the University in a timely manner.

6. The University will provide reasonable support and constructive challenge.
7. The registration process should be characterised by transparency, openness and timely communication.

Notification

Following notification of its intention to seek OfS registration, the partner and University will agree appropriate arrangements for engagement and information sharing throughout the application process.

Information Sharing and Quality Plans

Documentation shared with the University should be provided sufficiently in advance of submission to enable meaningful review, discussion of any identified risks, and consideration of any support or feedback that may be beneficial to the partner.

University Engagement

The University's interest in a partner's OfS registration application is primarily concerned with those matters that may affect the quality and standards of University awards, student outcomes associated with partnership provision, and the effectiveness of the University's oversight arrangements.

Accordingly, the University may review and provide feedback on evidence relevant to B7 and B8, and any other conditions insofar as they relate to the delivery, quality assurance or oversight of programmes leading to University awards.

The purpose of such engagement is to enable the University to understand and mitigate risks arising from the partnership, ensure that partnership arrangements are accurately represented, and provide constructive feedback where appropriate.

Responsibility for demonstrating compliance with all other OfS registration conditions remains with the partner institution.

Shared Regulatory Interest

The University recognises that a partner's approach to academic quality, standards and student outcomes may provide evidence of the effectiveness of the University's own oversight arrangements for partnership provision. Consequently, significant weaknesses identified within a partner's quality plan or related

evidence may present risks not only to the partner's application, but also to the University's regulatory responsibilities and reputation as an awarding body.

Status of Support

Advice, feedback or support provided by the University should not be interpreted as endorsement of an application or assurance that registration will be granted. The partner remains responsible for all evidence and representations made to the OfS.

October 2026