University of Exeter

Handbook for Academic Partnerships: Strategy, Guidance and Procedures

2020/21

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# Introduction

## Background to Academic Partnerships and Purpose of Handbook

* + 1. Academic partnerships are formal arrangements in which two or more institutions or organisations work together to provide teaching, supervision, support and/or facilities for students as a formal element of a degree or programme.
    2. By their very nature, academic partnerships can be high risk activities. The processes and procedures required to set up and operate successful academic partnership activity are outlined here. These processes have been implemented to ensure that high standards are maintained for partnership programmes and that the student experience remains paramount.
    3. The University of Exeter is responsible for the standard and quality of the awards made in its name and the quality of the programmes that lead to those awards. The University also holds ultimate responsibility for the way in which it manages its higher education provision with others, and conforms to the QAA’s [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B10 Managing higher education provision with others](http://as.exeter.ac.uk/media/level1/academicserviceswebsite/academicpolicyandstudentadministration/academicpartnerships/toolkit/Quality-Code-Chapter-B10.pdf).
    4. For the purpose of this framework, academic partnerships include: Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that include education-related activity; student exchanges / study abroad activity; progression agreements; articulation agreements; split-site programmes; validation arrangements; double or dual degrees; joint awards; and Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs).
    5. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a step by step guide for the approval, operation and contractual framework for Academic Partnerships with other institutions.

## Purpose of Academic Partnerships

* + 1. The University values the establishment of key, high quality academic partnerships that clearly support the University’s Global, Research or Education Strategies as well as each College’s Global Plans. Academic partnerships can create routes for international research collaborations, promote international student recruitment, provide enhanced student experiences through exchanges, potentially enhance employability prospects, assist in internationalising the curriculum, facilitate shared research through split site provision, strengthen research developments and funding opportunities, and fundamentally enhance reputation and the University ‘brand’. National partnerships via Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) funded through Research Councils are crucial to the University’s Research and Impact Strategy.
    2. This Handbook provides a quality assurance framework for academic partnership appraisal, governance and risk management that will enable colleagues to focus efforts on the most valuable academic partnerships and proceed, confident that processes are in place to ensure quality and to protect the students and the University’s reputation.

## Principles of Strategic Development

* + 1. The principles underpinning the strategic development of academic partnerships are that:
       1. academic partnerships should only be entered into where they clearly contribute to the strategic development and goals of the College and University;
       2. systems and processes should be proportionate to the risk;
       3. wherever appropriate, standard procedures and guidance should be used regarding academic partnership activity;
       4. quality of provision and student experience of academic partnerships are regularly monitored and protected;
       5. sense of ownership, academic expertise, and administrative professionalism of staff based in Colleges is fundamental to the success of an academic partnership;
       6. standard University Codes of Conduct also apply to Academic Partnership activity. As such, before engaging in any type of academic partnership, employees have a duty to ensure that their conduct does not create suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and their private interest. Their actions must not be influenced by a benefit (e.g. a gift or hospitality) to favour an organisation, and their actions must not induce or reward someone to perform a role or function improperly.

## Additional Information and Resources

* + 1. Information, guidance and forms relating to Academic Partnerships can be found on the [Academic Partnerships website](http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/academic-partnerships/).
    2. The Academic Partnerships team maintains a formal Register of Agreements for all Academic Partnerships, recording the main details of each partnership with links to the formal Legal Agreement.

# Types of Academic Partnerships

## Overview of the Different Types of Academic Partnerships

* + 1. The following table provides a summary of the different types of academic partnerships.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Split-Site programme** | One programme  One award, but with a significant contribution e.g. teaching, facilities, knowledge etc made by the partner organisation (not necessarily a HEI)  Normally (but not exclusively) for postgraduate research students, either individually or in small cohorts  **PGR**: split site and co-supervision are the favoured option for PGR level collaborative partnerships. PGR split site agreements involve an Exeter supervisor and an external supervisor (by agreement between the two institutions). |
| **Memorandum of Understanding** | A statement of intent to work with another high quality organisation  MOUs are not legally binding, and should not include any specific commitments, although potential developments may be mentioned |
| **Dual Degree** | One programme  Two awards – each award is based on credit from both institutions and awards are not independent.  Consisting of elements from the University of Exeter and elements from the partner institution  Students are registered at both institutions  **PGR**: Dual Degrees are not relevant for PGR level collaborative partnerships with the exception of Professional Doctorate Programmes. |
| **Double Degree** | One programme  Two awards with two possible outcomes – each award is independent from the other and based on credit from the respective institution. If one party fails to award, the other retains the right to revert to the awarding of single degree. In this case the reference to the other party that does not award should not be included on either the certificate or transcript.  Consisting of elements from the University of Exeter and elements from the partner institution.  Students are registered at both institutions and students must comply with regulations from both institutions. Requires detailed negotiation to ensure that this is feasible and there are no conflicting elements.  Supervision is carried out by staff from both institutions and a bespoke handbook to be created for students.  **PGR:** only to be used in exceptional circumstances for PGR level partnerships where there are multiple students over successive intakes. Double Degrees for single PGR students are no longer permitted. |
| **Validation** | A programme which is delegated to another organisation to deliver on behalf of the University  Students receive an award from the University of Exeter |
| **Student Exchange and Study Abroad** | Students undertake formal study for one year (or one semester) at an overseas HEI  The programme for each student is agreed by both institutions |
| **Articulation** | Provision offered by another institution is deemed suitable preparation for a student to transfer onto a University of Exeter programme  Usually at an advanced stage, e.g. direct entry to year 2 of an undergraduate degree  Students may achieve an initial award at the partner institution and then achieve a University of Exeter award |
| **Progression** | An access route to study at the University of Exeter  No formal commitment of acceptance onto a programme |
| **Joint Award (sometimes called Co-tutelles)** | **PGR:** Preferred partnership route for PGR level partnerships instead of Double Degrees.  One award, one viva, with one outcome, consisting of elements from two or more HEIs  Minimum Compliance Checklist (see Annex 2) must be adhered to and used at the start of any Joint Award discussions with partners. Students are registered at both institutions, and the supervisor is by mutual agreement between the institutions (to be discussed as part of the Minimum Compliance Checklist – see Annex 2).  Requires detailed negotiation and specification and therefore extremely complex and time-consuming to establish and oversee |
| **Co-Supervision** | Student receives an Exeter award and complies with Exeter regulations.  Involves an Exeter supervisor and an external supervisor from another institution, but the Exeter supervisor must be the lead and a Supervision Agreement must be created. |

## Doctoral Training Partnerships / Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs)

* + 1. The University of Exeter is a member of DTPs/CDTs aligned to each of the Research Councils; they are key to the University’s research and partnerships strategies.

The way in which DTPs and CDTs are initiated, developed, and approved is very different to that of other partnerships and so they are not included in this Handbook.

# Governance of Academic Partnerships

## Governance Structure

* + 1. There is a 3 stage process for approving academic partnerships (a diagram outlining the revised process can be found in Annex 1) and further information on each of these stages can be found in chapter 4:
       - 1. Stage 1 – College Approval
         2. Stage 2 – Strategic Approval
         3. Stage 3 – Quality Assurance Approval

Once stages 1 - 3 are complete the legal agreement can be drafted and signed by both parties.

* + 1. If an academic partnership involves a new programme or module/s, the approval must be undertaken separately as per the standard University of Exeter procedures for programme development and approval (see 4.7).

## Academic Partnerships Team

* + 1. The Academic Partnerships team is currently a 0.5 FTE position. They can be contacted on [partnerships@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:partnerships@exeter.ac.uk) for information and advice.
    2. The team’s remit is twofold:
       - 1. To provide expertise and guidance to other teams looking to develop an academic partnership with another institution. The team helps through all phases of the partnership, from development through to approval and finally implementation/operation and review.
         2. To assist with the development and management of the more complex academic partnerships (normally through the establishment of Partnership Boards or Academic Boards).
    3. Guidance, forms and further information can be found on the [Academic Partnerships](http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/academic-partnerships/) website.

## 

# How to Establish a New Academic Partnership

## First Steps

* + 1. In order to set up a new academic partnership, a College must first consider what type of partnership they are looking to develop as this will have an impact on the form they are required to submit and also the approval process (see section 2.1)
    2. The main form used for all academic partnerships in development is a Partnership Proposal Form (PPF). Completion of this form is the first step in getting the proposal agreed. It is this form that is considered by both the strategic approval group and the quality assurance group. It is also used by the legal team to draft the legal agreement and therefore Colleges should ensure they fill it in as fully and accurately as possible.

## Completion of the Partnership Proposal Form (PPF)

* + 1. A Partnership Proposal Form (PPF) should be completed for all new academic partnerships proposals as well as for extensions to existing agreements.
    2. PPF templates for different types of partnerships can be downloaded from the Academic Partnerships team Toolkit web page.
    3. Further advice on completion of a PPF is available by contacting the Academic Partnerships team. It is advised that the first draft of the PPF is sent to the Academic Partnerships team for review as soon as possible after completion.

## Stage 1 – College Approval

* + 1. The first stage in the approval process is for the academic partnership to be considered by the relevant College. For more complex partnerships, a site visit by College staff (normally an academic) to the proposed partner is essential. Advice from the Academic Partnerships team can be obtained regarding the requirement for a site visit. During these visits an assessment should be made of the quality of the academic provision and the support provided, in particular looking at evidence of:
       - 1. Quality of library and IT resources;
         2. Quality and expertise of academic staff;
         3. Availability of other specialist equipment (e.g. lab equipment);
         4. Student support mechanisms
         5. Teaching methodology (differences in the ways in which teaching is carried out);
         6. Types of assessment (will partnership students be able to adapt to the University of Exeter’s assessment patterns and methods if required?);
         7. Level of teaching (will the teaching and learning that takes place at the partner be appropriate for student transition to the University of Exeter or vice versa? Is the level appropriate for validation proposals?);
         8. Curriculum assessment (will the students be sufficiently prepared in terms of academic knowledge? How will any gaps be addressed? How do the credit rating for modules compare with University of Exeter programmes?);
         9. Requirements for external accreditation by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (Will they be fulfilled?);
         10. Students’ plans, aspirations and interest in the partnership programme (a meeting with students can also provide useful information on overall academic quality and English language skills if applicable).
    2. In considering a proposal, the College Executive assesses relevance to its strategic development plans, its ability to commit appropriate resources, the perceived level of risk and means of mitigating them, and the overall benefits of the proposal to the College.
    3. If, following initial consideration and research, the potential development appears positive and valuable to the College, then a PPF will need to be completed and submitted for approval to the College Executive Group in the first instance, before progressing to stage 2.

## Stage 2 – Strategic Approval

* + 1. Following approval by the College Executive Group, the PPF should then be progressed to **Stage 2 for Strategic Approval.** There are three different strategy groups within the University, and each of these are responsible for ensuring that relevant partnerships align with College and University strategies; that allocation of resources is appropriate in terms of quality and quantity; and that best use is made of resources (human and financial). It is the responsibility of the relevant strategy group to determine whether a proposal should be approved.

Who Approves What?

* + - * 1. All international academic partnerships = Global Partnerships Board (GPB)
        2. Domestic (UK) academic partnerships for UG and PGT = Education Executive Group (Ed Exec Group)
        3. Domestic (UK) academic partnerships for PGR = Research Impact and Evaluation Group (RIEG). S*ingle student PGR may be delegated to the Dean for PGR for approval.*
    1. For each of these groups, dates of meetings and who to contact to submit a PPF can be found on the Academic Partnerships website.

## Stage 3 – Quality Assurance Approval

* + 1. Following approval by the relevant strategy group, the PPF should then be progressed to **Stage 3 - Quality Assurance Approval**. In most cases this will be through the Associate Academic Dean for Students. Details of when this responsibility can be delegated can be found on the Academic Partnerships website.
    2. The Associate Academic Dean for Students is responsible for final consideration and approval of new partnerships; monitoring existing partnerships and considering the renewal of partnerships. Ensuring that structures and arrangements meet Quality Assurance requirements (as defined in the University’s TQA Manual and in the QAA Code of Practice) and give final approval of PPFs, after which the legal agreement can be drafted.

## Legal Agreement

* + 1. After College and University approval of the partnership has been obtained, the relevant College staff work with the partner institution to develop the programme in detail. Staff from the College, the Academic Partnerships team, and Legal Services will together produce a draft of the formal Legal Agreement to be negotiated with the partner institution(s).
    2. Typically a Legal Agreement will include the following elements (the actual content will depend on the nature and complexity of the partnership, and the risk associated with it):
       1. formal identification of the partners included, with formal contact details;
       2. start date, review date(s) and end date of the Agreement;
       3. definition of the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties involved (including students, if relevant);
       4. definitions of terminology;
       5. definition of delegated powers;
       6. description of the shared provision;
       7. ‘ownership’ of students, including admissions and registration procedures;
       8. identification of the academic regulations, policies and procedures to be followed;
       9. student complaints, appeals, and disciplinary procedures;
       10. degree awarding processes and production of a certificate;
       11. financial arrangements;
       12. Intellectual Property Rights, and confidentiality;
       13. insurance and indemnities;
       14. data protection matters;
       15. marketing and promotional activity, and approval of materials and use of logo;
       16. legal jurisdiction;
       17. implications of failure to fulfill obligations, including mediation and termination procedures;
       18. protection of students on termination of the Agreement;
       19. procedure for amending the Agreement.
    3. When the wording of the legal agreement is agreed and confirmed by all parties, it must be signed by the designated signatory (see annex one). Each academic partnership is a legally binding commitment for the University, and carries risk. The authority to sign an Agreement therefore resides at senior management level, and full details can be found on the academic partnerships website.

## Programme Development and Approval

* + 1. Any element of a partnership programme that counts towards a University award must be appropriately quality assured. The University is responsible for ensuring that the standards and quality of the partnership programme is equivalent to that of standard (non-partnership) University provision. The University must consider the level and content of programmes, appropriateness of assessment, and the student experience (including facilities and student support), when developing and accrediting shared provision.
    2. Depending on the type of partnership proposed, there may be a need to develop a completely new programme, or to amend an existing programme for partnership students. In these cases, the standard programme development process must be followed, as described in the University’s [Handbook for Initial Approval and Subsequent Amendment of Taught Programmes / Modules: Procedures and Requirements](http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%2014/14MPAPHandbook.pdf) If more than one College within the University is involved in the partnership, the programme will need to be considered and approved by each College.
    3. Programme Directors are responsible for ensuring that assessment and assessment procedures in all elements of partnership programmes that count towards a University of Exeter award, meet University of Exeter criteria as described in the [Quality Review Framework](http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/tqamanual/qrf/). These must be monitored by an External Examiner and also through the University Annual Student Experience Review (ASER) and College Academic Audit (CAA) processes.
    4. If the partnership contributes to an award that is accredited by a PSRB (Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body) then the University must assure itself that the external body’s requirements are met within the partnership programme.

## Miscellaneous - Study Abroad and Student Exchange agreements

* + 1. Student exchanges are generally proposed to ensure that there are sufficient high quality, appropriate institutions for University of Exeter students to study at as part of their undergraduate studies. These are strategically important for the student experience and for ensuring that the University meets its goal of increasing take-up of study abroad opportunities. The exchange partner, however, may not necessarily always be seen to be strategically important.
    2. Study Abroad and Student Exchange agreements are normally initiated through a discipline or college, or via the Study Abroad team (for cross university exchanges). The majority of exchanges take place at undergraduate level, and through ERASMUS.
    3. The process for approving these types of arrangements is as follows;
       1. Initial strategic approval of student exchange and study abroad agreements will be through the relevant strategy group (normally the Global Partnerships Board)
       2. Quality assurance approval is carried out by the Head of Global Partnerships.
       3. Renewals of student exchange agreements will be delegated to the Study Abroad Manager where the relationship and student experience has been deemed to be fit for purpose. For cases in which a question has arisen, any renewal will be submitted to the relevant strategy board.
       4. The Study Abroad Manager will provide an annual report on all student exchange/study abroad partners and submit this to the Global Partnerships Board.
       5. The Study Abroad team work directly with the Legal Service team to produce their own legal agreements.

# Management, Delivery and Monitoring

## New Systems and Procedures

* + 1. During the partnership approval process, Colleges will have thought about and outlined the mechanisms proposed for monitoring the partnership. The most important focus is on safeguarding the student experience for partnership students and developing procedures that facilitate their success. The Academic Partnerships team can assist with this process by arranging meetings between the College and Admissions, Student Records, Student Fees and other professional services staff to discuss the partnership set up.
    2. As well as programme development and approval as detailed in section 4.7 above, particular consideration will be need to be given to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Admissions arrangements | Entry criteria, application, offers and acceptances, criminal record checks, visas, etc. |
| Registration processes | UCAS?  Direct to the College or via Partner? |
| Fee rate | Are there any discounts?  Do students pay the University or the partner? |
| Student records | Transcript arrangements, credit transfer, calculation of the award, specific requirements for the award certificates, etc. |
| Information flow between the partners | When are details of student numbers and names known? HESA data? |
| Additional training or induction required | Where gaps in students’ academic knowledge or skills may be apparent |
| Student orientation | Support provided, mentors, requirements to help the students to adjust to their new environment including suitable accommodation, handbooks, etc. |
| Student representation | How partnership students will give feedback e.g. a specific SSLC? |
| Partnership monitoring arrangements (could be a Partnership Board) | Ongoing monitoring of partnership students and the operation of the partnership, annual assessment of student performance as a cohort, differentiation of partnership students from standard students to assess performance, etc. |

## Student Handbooks

* + 1. A Student Handbook must be provided to all students at the start of each cohort and annually thereafter, including the set of information as described in the [Code of Good Practice – Provision of Information by Colleges to Students](http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%206/6Aschlhnbk.pdf)*.* Handbooks may be electronic or in paper format. The rights and responsibilities of students and all partner institutions regarding student records, mentoring, complaints, appeals and disciplinary matters, must be clearly described. If a standard Handbook is used then any variations (e.g. for students undertaking a year abroad) must be clearly identified. The College is responsible for ensuring these are produced.

## Partnership Boards (or equivalent)

* + 1. For complex partnerships, a Partnership Board will be required. The Board is set up with each partner and oversees all programmes delivered through that partnership. They are responsible for the strategic management and ongoing quality assurance monitoring of the partnership.
    2. Membership of the Board consists of representatives from each institution in the partnership. Specific staff are identified and Terms of Reference agreed for each Board, bearing in mind the complexity and level of risk associated with the partnership. The level of involvement of the Associate Dean for Students and the Academic Partnerships team will be determined according to level of risk and nature of the partnership. The Board normally meets once or twice per year (may be virtual, via video conferencing or Skype) and specific details are normally included in the signed Legal Agreement.
    3. The Partnership Board is responsible for the management of the relationship, academic provision and student experience, which may include, for example:
       1. quality assurance of the partnership;
       2. oversight of the programme(s) including monitoring and evaluation;
       3. setting entry criteria for students;
       4. admissions;
       5. marketing;
       6. student progression and attainment;
       7. communication to the students and monitoring student feedback;
       8. ensuring resources and facilities are available and appropriate.
    4. Reports and minutes from Partnership Boards are submitted to the Academic Partnerships team, which will assess and confirm compliance with the QAA Quality Code and the University’s TQA Manual.

## Programme Monitoring

* + 1. Colleges are responsible for monitoring partnership provision in the same way that they monitor their standard provision. Monitoring therefore should be undertaken using normal procedures, e.g. Annual Student Experience Review (ASER), College Academic Audit (CAA), Annual Monitoring Review (AMR), module and programme feedback (Accelerate system), etc., or their equivalents, as well as monitoring via the Partnership Board where relevant. Information from the College’s ASER Action Plans will feed into the Partnership Board, as appropriate. Guidance on the University’s standard monitoring procedures and mechanisms can be found in the [Quality Review Framework](http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/tqamanual/qrf/) section of the TQA Manual.

## Student Representation and Feedback

* + 1. The University is responsible for safeguarding the student experience of all students involved in provision that contributes towards a University award, whether based at one of the University’s campuses or offered elsewhere or via another organisation or institution. This must be monitored through:
       1. ASERs and CAAs;
       2. Partnership Boards where relevant;
       3. Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) or PGR Liaison Fora;
       4. other feedback and evaluation mechanisms (eg Accelerate system or other survey tools);
       5. representation in meetings and on committees.

## External Examiners

* + 1. In accordance with standard University procedures, partnership programmes must be reviewed by an External Examiner. Where the partnership provision is similar to, or the same as, University of Exeter provision, then normally the same External Examiner should be invited to review the partnership provision alongside the standard provision. If the partnership element is sufficiently different, or if the existing External Examiner is not available to consider the partnership provision, then a further External Examiner must be appointed.
    2. Each formal partnership agreement must define the appointment process for External Examiners if this is different to the University’s standard procedure.

## Monitoring the Relationship

* + 1. Both the College and the Academic Partnerships team are responsible for monitoring the partnership relationship and ensuring that the partners are undertaking their responsibilities and are working well together. Monitoring the relationship is also carried out through the Partnership Board. Each Partnership Board reviews the formal Agreement once per year and this is a standing item on the agenda.

## Specific Monitoring Requirements for Validation Partnerships

* + 1. Validation partnerships are those where the University of Exeter has delegated delivery of a programme to another organisation, having evaluated and deemed the programme to be of an equivalent standard and quality as its own provision.
    2. Delegation of delivery means that there are specific requirements for monitoring to ensure that these programmes are of an equivalent standard to those delivered at the University of Exeter.

## Publicity and Marketing of Partnership Programmes

* + 1. The requirements for the approval of promotional materials, publicity, and marketing are normally set out in the partnership agreement.
    2. Publicity and marketing materials includes newspapers, journals, prospectuses, handbooks, websites and e-documents, with reference to:
       1. the logo of the University of Exeter;
       2. any programme or module delivered or validated by the University of Exeter;
       3. any award made by the University of Exeter;
       4. use of the University of Exeter name through job adverts.
    3. Use of the logo or University name must only be used in relation to programmes validated by, or offered in conjunction with, the University of Exeter.
    4. All publicity and marketing materials, whether external or internal to the partner institution, must be approved by the University of Exeter prior to their publication or general circulation.

# Review and Renewal or Termination

## The Review Process

* + 1. Each partnership agreement must include an end date to the formal relationship, and should include a timescale for the review of the relationship in order to determine whether it is renewed.
    2. Where no timescale for review is included in the partnership agreement, it is recommended that reviews commence 1 year before the partnership is due to end for more complex arrangements, and a minimum of 6 months before the end for more straightforward partnerships.
    3. A full review and consideration of the programme and partner must take place before the Agreement can be renewed. (The exception to this is for on-going renewal of standard study abroad agreements, which often happen annually. Consideration of renewal will be delegated to the Study Abroad Manager.) The College will need to review the relationship and activities, and determine whether the partnership should be continued. Colleges should consider:
       1. the purpose of the partnership and how successful it has been in achieving its goals;
       2. student performance and progression;
       3. whether the quality and reputation of the partner continues to be appropriate;
       4. the commitment of the partner to the relationship;
       5. the College’s ability to make future commitments to the partnership, bearing in mind the associated costs and risks;
       6. whether a variation to the partnership or additional activity should be discussed with the partner.

## The Process for Renewal

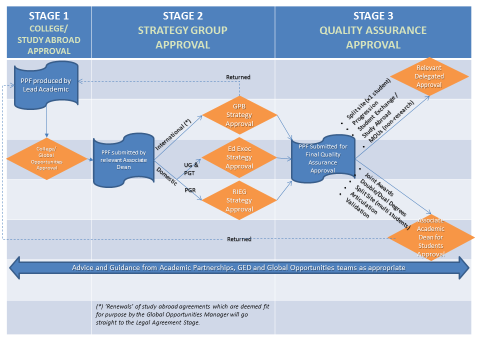
* + 1. Following the review of the partnership, if the College wishes to continue the relationship, then the appropriate Partnership Proposal Form needs to be completed and approved by the College Executive before submission for University level approval following the same process as for new partnerships (see Chapter 4).
    2. If approval is given, then a new Agreement will be created, negotiated, and signed. The time required will depend on the amount and complexity of changes involved.

## Ending a Partnership

* + 1. A partnership may be terminated either during the period of the Agreement, in accordance with the conditions, procedures and notice period defined in the Agreement, or at the end of the Agreement when it expires.
    2. Whenever the partnership is terminated, the commitment to, and interests of, the students involved in the partnership must be protected so that they are able to successfully complete their programme.
    3. For agreements that are terminated during the period of operation, a termination letter is drafted to confirm that the partnership is ending. This details any specific matters and actions required to protect the students. Termination letters are written by the Legal Services team, working with the relevant College staff and the Academic Partnerships team. They are signed at University senior management level, and this is normally at the same level as the original Legal Agreement (see section 4.6).
    4. For agreements that will not be renewed after the expiration date, a letter is sent to the partner informing them that the agreement will not be renewed, and confirming the date when it will end. This letter also clarifies the responsibilities of all partners to any remaining students.
    5. Termination letters may not be required for Agreements relating to an individual student, or for partnerships that have been inactive for a number of years.

## Last updated August 2020

**ANNEX ONE – SUMMARY OF THE APPROVAL PROCESS**

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Academic Partnership​** | **​** | **STAGE 2​**  **Strategy Approval​** | **STAGE 3​**  **Quality Approval​** | **STAGE 4​**  **Signatories on Legal Agreement ​** |
| **Joint Award**​  ​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | VC or DVC​ |
| UK : Ed Exec​ |
| **Double/Dual Degree**​  ​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | VC or DVC​ |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **Articulation**​  ​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | VC or DVC​ |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **Validation**​  ​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | VC or DVC​ |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **Split Site**​  **(multiple students)**​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | VC or DVC​ |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **Split Site**​  **(single student)**​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **Progression**​ | International: GPB​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | |
| UK: Ed Exec​ |
| **MOU (educationbased)**​ | International: GPB​ | Director of Global Exeter​ | |
| UK: Ed Exec​ | Associate Academic Dean for Students​ | |
| **MOU (research based)**​ | Single College only: ADR​ | To RIEG and GPB for info​ | Director of Research Services or Assistant Director of Research Development and Management(Director of IIB to sign MOUs withnon-academic partners) ​ |
| Institution wide: RIEG​ | To GPB for info​ |
| **Student Exchange/StudyAbroad (non-Erasmus and UG/PGT only)**​ | Director of International andDevelopment​ | GlobalOpportunities Manager​ | Director of Global Exeter​ |
| **ERASMUS**​ | Renewals: N/A​ | Global Opportunities Manager​ | Global Opportunities Manager​ |
| Exceptions/annualreport: GPB​ |
| **DTPs/CDT**​ | RIEG​ | ThroughDoctoral College​ | VC or DVC​ |
| **PGR**​  **(All types inclPGR StudyAbroad)**​ | International: GPB​ | Through Doctoral College ​  ​ | Dean of Postgrad Research orAssociate Dean of PostgradResearch ​ |
| UK: RIEG​ |

**ANNEX TWO – MINIMUM COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **QAA – section B11**  **CRA requirement** | **Exeter TQA/UK HE Norms – to be defended. Negotiation and significant risk** | **Potentially changeable within reasonable parameters/questions to consider** |
| **Admissions** | Clear information on the programme made available to applicants (CRA requirement). | Offer letter is binding so need to be clear on length of programme and fees before sent to student. |  |
| **Registration** | A contract containing finance and programme information, should be available for each student to sign at or before registration. This will often need negotiation well in advance. | Students should be registered at both/all institutions. |  |
| **Funding** |  | Details of how each institution manages funding and RTSG needs to be discussed in advance of registration to ensure each party is aware how the process will work and have procedures in place before the students arrive. |  |
| **Student Handbook** | QAA and new CRA requires this to be available to students’ pre: application. Full QA alignment and partnership requirements and a contract must be produced before the studentship is advertised. | Clear information about the programme including all instances of variance from standard procedures must be available to students and supervisors, including rules and timeframes around. A version of the PGR student handbook must be produced. | Length of degree; required training; extensions; disability support, how the partner institutions administer funding. |
| **Annual Monitoring** | Student must be able to give annual confidential feedback on supervision. |  |  |
| Progress must be officially monitored annually. | Use of MyPGR whilst the student is at both partner institutions would be preferable |  |
| If registered on MPhil/PhD an upgrade must take place, which includes a meeting with the student, assessment by staff other than the supervisors. | Can be done at a distance if necessary.  Most PhD students at Exeter will be registered on to the MPhil and must pass an upgrade process. | Consider the progression milestones for each of the partners and how this might work when the students are moving between institutions |
| **Complaints and Appeals** | Whilst at Exeter, our process must be adhered to. Where right of appeal does not exist at other institutions in a similar way, Exeter procedures will be used. All students on a partnership will have access to the OIA. |  |  |
| **Supervision** | Required to show that there is sufficient opportunity for training. At Exeter this is via the Supervision agreement and training needs. Training needs are based on individual needs assessment. |  |  |
| Need to show supervisory team meets our criteria for appointment, and that external supervisors have access to training and sufficient workload for the role, and that the supervision provided is kept under review. Supervisors must be aware of differences in support around the partnership. |  |  |
| **Thesis** | Assessment needs to be clear, which means we would need to be able to define any exceptions to our regulations clearly and in advance, this must include clarity over criteria for examiner appointment, conduct of the viva, communication of results to candidate, failure to reach consensus, disclosures of conflict of interest. | One Exam Process |  |
| Supervisor cannot be an active examiner but may be present as an observer only | No public viva | Language of thesis and viva |
| There must be at least one external examiner (external to both institutions) | One thesis, submitted where possible to Exeter as per Exeter’s procedures (link to thesis submission) | Length of degree |
| Assessment needs to be made against NQF standards. | One set of outcomes if joint | Format of thesis |
|  | Examiner feedback as per Exeter handbook | If the viva is to take place at the partner institution, the procedure must be agreed and communicated to the student in advance. |
|  | Examination as per Exeter handbook | Responsibility for producing a joint degree parchment (there are rules governing this). |
| Outcomes as per Exeter Handbook |  |
| **Modes of Attendance** | Maternity Leave rights as per Exeter Handbook for PGR students must be available to all students registered at Exeter. | If the partner code varies from Exeter this must be highlighted as a risk. |  |
| Interruptions – Exeter students may have 2 years with College permission | This can be negotiated, but must be outlined in advance of any agreement. Not allowing Exeter students the time given to other Exeter students would need to be mitigated as a risk. |  |
| Exeter students may be 0.5, 0.6, 0.7, 0.8, 0.9 or 1.0 – this must be available to all students |  |  |

It is important to define all instances of exceptions to our regulations and be clear about how those exceptions operate. In particular, the following need careful consideration:

* The criteria to be used in appointing examiners the preparatory period prior to the viva
* How the viva will be conducted
* How and when the result will be communicated to the candidate
* How to handle cases where the examiners cannot reach a consensus
* The criteria to be used for selecting external examiners when they have had previous affiliations with the degree-awarding body or the provider.