



## UCL Academic Manual 2023-24

# Chapter 8: Academic Partnerships Framework

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Chapter 8 is UCL's regulatory framework for the management of all UCL learning opportunities delivered in collaboration with external organisations leading or contributing to the award of UCL academic credit or a UCL qualification.

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# 1 UCL Policy and Regulations for the Quality Assurance of Academic Partnerships

## 1.1 Introduction

1. Academic partnerships, as defined in Section 2.2 of this Framework, can offer many benefits to UCL, including opportunities to enhance our reputation and promote UCL's academic networks both nationally and internationally. All academic partnerships should be considered in terms of their alignment with UCL's mission and 20-year strategy. International academic partnerships are also a key part of the UCL Global Engagement Strategy and our mission as London's Global University.
2. UCL academic partnerships with other organisations which contribute or lead to UCL credit and/or qualifications should enrich both our reputation and our contribution to society as London's Global University. This applies to academic partnerships both in the UK and beyond. Similarly, UCL needs to ensure that when delivering education with other institutions it complies with all relevant national requirements and legislation, and that the student experience is enhanced, not compromised, by academic partnership arrangements.
3. The purpose of this framework is to provide information and guidance on for UCL's policy for the inception, approval, operation and contractual framework of academic partnerships with other institutions, leading to UCL credit and/or qualifications (whether as sole, joint and multiple awards).
4. This chapter of the Academic Manual is intended to provide a regulatory framework for staff with regard to UCL's requirements for the management of academic partnerships to deliver education with other institutions.
5. The processes set out ensure academic partnerships adhere to the requirements of the Office for Students Regulatory Framework and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Quality Code, as well as other external regulatory and legislative requirements and best practice.

## 1.2 Definitions

1. Across the higher education sector, there is varied terminology in use which refers to academic partnerships: 'collaborative provision' or 'collaborative programmes' have the same meaning.
2. This definition covers a wide range of provision from Teaching Contribution arrangements, where another institution delivers, or contributes to the delivery of, one or more modules on a UCL degree programme, to jointly delivered and awarded degrees with other institutions. An extensive list of types is provided in *Annex 8.1 Forms of Academic Partnerships* but advice is available from the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for any member of UCL staff who is unsure as to whether a potential programme, or element of a programme, may be classified as an academic partnership.
3. This definition does not cover provision of short courses, such as those supported by the Short Courses Support Team.
4. The term 'qualification' within this and any associated documents refers to a higher education doctorate, degree, diploma or certificate accredited and conferred by UCL following the successful completion of an approved programme of study. A UCL academic partnership always relates to teaching activity that leads to a UCL qualification or the award of UCL credit.

## 1.3 Policy

1. UCL is responsible for the quality and standards of all academic qualifications made in its name. Consequently, its academic partnerships should be based on the premise that:
  - the academic standards of all UCL qualifications involving collaboration with partner organisations must be compatible with UCL's regulations, policies and procedures, and with external reference points including those set out by the Office for Students Regulatory Framework and QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education,
  - the quality of student learning opportunities and experiences on collaborative programmes should be equivalent to those of comparable qualifications delivered and supported solely by UCL, and adequate to enable students to achieve the appropriate academic standards.
2. As UCL is responsible for the academic standards of all of its qualifications, UCL will only consider entering into partnerships with other organisations:
  - which will support the achievement of UCL's mission and 20-year strategy;
  - which have the academic standing to deliver collaborative programmes to appropriate academic standards (where relevant); the human, physical and financial standing to sustain them; and the legal standing to contract to their delivery;
  - which will enable UCL to effectively to meet its responsibilities for the quality and standards of its qualifications;
  - which will enable UCL to discharge its responsibilities to any professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) that has approved or recognised the relevant programme;
  - which are able to enter into a written and legally binding agreement or contract setting out details of the collaboration and the rights and obligations of the parties, which is signed by the authorised representatives of both UCL and the partner organisation.
3. All proposals for academic partnerships must only be considered according to the policies and procedures approved by UCL to ensure that the potential partner meets all of the requirements of paragraph 2 above. No academic partnerships shall be permitted to progress unless approval has been granted via these processes. No agreements relating to academic partnership activity are signed unless the processes outlined in this Framework have been followed.
4. Once a partnership with another organisation has been approved and a formal, legally-binding agreement signed, the details of the partnership and the programme(s) offered through it shall be entered on the University's Register of Academic Partnerships. This is a comprehensive list of all UCL academic partnerships which meet the definition given in Section 2.2 and which is maintained by Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.
5. The level of risk involved with each partnership should be assessed and managed accordingly. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will advise Departments and Faculties on the risks involved with each proposed partnership.
6. All academic partnerships will be monitored for academic standards and quality on an annual and periodic basis. UCL reserves the right to suspend or terminate any partnership if it perceives that academic standards are at risk, subject to safeguards for students. Renewal of existing academic partnerships will be subject to approval by the Academic Partnerships Panel.
7. Governance of academic partnerships and operational responsibility will be set out in the agreed process and procedures.

## 2 Types of Academic Partnership

### 2.1 Further Terms Used in this Document

<b>Award:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
<b>Academic partnership</b>	A partnership between UCL and a partner institution(s) set up to collaboratively facilitate the delivery of learning opportunities leading to the award of an academic degree or academic credit by UCL or jointly by UCL and the partner institution(s).
<b>Due diligence</b>	Evaluation of a potential partner organisation's financial, legal and organisational position and the assessment of risks involved with entering into an academic partnership with the organisation.
<b>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</b>	Statement of intent to work with another party. This document does not entail any specific commitment and is not legally binding, although potential activities may be referenced. UCL Global Engagement team manages the UCL Memoranda of Understanding.
<b>Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)</b>	Formal, legally-binding document setting out the rights and responsibilities of each party with regard to an academic partnership. All academic partnerships require this type of agreement.

### 2.2 Overview of Different Types of Academic Partnership

1. The following table provides a summary of the different types of academic partnerships at UCL. A full breakdown is available in *Annex 8.1 Forms of Academic Partnerships*, including the principles for specific wording in UCL degree certification where relevant.

<b>Articulation agreement</b>	Students who satisfy the UCL academic criteria on a specific programme of another institution are entitled to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a UCL programme. UCL's regulations concerning Recognition of Prior Learning apply to all articulation agreements.
<b>Progression agreement</b>	Students who have successfully completed a specified programme of study at one institution may apply to be considered for a place on a named degree programme (s) at UCL.  These arrangements primarily support recruitment activity. The students must meet agreed entry criteria and any other special requirements as set out in the progression agreement; entry to the UCL programme is not guaranteed.
<b>Double/Multiple Degree</b>	Exactly as a Joint Award, but each institution produces its own degree certificate and transcript due to juridical requirements or issues with recognition of a joint certificate. At least the UCL certificate for a double/multiple degree refers to the partner institution(s) as another degree-awarding body for the same programme. The principles for the specific wording on the se

	certificates can be found in <i>Annex 8.1 Forms of Academic Partnerships</i> .
<b>Dual Degree</b>	<p>Students undertake the major part of a UCL programme and of a partner institution programme with overlapping curricula allowing for the programmes to be taken together in a shorter time than it would take to complete the two programmes separately, but longer time than it would take to complete just one of the awards (to preclude full double-counting of credit for two awards)<sup>1</sup>. Each institution awards its own degree.</p> <p>Each institution produces its own degree certificate and transcript.</p> <p>The UCL qualification for a dual degree programme may or may not be contingent on credit awarded by the partner institution.</p>
<b>Dual Award Transfer</b>	<p>Students undertake two separate awards one with the partner and one with UCL, without overlapping curricula.</p> <p>The student transfers to UCL/partner to complete the other award, and the credit from the UCL award may count towards the partner institution award, but the partner award does not normally contribute towards the UCL award.</p> <p>Each Institution awards its own degree.</p> <p>Each Institution produces its own degree certificate and transcript.</p>
<b>Joint Award</b>	<p>Students undertake one programme, which is jointly developed and delivered by UCL and another institution; one qualification is awarded by both institutions who issue a joint degree certificate.</p> <p>Joint award partnerships usually require the most effort to establish as the regulations and administrative processes of both institutions as joint degree-awarding bodies must be aligned and their application to the joint award programme agreed between UCL and the partner institution.</p>
<b>Joint Delivery</b>	<p>Students undertake one programme that leads to a UCL award only and the UCL regulations, policies and procedures apply to the programme and oversight of all provision is always maintained by UCL. A jointly delivered programme is, however, designed, developed and delivered in collaboration with another institution, with whom the teaching activities for the programme are equally, or close to equally, shared</p> <p>Any teaching delivered by another institution as part of a UCL degree must be delivered in the English language, unless the aim of the module(s) is to teach and assess the students in a language other than English.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> The credit of an interim qualification can be counted towards the full qualification at the other institution (i.e. a PGDip is counted as the first year or a two-year Master's programme at the other institution), but in this case the student will not be awarded the interim qualification by UCL. This type of partnership is an affiliate study arrangement, not an academic partnership, as there is no UCL award involved. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of APP for qualifications leading to professional body recognition (in line with the principle set out in the UCL regulations for Recognition of Prior Learning).

	<p>A jointly delivered programme can be referred to as a 'joint programme' in advertising material, but it should always be made clear that the programme only leads to a qualification awarded solely by UCL or by the partner institution.</p>
<b>Teaching/Programme Contribution</b>	<p>Students undertake one UCL programme, delivered with contribution from a partner institution(s).</p> <p>The programme leads to one award conferred by UCL. The level of contribution from the other institution(s) can vary from teaching a number of modules for a programme designed by UCL to providing facilities to a part of the programme or contributing to marketing and recruitment of the programme. Oversight of the programme and the activities provided with contribution from the partner institution is always maintained by UCL.</p> <p>Any teaching delivered by another institution as part of a UCL degree must be delivered in the English language, unless the aim of the module(s) is to teach and assess the students in a language other than English.</p>
<b>Joint PhD</b>	<p>A joint research degree programme is jointly designed, delivered and assessed by two institutions. The programme leads to a joint award with a single, joint degree certificate issued by the institutions. The regulatory requirements, including the examination requirements of both institutions apply to the programme. Where there is discrepancy between the regulations of the institutions, joint requirements that satisfy both institutions must be created separately for each programme by the proposing UCL Department and the partner institution, approved by the appropriate Committee(s) of each institution.</p> <p>Joint PhD's cannot be set up for individual students (so called 'co-tutelle' arrangements), but must be developed with the aim of recruiting several students over a number of years.</p>
<b>Double PhD</b>	<p>A double research degree programme is jointly designed, delivered and assessed by two institutions, but leads to two separate degree certificates, one issued by each institution. The degree certificate of UCL, at least, mentions that the degree is awarded for one double research degree programme. As the only difference between a joint and a double research degree is the issuance of degree certificates, joint regulations are also needed for a double research degree programme in the same way as for a joint research degree programme.</p> <p>Double PhD's cannot be set up for individual students, but must be developed with the aim of recruiting several students over a number of years.</p>
<b>Flying Faculty and off-site</b>	<p>The whole programme, or a major part of a programme, are delivered in a location away from UCL campus by UCL staff, who also carry out all aspects of assessment. Flying Faculty and off-site partnerships may, however, also be Jointly Delivered or be combined with Programme Contribution from the partner institution.</p> <p>International partnerships in this category are normally referred to as flying faculty whereas similar partnerships in the UK can be referred to as off-site.</p>

2. UCL has a number of Doctoral Training Partnerships/Centres (DTP/DTC) which are initiated, developed and approved via UCL Research Services. Any specific arrangements within DTPs/DTCs which come under the definition of academic partnerships will come under the terms of this framework and must be developed accordingly.
3. Student exchanges and study abroad arrangements are managed via the Study Abroad team in liaison with the Global Engagement team (GE) in line with *Annex 8.9 Principles for the Management of Study Abroad and Student Exchange Partnerships*. The Study Abroad team is the main point of contact for these activities.
4. Placements relating to degree programmes are managed with within the relevant academic Department who are the main point of contact for these activities. Departments should comply with the provisions in *Annex 8.12 Principles for the Management of Placements at UCL* and use the due diligence documentation and placement agreement templates provided.
5. Some UCL Departments engage in intercollegiate module sharing activity with other University of London Colleges and Institutes. The specific provisions that apply to elective intercollegiate module sharing are set out in *Annex 8.10: Intercollegiate Module Sharing with other University of London colleges – Student Policy* and the related *Annex 8.11: Principles for the Management of Intercollegiate Module Sharing with other University of London Colleges*.
6. UCL does not engage in validating (including ‘endorsement’ and ‘accreditation’) other institutions’ degree programmes or in franchising UCL degree programmes to be fully delivered by other institutions.
7. UCL Departments may contribute a module(s) to a programme(s) leading to an award of another university. These collaborations do not lead to UCL credit or award and are therefore not defined as academic partnerships for the purposes of this framework. Any agreements for these collaborations drafted by the degree-awarding body for UCL to sign must, however, be reviewed by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team and/or Legal Services, and signed by the Vice-Provost, Education and Student Experience on behalf of UCL.



# 3 Roles, Responsibilities and Governance

## 3.1 Governance at UCL Level

1. Although in practical terms academic partnerships normally involve UCL Faculties and Departments, they are a formal relationship between the University and the partner organisation. Hence governance of academic partnerships, in terms of mandating and decision-making, sits at the highest appropriate level of authority in UCL once the relevant Head of Department/Director of Division/Institute and Dean of Faculty has approved any such proposal.
2. Academic Committee delegates responsibility for oversight of learning and teaching, including the maintenance of standards and quality management, of accredited taught programmes to the Education Committee. It also delegates responsibility for oversight of research degree provision, including the maintenance of standards and quality management, to the Research Degrees Committee.
3. Academic partnerships involving the award of credit and/or qualifications relating to taught degree programmes are therefore considered under the terms of the Education Committee; academic partnerships involving the award of research degrees are therefore considered under the terms of the Research Degrees Committee.
4. In the case of potential international academic partnerships involving accredited taught programmes/modules or research degrees, in the first instance partner organisations must be considered by the Global Engagement team (GE). GE must endorse the potential international partner in the first instance and ensure that they are in-keeping with the UCL Global Engagement Strategy.
5. The Global Engagement team (GE) may wish to strengthen an initial international partnership proposal which has the Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement)'s endorsement for development through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). MoU may also be developed in response to a specific need of the partner institution, such as to progress the partnership through their own governance structure. All MoU must be signed by the Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement) on behalf of UCL once the relevant Head of Department/Director of Division/Institute and Dean of Faculty has given their approval and/or signed the MOU.
6. The Education Committee and the Research Degrees Committee have delegated the authority to the Academic Partnership Review Group (APP) to review proposals for academic partnerships with other organisations (both UK and international) which lead to or involve the award of UCL credit and/or qualifications. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will be responsible for the processes underlying the development, approval and operation of such partnerships.
7. The APP consists of representatives of these two committees as well as other UCL stakeholder Departments as appropriate (including but not limited to Student and Registry Services, Legal Services and the GEO) and is supported by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.

## 3.2 Faculty Management Framework

1. Responsibility for quality management of learning and teaching is located with Heads of (Academic) Departments (excluding the School of Life and Medical Sciences) in liaison with the relevant Dean of Faculty; this is devolved to Heads of Department from Council via the Provost.
2. In the School of Life and Medical Sciences, responsibility for quality management of learning and teaching is located with the relevant Directors of Division/Institutes; this is devolved to Directors from Council via Deans of Faculties, Vice-Provost (Health) and ultimately the Provost.

3. With paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 in mind, the day-to-day management of academic partnerships sits at local (departmental, divisional or institutional) level, normally through the Academic Programme Director, who has been appointed to the academic partnership and who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the partnership programme/activity and for ensuring that the partnership adheres to UCL's systems and procedures.
4. Management of academic partnerships must be included in the terms of reference of Departmental committees to ensure that this is embedded and this in turn reflected in the terms of Faculty committees to ensure consistency between organisational layers of UCL. The Department Teaching Committee, or equivalent, should receive the minutes of Joint Management Committees.

### 3.3 Professional Support and Oversight

1. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team provides a central point of contact at UCL regarding academic partnerships which lead to or involve the award of UCL credit and/or qualifications. This central team acts as an advisory and co-ordinating body for the approval, development and management of academic partnerships, linking up the relevant UCL stakeholders and ensuring oversight at institutional level.
2. The instigation and academic development of academic partnerships is undertaken within academic Departments and Faculties, always in liaison with the Global Engagement team (GE) (for international partnerships).
3. The processes for supporting academic partnerships beyond inception are situated in the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team. This team is the first point of contact for any member of UCL wishing to propose entering into an academic partnership.
4. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team provides expertise and guidance in evaluating and developing partnerships for academic Departments and other stakeholders during all phases of the partnership, from initial approval through to implementation, operation, review and termination.
5. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team coordinates communication with other UCL stakeholders who may need to be consulted with regard to each partnership (e.g. GEO, Legal Services).
6. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team is responsible for ensuring that any reporting relating to academic partnerships required under the Office for Students Regulatory Framework takes place (in line with UCL's standard practice for reporting to the Office for Students).
7. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team also develops and services the Academic Partnership Review Group described in Section 3.1 and other cross-UCL teams and working groups to share good practice and resolve common issues which may occur. The team also works directly with relevant areas across UCL to resolve more specific issues.

# 4 The Lifecycle of an Academic Partnership

## 4.1 Overview

1. There are four main stages to the lifecycle of an academic partnership:
  - Inception and approval;
  - Operation and monitoring;
  - Review and renewal;
  - Termination.
1. The process for management of the lifecycle is situated in Academic Policy, Quality and Standards, apart from in the case of student exchange/study abroad programmes, which are managed by the Study Abroad team, and placements and medical electives which are managed by the relevant academic Department.

## 4.2 Initial Inception

1. In the first instance, a UCL staff member seeking to instigate an academic partnership must seek initial endorsement to proceed from his/her Head of Department/ Director of Division/Institute and Dean of Faculty. Such partnerships must be considered in line with the policy set out in Part 1 of this framework.
2. The proposer must then contact the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team who will support the proposal through its lifecycle. Any agreement to proceed with developing the partnership by the relevant Head of Department/ Dean of Faculty must be provided to the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team along with details of the potential partnership.
3. Advice on how to articulate the partnership activity can be obtained from the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.
4. In the case of potential international partners, the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will consult with the Global Engagement team (GE) in order to obtain endorsement for the potential partner.

## 4.3 Procedure for Approval of a New Academic Partnership

1. The Academic Partnerships Proposal Form (*Annex 8.2*) must be completed by the proposer, with support provided by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team. Depending on the nature of the proposal, other departments, e.g., Registry, or particular members of staff, e.g., Teaching and Learning Manager or Finance Manager, may need to be consulted regarding practical aspects of the partnership.
2. The Joint and Double Research Degree Partnership Form (*Annex 8.7*) must be completed for these partnerships instead of the Academic Partnerships Proposal Form.
3. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will complete a Due Diligence Checklist and a Risk Assessment of the partner institution and partnership activity. Depending on the outcome of these checks Academic Policy, Quality and Standards Additional Financial Due Diligence may be carried out by the Academic Policy and Standards team and/or the Department will be asked to complete a Site Visit Checklist for the proposed partnership. Completed Due Diligence Checklist and Risk Assessment documents will be shared with the partnership proposers prior to consideration by the Academic Partnerships Panel.
4. The completed New Academic Partnerships Proposal Form, and Site Visit Checklist (as required) are scrutinised and considered for approval by the relevant Departmental Teaching Committee and the Faculty Teaching Committee, or the equivalent committees for research degrees.
5. The completed forms must then be submitted to the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for final review.

6. The full proposal, Due Diligence Checklist and Risk Assessment are then submitted to the Academic Partnerships Panel for consideration and institutional approval of the new Academic Partnership.
7. Approved proposals will be formally approved by the Education Committee or the Research Degrees Committee as appropriate.
8. Once a proposal has been approved by the Academic Partnerships Panel, the production of a Memorandum of Agreement will be co-ordinated by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team. The draft agreement will be shared with the academic lead for the partnership activity and the Faculty Tutor or Faculty Graduate Tutor, and negotiated with the partner organisation.
9. Approval for new programmes or modules delivered in partnership must be undertaken in parallel to the academic partnership approval process as per the relevant UCL procedures (see the Programme and Module Approval Framework). Programme approval is required for all joint and double award programmes, dual degree programmes where the UCL award is contingent on the partner institution award and double and joint research degrees. Teaching contribution partnerships will normally also require a level of programme or module approval. Flying Faculty partnerships require approval as a new route to an existing programme, or the full programme approval if the programme is new. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will advise the Faculties and Departments on which level of programme or module approval is required for a proposed academic partnership.

## 4.4 Full Proposal Documentation

1. Once initial approval to develop an academic partnership has been given, the following documents must be completed and signed off by the relevant parties depending on the type and risk level of the proposed partnership. The following table is intended as a guide as to what is required, although the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will always advise the Departments as to which documents are required for specific partnership:

<b>Academic Partnership Proposal form (Annex 8.2)</b>	<p>This must be completed for all proposals by the proposer. Once completed it should be scrutinised by the Departmental Teaching Committee and Faculty Teaching Committee. The partner institution should also confirm its agreement to certain sections of the form as indicated.</p>
<b>Due Diligence Checklist (Annex 8.3)</b>	<p>This is completed by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for each new and renewed partnership. Some parts of it may not require completion, depending on the nature and risk level of the intended partnership. A Risk Assessment will also be carried out by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for each new and renewed partnership. These documents will form part of the consideration of the Academic Partnerships Panel.</p>
<b>Site Visit Checklist (Annex 8.4)</b>	<p>This should be completed for all new partnerships, and renewed partnerships where a non-UCL venue is to be used for the provision of part or all of a partnership activity, as advised by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.</p>
<b>Articulation Agreement Curriculum Mapping</b>	<p>A mapping is required for Articulation agreement proposals where UCL will count credits from the partner institution as part of the UCL degree by admitting the students to the</p>

	<p>UCL programme with advanced standing. The mapping should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the <i>equivalence of the study workload</i> undertaken at the partner university to the relevant years of the UCL programme (using e.g. credit conversion or learning hours);</li> <li>• Evidence of the <i>equivalence of the level of the partner programme</i> to the FHEQ level of the UCL degree (through e.g. an analysis of the assessment methods and/or learning outcomes); and</li> <li>• <i>Comparative analysis of the content of the partner programme and the UCL degree</i> to ensure the students possess the relevant skills and knowledge when joining the UCL programme with advanced standing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Joint and Double Research Degree Partnership Form (Annex 8.7)</b></p>	<p>This must be completed for all Double or Joint PhD proposals by the proposer. Once completed it should be scrutinised by the Departmental Research Degrees Committee and Faculty Research Degrees Committee. The partner institution should also confirm its agreement to certain sections of the form as indicated.</p> <p>The proposer must also follow the standard approval process for Doctoral Programmes set out in Chapter 7, Part B: Programme and Module Approval and Amendment.</p>

## 4.5 Operational and Regulatory Considerations

1. The following operational and regulatory issues must be considered when developing a proposal for an academic partnership.
  - a) Marketing and recruitment:
    - how the programme will be marketed and students recruited;
    - what mechanisms are in place to approve any marketing and publicity material produced by either institution.
  - b) Admissions and entry requirements:
    - clarify the process for dealing with applications;
    - clarify any delegation of responsibility to the partner organisation;
    - admissions processes need to take account of both partners' entry criteria and regulations as well as any PSRB requirements, or joint entry criteria may need to be developed. The entry criteria for partnership programmes should not be lower than for programmes delivered entirely at and by UCL. Any changes proposed to the standard UCL entry requirements, including overseas equivalence of entry qualifications, must be approved by the Programme and Module Approval Panel and documented in the Programme Summary of the relevant programme. English language requirements can never be lower than the standard UCL requirements.
  - c) Assessment arrangements:
    - which assessment regulations will apply to the module(s) or programme(s);
    - who will be responsible for the assessment of students and how will the equivalence of marking practices be guaranteed;
    - which provider's appeals procedure will be followed and, where appropriate, the relationship between the two procedures;

- the language of instruction will normally be in English (except for language degrees, where relevant).
- d) External examiner arrangements:
  - the External Examiner arrangements for the partnership programme must be consistent with the UCL Quality Review Framework;
  - External Examiner(s) have to be appointed for all joint and double/multiple award programmes and the External Examiner(s) need to, on request, have access to samples of assessed work or examination scripts from the partner institution in order to have full oversight of the academic standards for the whole programme;
  - a joint Board of Examiners with representation from both/all institutions should be set up for joint and double/multiple award programmes.
- e) Financial processes:
  - clarify where, when and how tuition fee income or any other income will be paid and by whom;
  - clarify any invoicing arrangements.
- f) Learning resources:
  - consider what access to learning resources students require from each partner, e.g. online resources provided by the partner, and how these will be accessed;
  - consider whether staff from each partner organisation will need to access any resources at the other, e.g. library.
- g) Legal framework:
  - all academic partnerships must be subject to a legally-binding agreement based on approved UCL templates setting out the responsibilities of each party;
  - all legally-binding agreements must be time-limited and undergo review prior to renewal.
- h) Management arrangements:
  - partnership programmes must be managed in the same way as any other UCL degree programme;
  - an academic lead must be responsible for the management of the programme including liaison with the partner organisation;
  - clarify how the programme will be managed, e.g. by a joint programme committee involving staff from the partner organisation if appropriate, and how this relates to UCL management structures.
- i) Monitoring arrangements:
  - Departments/Institutes and Faculties must monitor and review academic partnerships within the UCL Quality Review Framework.
- j) Quality management:
  - as UCL is responsible for the learning experience of students registered on its qualifications, the UCL Quality Review Framework must apply to academic partnerships programmes.
- k) Award details/certification:
  - in the case of joint or multiple awards:
    - arrangements for the production and content of degree certificates and transcripts must be defined;
    - arrangements relating to graduation processes and/or ceremonies must be clearly laid out.
- l) Classification:
  - Where the UCL qualification is contingent on credit obtained at the partner institution, the formula for calculating the classification for the programme must be agreed.
  - If
    - the number of credit taught by the partner institution constitutes a maximum of 1/2 of the credits required for the UCL qualification;

- the partner institution does not use the UCL marking scheme; and
    - UCL is the sole degree-awarding body for the qualification, the grades from the partner institution may be excluded from the classification of the UCL qualification.
  - For jointly awarded qualifications, either the standard UCL, the partner institution or a jointly developed classification scheme may be used. If the standard UCL classification is not used, the proposed classification scheme must be approved by PMAP as part of the programme approval process.
  - The classification scheme for each academic partnership programme that does not use the standard UCL classification scheme must be set out in the programme summary and the additional student terms and conditions for that programme.
- m) Resources:
- clarify the staffing resources required, including the academic lead, from both organisations;
  - consider the implications for UCL estates and facilities where relevant.
- n) Registration and induction:
- clarify who is responsible for registering and inducting students on the partnership programme, including the registration status of students;
  - in the case of joint or multiple programmes, students must remain registered at UCL during any periods of time spent at the partner institution;
  - clarify whether students will remain registered at both institutions for the duration of the programme;
  - consider any visa requirements and any requirements relating to Student Visa responsibilities;
  - information on the partnership programme must be made available to students, particularly around regulations and procedures, access to learning resources within both institutions, student support and assessment, and any transfer of data between the partners, e.g., personal details, transcripts.
- o) Student support:
- students registered at UCL on a partnership programme should be entitled to the same student support services, e.g., for disability, as students on other UCL degrees;
  - clarify how students moving between organisations will access these services and how support will be configured;
  - how student feedback is collected, shared and acted upon by the partner institutions.
- p) Data transfer
- what personal data (student and/or staff) is shared with the partner institution and is any of that data [special category sensitive data](#);
  - If the partner institution is based outside the European Economic Area (EEA), Departments must comply with the guidance on [Transfers of personal data outside the EEA](#);
  - data protection issues must be addressed in the Memorandum of Agreement as advised by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.
2. When developing the proposal in liaison with the partner institutions, the proposer should consult with colleagues who might contribute to the development and operation of the programme. As a guide, these may include:
- i. Faculty Tutor/Faculty Graduate Tutor
  - ii. Academic staff involved in the programme
  - iii. Faculty manager
  - iv. Departmental learning and teaching manager

- v. Departmental/ Institute manager/finance officer (for operational and financial advice, administrative resourcing issues)
  - vi. Central UCL colleagues (e.g. the GEO; Education Services, Admissions, the Doctoral School)
3. Failure to consult adequately may result in aspects of the proposed partnership programme not working effectively, e.g. students not being registered correctly, or degree certificates not being produced with the correct details.
  4. If staff are unclear as to who they should consult with, they should speak to the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for advice.

## 4.6 Memorandum of Agreement

1. Once a proposed academic partnership has been fully approved by the Academic Partnership Review Group (and any associated programme approval completed), the proposer must ensure that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is adapted and signed by both UCL and the partner organisation(s).
2. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will support this process and draft the MoA in liaison with the academic Departments.
3. It is the responsibility of the UCL academic lead for the academic partnership to ensure s/he is familiar with the content of the MOA and for ensuring that both UCL and the partner organisation adhere to the responsibilities set out in the agreement.
4. Advice on the template to be used and finalising of the MOA is available at any time from the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team.
5. The authorised signatories for Memoranda of Agreement for academic partnerships are set out below with reference to the Council-approved Delegated Authorisation Limits:

Description of the agreement	Signatories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of the MoA or potential UCL liability under the MoA of <b>over</b> £250k</li> <li>• With an <b>international</b> partner</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Director of Finance and Business Affairs</li> <li>2. Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement).</li> <li>3. Head of Doctoral School (research degrees)</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of the MoA or potential UCL liability under the MoA of <b>up to</b> £250k</li> <li>• With an <b>international</b> partner</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vice-Provost, Education and Student Experience (taught degrees)/Head of Doctoral School (research degrees)</li> <li>2. Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement).</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of the MoA or potential UCL liability under the MoA of <b>over</b> £250k</li> <li>• With a <b>UK</b> partner</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Director of Finance and Business Affairs</li> <li>2. Vice-Provost, Education and Student Experience/Head of Doctoral School (research degrees)</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of the MoA or potential UCL liability under the MoA of up to £250k</li> <li>• With a <b>UK</b> partner</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vice-Provost, Education and Student Experience/Head of Doctoral School (research degrees)</li> </ol>

6. UCL Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team must retain one fully-signed original copy of the MOA and another must be returned to the partner organisation.
7. UCL Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will keep central records of all Memoranda of Agreement signed for academic partnerships under this framework. During the academic year preceding the year when a Memorandum of Agreement is due to expire, the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will contact the relevant Department and Faculty to facilitate the renewal of the agreement (unless the



Department wishes to terminate the partnership instead, in which case the provisions in Section 4.8 apply).

8. To ensure that the academic partnership is viable and continues to provide excellent learning opportunities to the students, the Departments must complete Annex 8.5 Academic Partnership Renewal Form for consideration and approval by the Academic Partnerships Panel (APP) on behalf of Education Committee and Research Degrees Committee. An updated Due Diligence Checklist and Risk Assessment for the partnership proposal and partnership institution will also be carried out by the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for consideration by APP as part of the renewal. These documents will be shared with the partnership proposers prior to submission to the APP. Where applicable a new Site Visit Checklist must also be completed to ensure that there have been no changes in the delivery site since the original partnership approval. The renewal of the agreement will not take place until approval for the continuation of the partnership has been obtained by APP.
9. If there is no APP-approved and fully signed Memorandum of Agreement in place for an academic partnership on 1 September in any year, the recruitment of the next intake to that programme or module (if the module is not compulsory) must be suspended until the Memorandum of Agreement has been fully signed.
10. If a change is proposed to an academic partnership during the term of the Memorandum of Agreement (e.g., a programme amendment), advice should be sought from the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team to determine whether the Memorandum of Agreement requires amendment. Should an amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement be required, the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will draft a Variation of Agreement letter to reflect the change and ensure that this is signed by UCL and the partner organisation(s) in liaison with the relevant Faculty.

## 4.7 Operation and Monitoring of an Academic Partnership

1. The academic Departments are responsible for managing the academic partnerships they have, with support from the Faculty and any relevant professional service departments. The Department appoints an Academic Programme Director for the partnership, who is the first point of contact for all matters relating to the partnership and programme.
2. Departments should also appoint a dedicated member of administrative support staff to assist the Academic Programme Director in fulfilling their responsibilities.
3. The specific key responsibilities of the Academic Programme Director are set out in the Memorandum of Agreement relating to the partnership. The responsibilities can vary depending of the type of academic partnership, but the following responsibilities normally apply to taught degrees:
  - acting as the first point of contact for the partner institution at UCL;
  - having an oversight of marketing and recruitment of students as well as admissions and registration of students on the programme at UCL;
  - ensuring that the teaching and assessment processes are carried out as per respective institutional requirements;
  - assuring the academic standards and quality management of the programme in line with institutional and external national requirements, including student engagement and feedback processes for all parts of the programme;
  - the day to day management of students registered on the programme;
  - liaison with academic and professional services staff at UCL and partner institution as appropriate;
  - ensuring external examiner(s) are appointed to the programme, and liaising with the external examiner(s) as appropriate;

- ensuring that all information published and made available to students and other stakeholders through both institutions is accurate, up to date and reliable;
  - ensuring that information on the students' achievement, performance and registration on the programme while they are based at the partner institution is obtained and processed by UCL as necessary for the purposes of managing students' records and awarding the degree;
  - ensuring that the conditions and terms stated in the Memorandum of Agreement are adhered to within UCL.
4. Most academic partnerships (as set out in the Memorandum of Agreement) will require a Joint Management Committee, which includes representatives from both/all institutions and meets at least annually to discuss developments and issues relating to the partnership and programme. A template agenda for a Joint Management Committee can be found in *Annex 8.8*. Further terms of reference and operation for each Joint Management Committee are set out in the relevant Memorandum of Agreement.
  5. Where an academic partnership has a Joint Management Committee, the Department is required to provide the minutes of the meetings from the previous academic year, to the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team via [academic.partnerships@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:academic.partnerships@ucl.ac.uk) by the 1<sup>st</sup> October.
  6. Academic partnerships are periodically reviewed as part of UCL's Internal Quality Review processes (see Chapter 9: Quality Review Framework).
  7. The viability and operation of an academic partnership are evaluated upon the renewal of the relevant Memorandum of Agreement (see Section 4.6).

## 4.8 Termination of an Academic Partnership

1. Termination of a collaborative partnership may be categorised in one of three main ways as follows:
  - i. Termination of the partnership by UCL before the term of the Memorandum of Agreement has finished;
  - ii. Non-renewal of the Memorandum of Agreement when its term has expired. This may be by mutual agreement of both institutions or by one institution or the other not wishing to continue the collaboration;
  - iii. Termination by the partner organisation before the Memorandum of Agreement has reached its full term.
2. Termination of a partnership by UCL may be for a number of reasons, for example, failure to recruit sufficient student numbers to make the partnership viable, financial matters, quality issues or government changes in the country of the partner institution. These examples are not exhaustive.
3. The partner organisation may terminate the partnership with UCL for a variety of reasons, some of which may be similar to those given above.

### **Termination and Duty of Care to Students**

4. Whatever the reasons for the termination of an academic partnership, whether mutually agreed or by one partner or the other, both institutions have a duty of care to students studying and registered on a programme carrying a UCL award. The duty of care is such that students must be able to complete their programme to the normal timescales. UCL should endeavour to agree an exit strategy with the partner organisation that ensures this duty of care is met for students.

### **Exit Strategy**

5. Unless the Memorandum of Agreement includes specific and clear reference to the obligation of both parties to continue to support the students even after the expiry or termination of the agreement until all students have successfully completed their UCL programme or module, the two organisations should agree an exit strategy that ensures all current students can complete their UCL programme. This should be a

written document and may take the form of a letter. An exit strategy should also include timescales for current students to complete their programme of study and allow for the possibility of resits, deadline extensions and so forth where there are justified extenuating circumstances.

6. Where a partner institution cannot provide an arrangement which will provide this duty of care to students, for example, due to insolvency resulting in ceasing to trade, it is the responsibility of UCL to ensure the duty of care to current, enrolled students is met. This may require alternative arrangements for teaching, assessing and providing equivalent learning opportunities for the students.

### **Approval**

7. *Annex 8.6 Academic Partnership Termination Form* should be completed and signed as indicated for partnership terminations that do not involve terminating a degree programme or a route on a degree programme. When complete, this should be submitted to the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team for report to the Academic Partnerships Panel (APP).
8. The arrangements for termination, duty of care to students and the exit strategy as set out in the termination form must be approved by the Head of the Academic Department and then signed off by the Dean of Faculty or the Faculty Tutor. If the partnership is a non-UK partnership, the Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team will also inform the Global Engagement team of the termination.
9. Where the partnership termination involves terminating a degree programme or a route on a degree programme, the programme withdrawal process set out in Chapter 7, Part B: Programme and Module Approval and Amendment must be followed instead of using *Annex 8.6 Academic Partnership Termination Form*. The Programme Withdrawal Questionnaire will be also approved by the Academic Partnerships Panel where it includes a termination of an academic partnership.
10. The Academic Policy, Quality and Standards team can offer advice and guidance on matters to do with termination, exit strategy and duty of care to students if required.