

## Section 11: Working with other institutions

# Self-evaluation and Business Planning for the review of Partnership Programmes

*[Although a significant proportion of this document needs to be descriptive it should also include an evaluation of current practice - showing areas where weaknesses are known and where improvements/enhancements can be made]*

This document has been developed to encompass all partnership programmes. However, it is appreciated that each partnership programme is different and the review process should be proportionate. Therefore those operating progression and articulation arrangements should contact Georgina Randall ([g.m.randall@reading.ac.uk](mailto:g.m.randall@reading.ac.uk)) in the Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) for further guidance.

Schools are required to write a Self-evaluation and Business Planning document covering the following headings. : The questions indicate factors which should be considered and particular attention should be given to areas of significantly development since initial approval or last review of the partnership programme.

### 1. Executive Summary

- This summary should provide an overview of the key elements of the programme covering the period since the partnership was established or the partnership was last reviewed, including details on:
  - Brief details of the partner organisation, the origins of the partnership and timeline of the relationship:
  - List of the programme(s) involved, type of award, mode of study, amount and type of study done at each institution, entry tariff, fees:
  - Student numbers involved:
  - Local recognition or accreditation requirements for operating in the Partner's Country
  - What has worked particularly well? What are the examples of good practice? Have these activities led to any other partnership programmes (either within School or across the University)?
  - Have there been any significant changes in the context of then programme? (e.g. Changes with the partner, changes in the locality of the partner)
  - What key areas have been identified for development? And if so, how are you going to take these forward?

### 2. Strategic Fit

- Does the programme continue to fit with:
  - The School Operating Plan?
  - School's – and related areas - current offering?

- University's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Priorities?
  - Internationalisation Strategy?
- What are future plans for the programme/s? Any changes planned for size, scope, model? Will this have implications on resources?

### **3. Resources**

- Have you consulted with the following services for feedback on the operation of the programme:
  - Other Schools involved
  - Admissions
  - Library
  - IT Services
  - Study Advice
  - Student Services Centre
  - RISIS
  - Exams office
  - International Study and Language Centre (for pre/in-sessional language support)
  - Centre for Quality Support and Development
  - Careers, Placement and Experience Centre
  - Reading International Office
- Are there any plans to enhance the recourse provision on the programme such as new technological or lab based equipment?

### **4. Risk Analysis**

- Does the School/University continue to have capacity to successfully run the programme?
- What would be the implications if 10% or 20% fewer or more students were accepted on the programme? Has this occurred for previous cohorts and what was the effect?
- Are there any other factors of change on the horizon? What would their impact be?
- What is the exit strategy if the partnership were required to terminate quickly?
- Has the partner established or are they in the process of establishing similar programmes with any other partners?

### **5. Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions**

- What marketing materials are in use for this programme? What mechanisms are there for UoR to check amendments or final version of new materials? How does UoR monitor these marketing materials? Who is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of marketing information?
- Have any new competitors emerged? What do they offer which is comparable? Does UoR still have a unique selling point?
- What evidence do you have that there is continued demand for the programme?
- If UoR is responsible for admissions, are the standard procedures applied? If the partner is responsible for admissions, what is the process and have any problems arisen?
- What have the recruitment numbers been? Has there been any fluctuation in numbers and if so, has the cause been identified?

- What is the projected recruitment numbers for the next three years? What are the maximum and minimum numbers for the programme? Are there any anticipated issues coming up that are likely to affect recruitment?
- Are there any plans to change the entry tariff? Is the entry tariff still competitive?
- What are the fees for the programme? Are the fees still competitive?<sup>1</sup> (What is the profile of students admitted? Are there particular patterns in admission and are there areas where more marketing could be utilised?)
- Have any students had problems financing their studies?
- Are there any proposed new initiatives to enhance marketing of the programme and recruitment?

## **6. Programme Delivery and Student Experience**

- In what ways has the programme changed? Have any significant changes been made by either the partner or UoR? How does UoR ensure that changes are communicated and curriculum mapping exercise take place (if changes are significant)?
- How do you ensure that the programme delivers a high quality student experience? Please provide examples to support your answer.
- Are there suitable range of teaching methods and student learning opportunities? Please provide examples.
- Are there any plans to change the programme significantly (e.g. introduction of a new pathway)? Are there any proposed new ways of delivery the programme content?
- What mechanisms are in place for students to feedback on the programme and modules? What has the general tone of the feedback been? Where problems have been identified, what actions have been taken and how has this been feedback to students?
- What mechanisms are in place for student representation? How do student provide input on the programme?
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the student experience at the partner? Is it comparable to student experience at UoR?
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the mechanism for transfer? E.g. registration at UoR.
- For programmes involving transfer from the partner to UoR, what is the impact of a group of students arriving en masse into the student body – both for the arriving students and the current cohort?
- Is there any variation on the standard student representation policy of UoR?
- Has there been any change in procedures for student discipline, academic appeals and student complaints when studying at UoR and the partner?
- Have students been able, where required, to access support provided by the Disability Advisory Service? Is the physical learning and teaching environment accessible for all students?
- Have students been able to find suitable accommodation for the duration of their programme at UoR?
- Is there variation in any UoR policies for the programme?
- Are there any plans for new initiatives to enhance student support?

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that any fee reduction requests must be submitted to the Sub-group on Fees, University Bursaries and Scholarships.

## **7. Student information and support**

- What is the status of students (in terms of being UoR students) at various points in the programme?
- What information is supplied to current students? Does this vary between UoR and the partner?
- Do students receive student handbooks which include programme specific information on student entitlement to academic and personal support and learning resources?
- What are the arrangements for academic and pastoral support and the responsibilities of UoR and the partner respectively?
- What UoR learning resources are students entitled to both remotely and locally? Are these adequate, consistent and has the level/type changed?
- What additional services are offered by the partner to students? At which stage of the programme are these offered?
- Are students provided with any additional support (such as pre-sessional or in-sessional English language support, induction and transition events)? Was this planned or have these provisions developed as need arose? Are there plans for support to be developed in the future?

## **8. Assessment, progression and External Examiners**

- What are the respective responsibilities/input of UoR and the partner for assessment in relation to:
  - Assessment tasks – setting assignments and exam papers and preparing students for them
  - Conduct of examinations
  - Marking and moderation of student work and examination scripts
  - Feedback to students on assessment performances
- What are the arrangements for Exam Boards and student progression between institutions and Parts at UoR? What is the input of the partner?
- What are the arrangements for External Examiners? Who appoints the external examiner and how are their reports fed back to the partner? How are recommendations of external examiners fed back into the programme?

## **9. Employability, Graduation and Destinations**

- Have students been able to access the Careers, Experience and Placement Centre at UoR?
- Is the programme accredited? If so, what consultations have taken place with the relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB)? Has there been any feedback from the PSRB? Will they need to be contacted prior to any revalidation of the programme?
- Does the programme include placements, Erasmus or study abroad opportunities?
- What are the arrangements for graduation, certificates and transcripts? What information relating to the partner is included on the certificate/ transcript?
- What is the destination of those who have graduated from the programme? Have any students pursued further study (where applicable)?
- Has any feedback been received from employers? Do employers have any involvement in the programme?
- Are there any plans for engaging employers in new ways and providing students with new development opportunities?

## 10. Communication

- Does this programme have a specific Programme Committee or Board of Studies? If so, how often do they meet and are formal records kept of these meetings? What is the membership of the committee and where does it meet?
- How does the programme feed into a UoR Board of Studies?
- What are the on-going monitoring arrangements? How are issues raised and addressed?
- How does the partner input into annual monitoring and what support is provided for this?
- Have any issues been raised in the following, and how have they been addressed?
  - Partner Programme Sub-Report
  - Partnership annual review (Form B)
- How does UoR and the partner communicate day-to-day?
- How effective is the Operational Handbook?
- What is the management structure and key operational roles for the programme? Who is responsible for what at both UoR and the partner? (See also table below)
- How are student records, student data on progression and achievement kept and maintained?
- How often are visits made between the partner and UoR? Is the number of visits more or less at the frequency anticipated? Will the number of visits stay the same in the future? Are there any formal reports of visits made?

## 11. Staffing and staff development

- Has the programme had sufficient academic, pastoral and administrative support staff to deliver the programme? Have there been any changes since the programme was established?
- Who is responsible for the appointment and management of staff teaching on the programme? Has this allocation of responsibility changed?
- Do the staff teaching on the programme continue to have academic and professional capacity to continue to teach the programme?
- Have the programme leads for UoR and/or the partner changed? How has this affected the programme?
- Have you reviewed CVs of any new staff teaching on the programme<sup>2</sup>?
- What is the process for dealing with complaints/concerns about staff?
- What staff support and development is offered? Are there any CQSD courses available? How frequent have these been? How is it ensured that staff are kept up to date with changes in the programme?
- Are there any plans to support staff development in new ways?

## 12. Areas of responsibility

- Which partner is responsible for the following elements? Please fully complete the following table and indicate the degree of responsibility where it is shared.

**Areas of Responsibility**

**Please state which partner has responsibility for each of these areas, highlighting areas where changes in responsibility have been made and why.**

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<sup>2</sup> It is a requirement that the University should formally and in advance of their commencing teaching on University programmes, approve the curricula vitae of all relevant partner institution staff.

<b>Curriculum design</b>	
<b>Advertising and marketing</b>	
<b>Recruitment activities</b>	
<b>Application advice</b>	
<b>Admissions</b>	
<b>Registration</b>	
<b>Accommodation</b>	
<b>Induction</b>	
<b>Teaching</b>	
<b>Teaching facilities</b>	
<b>IT facilities &amp; resources</b>	
<b>VLE</b>	
<b>Learning resources</b>	
<b>Student evaluation</b>	
<b>Setting assessments</b>	
<b>Marking &amp; feedback</b>	
<b>Moderation</b>	
<b>External examining</b>	
<b>Examination Board</b>	
<b>Board of Studies</b>	
<b>Annual Programme Report</b>	
<b>Student representation</b>	
<b>Disciplinary matters</b>	
<b>Appeals</b>	
<b>Complaints</b>	
<b>Collecting tuition fees</b>	
<b>Student support (academic)</b>	
<b>Careers education, information, advice and guidance</b>	
<b>Student support (pastoral)</b>	
<b>Student support (disabilities)</b>	
<b>Staff visits to other partner (informal/formal, for teaching, reviewing programme etc.)</b>	
<b>Staff training and evaluation</b>	
<b>Certificates &amp; transcripts</b>	

### 13. Partner Status and Operating Context

#### Partner Status

- When does the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the partner expire?<sup>3</sup>
- What existing relationship does the partner have with UoR?
- What comments and recommendations have been provided by any *Partnership annual review (Form A)*?
- For partners where the University already runs an academic partnership programme, what comments and recommendations have been provided by any *Annual monitoring form B for progression and collaborative programmes* and *Partner Programme Sub-Reports*?

Have you established, in addition to checks carried out at MoU stage:

- UoR's experience of operating the proposed model of the programme?
- UoR's ability to successfully resource investigation of the programme with specific consideration of resource implications for the School and CQSD?
- UoR's ability to successfully resource delivery the programme with specific consideration of resource implications for the Teaching and Learning Dean, CQSD, Blackboard, the Library?
- the School's ability to successfully resource investigation of the programme and delivery the programme including funding of a full site visit where applicable?
- the partner's status (an HEI with or without degree awarding powers, further education college, or other organisation)?
- the partner's previous experience of delivering higher education at the relevant level?
- the partner's knowledge, understanding and previous experience with UK higher education?
- the partner's experience of academic partnerships collaborative provision with other institutions with special note of current arrangements with UK HEIs?
- the partner shares the University's educational objectives and expectations for the assurance and maintenance of academic standards and qualities?
- the partners fit and overlap with UoR in terms of qualification levels and subject areas?
- the financial status and stability of the partner which indicates it is demonstrably financially capable of entering into and maintaining the arrangement (*only applicable where the partnership involves a significant financial risk to the University*)?
- the partner has the ability to contract (if a binding agreement is to be put in place) and who the contracting party is?
- the partner has the ability to enter into a partnership for delivery of the type of programme and arrangement in question. Are there any restrictions on what they can and cannot do?
- for jointly awarded degrees: do institutional regulations permit the award of joint degrees *i.e.* does the partner have the requisite legal and regulatory capacity?
- does the partner have any business interests and/or links with private or overseas providers which could present potential risks to the proposed arrangement?
- has in place the suitable type and standard of facilities and resources need to meet their areas of responsibility for delivering the proposed programme? Including health and safety, equality of opportunity, student complaints procedure, disability provisions, staff development opportunities, etc.

What kind of profile does the partner have:

- with QAA?
- with their own quality assurance body?
- in the media?

<sup>3</sup> Before an academic partnership can be pursued, a MoU must exist between UoR and the partner. CQSD can advise if an MoU is already in place.

- with their other partners?

## **Operating Context**

Country context:

- What is the level of stability within the country and region in which the partner is based including profile with UK Border Agency?
- What legal and regulatory frameworks and Higher education structures does the partner operate within?
- Is UoR able to operate within the legislative framework and the political, ethical and cultural context requirements of the region?
- What is UoR's experience working in the partner's HE sector and area of the world?
- Are there any country specific regulations to operate the programme? E.g. Letter of Accreditations, application to the local Ministry of Education:
- Are there any monetary restrictions including any laws relating to tax, VAT, transfer of money, limit on levels of fees? Are there any laws relating to partners in receipt of public funds where relevant?
- Are there any issues with transferring monies out of the countries concerned?
- What is the official language of the country the partner is based in and to what extent is English is spoken as a second language?

Regulatory considerations:

- Are there any implications for professional accreditation of the programme if it is delivered in partnership?
- What are the implications of current UK legislation affecting the admission of international students (i.e. immigration and visa requirements) for the programme?
- How can UoR be compliant with copyright licenses, library licenses, software licenses and data transfer whilst pursuing academic activity in the region?

Contingency arrangements:

- What arrangements would be made for students were the ownership of a partner, or its status, to change in such a way that might lead to the termination of the arrangements. What would be the costs?

## **14. Finance**

- Please provide details of finances of the programme including:
  - Details of direct costs incurred (travel and accommodation, external examiner costs, institutional quality assurance costs, additional administration etc.):
  - Details of tuition fees with a breakdown of target student numbers split between Home & Overseas :
  - Details of associated costs for programme materials including learning resources:
  - Details of lecturer/tutor requirements (e.g. number of days and equivalent grades whether external or internal)
  - Overall cost/benefit analysis and projected costs and income for the partnership for the period of the next agreement:
  - Any other income/expenditure.
- Is a validation fee charged for this programme? If so, please provide details of this arrangement.

## **15. Other documentary requirements**

Please provide:



- *Partner Programme Sub-Reports* for past three years (produced by the partner for Board of Studies) where available:
- *Monitoring Form B for progression arrangements and collaborative* for past three years (for International Project Board):
- Any written reports of visits and meetings to or from the partner:
- Operational Handbook (where available):
- Original business plan:
- Any further documentation relating to the programme delivered with the partner.

## **16. Renewal**

- Have any discussions taken place with the partner regarding renewal of the MoA? Did they have any stipulations or key changes they would wish to make to the contract? Does the UoR School have any stipulations or key changes they wish to include in the contract?
- Will any renewal require local recognition or accreditation requirements for operating in the partner's country (permission from national/regional government authorities, if applicable)?