

Section 5: Programme design and development

Approval of a new programme

[For the purposes of the processes described in this document, in Henley Business School the Head of Programmes will be fulfilling the functions of the School Director of Teaching and Learning.]

Scope of guidelines

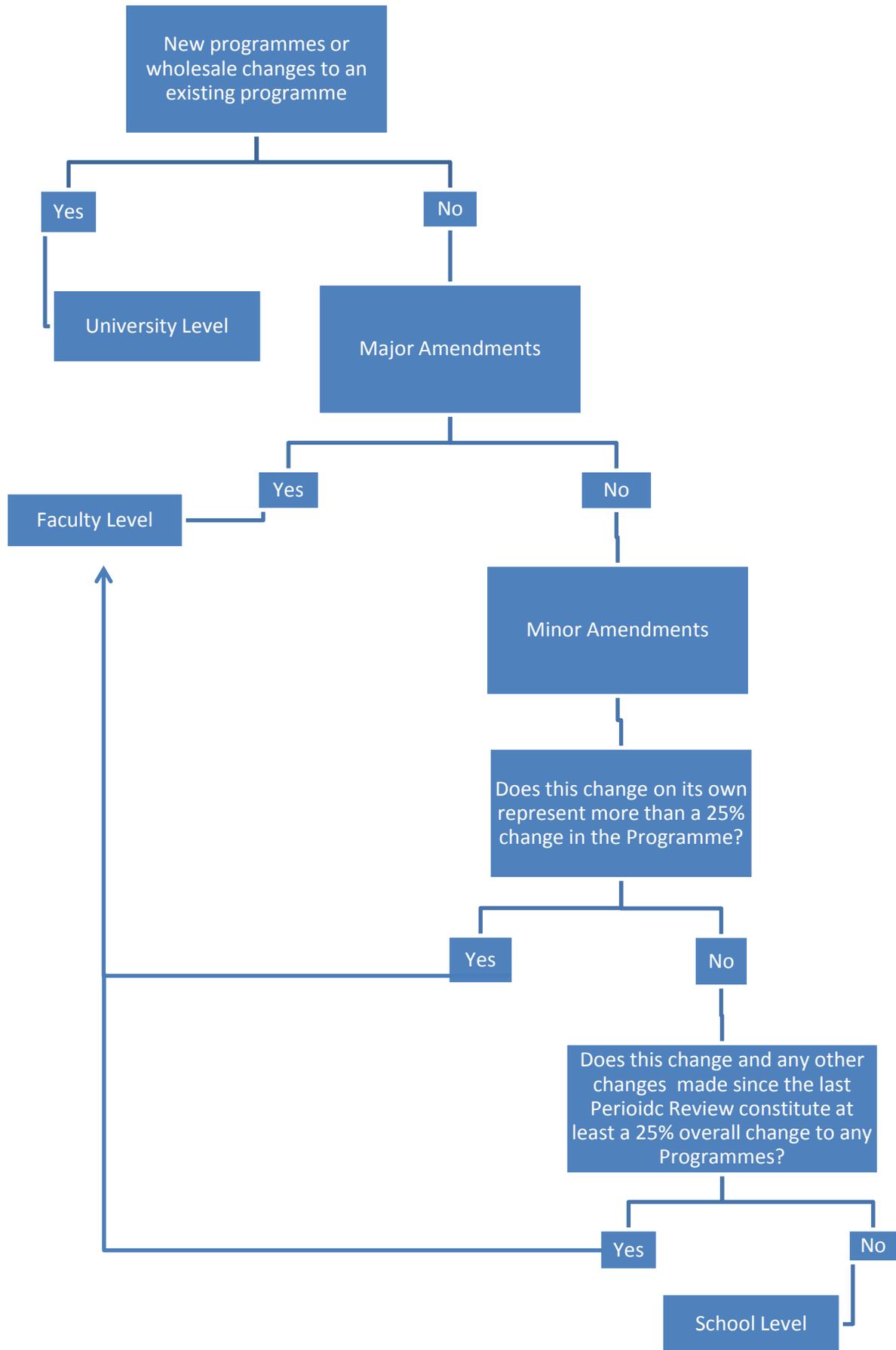
1. The University divides approval of programme initiatives in to three types:

Approval process	Characteristics	Which guidelines?
School-level	Minor amendments, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revision of existing modules and module descriptions • minor changes to programmes as a whole which do not alter programme outcomes or the balance of assessment 	<i>Amendments to programmes</i>
Faculty-level	Major amendments, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a change in the programme title or the award (such as changing from a BA to a BSc) or duration of Programme provided this does not involve changes that require University level approval • a substantial change to the programme outcomes • changing modules from compulsory to optional or vice-versa • a new programme which is an amalgamation of existing modules or programmes (The relevant ADTL may choose to increase the level of approval to University level, taking into consideration resource required, academic coherence and the effect on the University programme portfolio) • an existing programme which will now be taught at an branch campus or international office provided this does not involve changes that require University level approval • delivery of an existing programme with the introduction of a small elements of blended or distance learning 	<i>Amendments to programmes</i>

	<p><i>Changes to entrance requirements are considered by the Committee on Student Recruitment, and Academic Provision and Marketing (STRAM), subject to the University's Admissions Policies which are approved by Senate on the recommendation of the University Board for Teaching and Learning.(UBTL)</i></p>	
University-level	<p>New programmes and wholesale changes to existing programmes e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes which have resource implications, such as staffing, new equipment, student numbers • development of existing programmes to be delivered with a partner (including jointly awarded-degrees, progression and articulation arrangements) • an existing programme but will be delivered in a new mode e.g. distance learning, significant introduction of blended learning elements • establishing an Integrated Masters Programme from new or existing Programmes 	<i>Approval of a new programme</i>

2. This document provides detailed guidelines for Faculties and Schools to use in relation to proposals requiring University-level approval. Guidelines on the process to follow in the case which require Faculty or School level approval, the Amendments to a programme document should be used; <http://www.reading.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=72561&sID=87193> The flow-chart below will help staff to identify which approval process and guidelines should be followed:

Flowchart 1: Which approval process?



N.B. Based on the characteristics and associated risks of the proposal, the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) ADTL is permitted to increase the level of approval normally required for a programme initiative from Faculty- to University-level

To determine if a change, or cumulative changes, affect 25% of the programme since the last Periodic Review, proposers should consider:

- a. Change in mode of delivery such as introduction of blended learning, distance learning or change in contact hours
- b. Change in modular aims or learning outcomes
- c. Significant alteration in the subjects covered through introduction or withdrawal of core/optional modules
- d. Change in assessment method and assessment weighting
- e. Change in credit weighting or level of modules
- f. Introduction or withdrawal of compulsory placements or study abroad period

Proposers should note that 25% is offered as an indication of the extent of cumulative change which requires at least Faculty Level scrutiny. It is recognised that change is not readily quantifiable and that proposer should exercise judgment in assessing to what extent a change will affect the overall Programme, learning outcomes and student experience.

Staff in the relevant Faculty Office are available to offer advice on the appropriate process proposers should follow.

3. Specific guidance on the design of new programmes, including programmes which involve delivery with a partner, can be found in *Guidelines on the design of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes*.

Introduction

4. The University welcomes initiatives to improve and widen the scope of the programmes it offers. To ensure the quality and consistency of its provision, all new programmes and programmes involving wholesale changes need to be approved via the University-Level Approval process before they commence.
5. The objectives of the University-Level Approval process are:
 - to ensure that the proposed programme meets the University's requirements for quality and standards, and with any requirements of the QAA, professional and statutory bodies and other stakeholders;
 - to ensure that the proposed programme is consistent with the University's Corporate Plans, the Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Global Engagement Strategy, and the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Priorities;
 - to ensure that the proposed programme is consistent with the School or Department's priorities as identified in the School Planning and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (SPELT) process;
 - to ensure the financial viability of the proposed programme;
 - to consider the aims and objectives of the programme and how these are to be achieved;
 - to ask fundamental questions about the academic rationale and structure of the proposed programme; and,
 - to assist eventual Boards of Studies and Module Providers to prepare for Periodic

Review, subsequent external assessment, and where appropriate, professional accreditation.

6. This document is intended to guide proposers of new programmes to the simplest and quickest way of ensuring that the proposal is fully considered and for confirming that it conforms to the University's standards. The amount of detail required and the degree of scrutiny it will receive depends on the complexity of the proposal.
7. Supporting documentation should be completed by the nominated proposers within the Department, with the support of their School Director of Teaching and Learning. The Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) should be consulted during the process and additional guidance can be supplied by the Faculty Office. The documentation required at each stage of the proposal process is included in a box under the relevant heading below. All documentation can be found in section 5 here; <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Teaching partnerships

8. The University wishes to support Proposers seeking to develop programmes involving delivery with other institutions within the UK and overseas, which are purposeful, strategic and aligned with the University's strategies and other relevant sub-strategies. It is the responsibility of the University to ensure the academic standards and quality of learning delivered for all awards granted in its name, including programmes delivered with a partner.
9. All proposals for taught programmes to be delivered with a partner institution (such as jointly-awarded degrees, Foundation Degrees and articulation and progression arrangements), either domestically or internationally, will pass through the University-Level Approval process. In addition to the standard process, partnership programmes will also undergo additional investigations due to the higher level of risk associated with this type of programme.
10. The additional steps for partnership programmes are indicated at each Stage in a separate box. In recognition of the different levels of risk inherent with partnerships, two boxes are included for each category;
 - Progression and Articulation arrangements
 - All other Partnerships
11. The definition of Progression and Articulation arrangements, as well as a wider typology of partnerships, can be found in Section 11c here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Whilst the University does have a process for individual students to transfer credit to be counted towards a University award (*University Policy on Assessment of Prior (Experiential) Learning (AP(E)L)*), it is recommended that where it is expected on a regular basis that groups of students from the same institution will wish to transfer credit, it is advisable to set up a Progression or Articulation arrangement.

Normally, the same limits on credit transfer and exemption apply to Progression and Articulation arrangements as for students being considered for individual AP(E)L; a

maximum of two thirds of an undergraduate programme and one third of a postgraduate programme can be gained via transfer/exemption.

12. The process in respect of Postgraduate Research Programmes is described in *Postgraduate Research Programmes: Collaborative arrangements framework*, which is published under section 9 here:

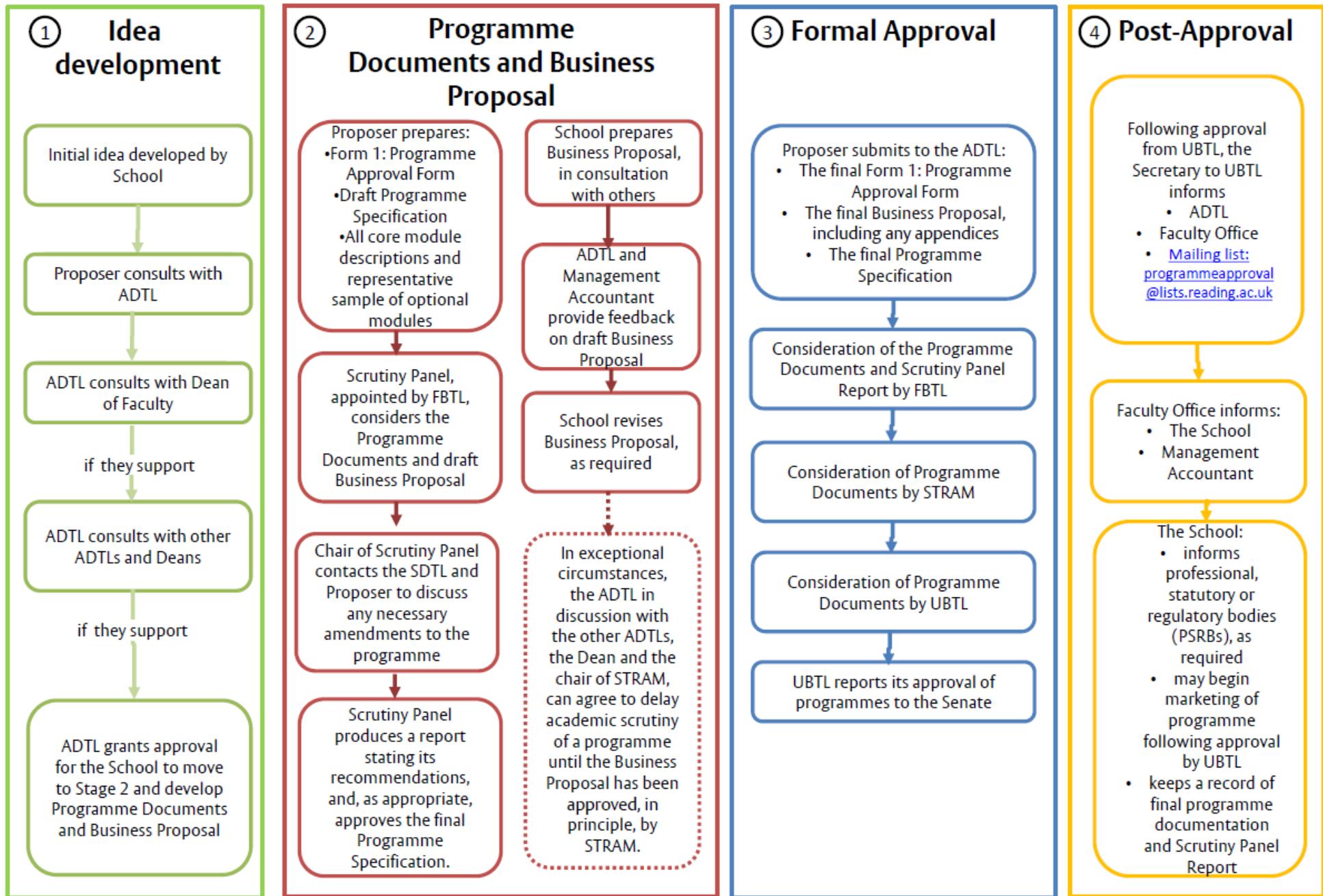
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

University-Level Approval Process

13. There are four stages of University-Level Approval, which are summarised in the table below and mapped out in the approval process flowchart on the next page. As noted above, variations to this process will apply for programmes which involve delivery with a partner. For such programmes, Proposers should refer to Appendix 1 of this document.

Stage	Characteristics
<u>1: Idea development</u>	Discussion of initiative within School, consultation within School/Faculty and initial approval.
<u>2: Programme Documents and Business Proposal</u>	Preparation of Programme Documents and Business Proposal, and scrutiny within Faculty.
<u>3: Formal Approval</u>	Submission of documents, as approved by the Faculty, to the Committee on Student Recruitment, Academic Provision and Marketing and onward to the University Board for Teaching and Learning. The Board then reports to the Senate.
<u>4: Post Approval</u>	Stakeholders informed of programme approval and programme implemented. Marketing, recruitment can begin.

Flowchart 2: Overview of University-level Approval



14. It is suggested that Schools set out an indicative timeframe for each stage of the process, taking into consideration the timing of groups and Committees that will scrutinise the proposal, the resources available across the University and within School as well as the time needed to properly market the Programme before its planned commencement. The timeframe may expand or contract depending on the complexity of the proposal and resource available. The chart below outlines potential timeframes.

Domestic Programmes

School Timeline *

Stage	Approximate timescale
Discussions with key School/Faculty/CQSD colleagues	As required by School
Approval to develop idea and ADTL	As required by School
Development of paperwork and continuing liaison with School/Faculty/University colleagues	As required by School

Faculty Timeline **

Faculty consideration of paperwork submission and setting up scrutiny panel	2 week – 4 weeks
Scrutiny meeting and preparation of report	1 week – 4 weeks
School response to scrutiny report	1 week – 2 weeks
If required, further development and resubmission to scrutiny panel	As required by School
FBTL approval	1 week – 2 weeks

University Timeline***

STRAM approval	2 weeks – 4 weeks
UBTL approval	2 weeks – 4 weeks
UCAS and Programme Code set up	1 week – 3 weeks (longer during Summer vacation)
Hard copy prospectus deadlines**** UG – November, 24 months prior to first cohort entry PG – March, 18 months prior to first cohort entry	

Notes:

* Dependent on the complexity and number of Schools or departments involved

** Dependent on the complexity of the proposal and resource available within the relevant Faculty Office

*** Dependent on dates of University Committee meetings and resource available within the relevant Faculty Office and RISIS

**** Proposers should contact Digital Development to enable newly approved programmes to be included on the University's website

Partnership Programmes

In the case of partnerships it is particularly important to ensure adequate time is allowed for additional documentation, a site visit or partnerships investigations and, post-approval, the negotiation and signing of contracts. Discussion with a partner will involve discussions outside of this timeframe and the chart below demonstrates the internal University approval process element of partnership building. The Centre for Quality Support and Development (g.m.randall@reading.ac.uk) can advise on a proposed timeframe for specific partnership.

School Timeline *

Stage	Approximate timescale
Discussions with key School/Faculty/CQSD colleagues	As required by School
Approval to develop idea and ADTL	As required by School
Development of paperwork and continuing liaison with School/Faculty/University colleagues	As required by School

Faculty Timeline **

Partnership Investigations	6 – 8 weeks
Faculty consideration of paperwork submission and setting up scrutiny panel	2 week – 4 weeks
Scrutiny meeting and preparation of report	1 week – 4 weeks
School response to scrutiny report	1 week – 2 weeks
If required, further development and resubmission to scrutiny panel	As required by School
FBTL approval	1 week – 2 weeks

University Timeline***

STRAM approval	2 weeks – 4 weeks
UBTL approval	2 weeks – 4 weeks
UCAS and Programme Code set up	1 week – 3 weeks (longer during Summer vacation)
Hard copy prospectus deadlines**** UG – November, 24 months prior to first cohort entry PG – March, 18 months prior to first cohort entry	
Negotiation and Signing of contract	Dependent on complexity of provision
Operational set up of programme	Ongoing

Notes:

* Dependent on the complexity and number of Schools or departments involved

** Dependent on the complexity of the proposal and resource available within the relevant Faculty Office

*** Dependent on dates of University Committee meetings and resource available within the relevant Faculty Office and RISIS

**** Proposers should contact Digital Development to enable newly approved programmes to be included on the University's website

Stage 1: Idea Development

No formal documentation required

15. The Proposer, School Director of Teaching and Learning and Head of School should discuss the programme idea and reach an agreement as to whether they consider it to be worth developing further.
16. Where the School wishes to proceed with the programme idea, the Proposer should consult in the first instance with the relevant ADTL.
17. The ADTL will consider the programme idea and will consult with the Dean of the Faculty. If they support the proposal, the ADTL will consult ADTLs and Deans in the other Faculties, normally via an exchange of emails, to ensure that there is no conflict with initiatives in other parts of the University. The proposal may be sent back to the School for further clarification or development by the ADTL, either upon initial receipt of the proposal or following consultation with counterparts in other Faculties.
18. Where there is approval of the programme idea, the ATDL will inform the School and grant approval for the School to develop Programme Documents and Business Proposal.
19. UBTL permits that in exceptional cases, the ADTL in discussion with the other ADTLs, the Dean and the chair of the Committee on Student Recruitment, Academic Provision and Marketing (STRAM), could agree to defer academic scrutiny of a programme until the Business Proposal had been approved, in principle, by STRAM.

Partnership Programmes – Stage 1 additional steps

Memorandum of Understanding

1. Where a partnership is under consideration, proposers should investigate if a Memorandum of Understanding is in place with the partner; CQSD can advise on this. Where a MoU does not exist and initial approval for the partnership is granted, Schools must follow the process for obtaining an MoU as set out in *Request for a Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU)¹ (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=86567&sID=87193>).
2. The Global Engagement Strategy Board is responsible for considering each proposed MoU request and will only approve an MoU if there are arguments for how the new partnership will enhance the University of Reading. The Proposer will be required to comment upon the academic standing of proposed partner, the name of the proposed partner's current partner institutions, the nature of any existing links with proposed partner, benefits of proposed partnership and any risks associated with partnership.
3. The International Project Board will inform the Proposer of the outcome of their request and if supportive, approve the development of the MoU. The MoU will be written and signed in consultation with CQSD and Academic Legal Services.

¹ An MoU is a formal declaration of a partnership between two institutions. It is a generic document, stating the partners' intention to explore various activities.

Initial meeting and site visit decision

4. Proposers should convene a meeting with the School's SDTL, the appropriate ADTL, a representative of CQSD and any other internal members of staff who will play a key role in the development of the academic partnership. This meeting will allow stakeholders to discuss whether the proposal should be progressed and also decide if a site visit is required. These discussions should address the time frame in which the proposal will be developed and submitted for approval. Discussions should consider a range of factors as outlined in Section C-E of *Annex 6: Standard Template for Business Proposal* (Section 5a here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>).
5. The meeting will further consider the level of investigations required for the programme based upon the scale and complexity of the proposed activity, the type of partner and the experience of the partner in the academic area and in partnerships.
6. Once the meeting has taken place, the ADTL will consider the programme initiative and will consult with the Dean of the Faculty. If they support the proposal, the ADTL will consult ADTLs and Deans in the other Faculties, normally via an exchange of emails. This will act as an opportunity to link up initiatives with the same partner from across the University or ensure that there is no conflict with initiatives in other parts of the University. The ADTL may request further information from the Proposer as part of these initial considerations.
7. The decision on whether a site visit is required will be based on the level of risk inherent with the unique context of the proposed programme and partner. Section C & D of *Annex 6: Standard Template for Business Proposal* should form the basis of discussions regarding risks. The following table broadly indicates the level of risk for certain types of academic partner programmes in relation to typology:

Nature of arrangement	Likely range of level of risk
Joint award	High
Validation	High
Franchise	Medium-high
Off campus delivery	Medium
Dual awards	Low-medium
Progression/Articulation	Low-medium

The University's typology can be found in Section 11c here:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

8. Where there is initial approval of the programme initiative, the ATDL will inform the School and grant approval for the School to develop Programme Documents and Business Proposal. The ADTL, in consultation with CQSD, will also inform the School if a site visit is required.
9. The ADTL will inform the Proposer if a site visit is required.
 - Where a site visit is required, the visit team will work with the School in order to make arrangements for the visit and discuss a timeframe for this element of

the approval process.

- Where a site visit is not required, a desk-based review will be conducted by CQSD in collaboration with the ADTL. In this situation, the same type of investigations should be conducted, utilising video conferencing to conduct discussions with key stakeholders at the partner.

Progression and Articulation – Stage 1 additional steps

Memorandum of Understanding

1. The same process should be followed as above.

Initial meeting and site visit decision

2. The same process should be followed as above.
3. Whilst a site visits would not normally be required for a Progression or Articulation arrangement, discussions should still be undertaken with the School's SDTL, the appropriate ADTL and a representative of CQSD.

Stage 2: Programme Documents and Business Proposal

Documentation required by the end of Stage 2		
Title	Completed by	Submitted to
Form 1 : Programme Approval Form (not required for Progression and Articulation)	Proposer	ADTL via Faculty Office
Form 2 : Curriculum Mapping Form (Progression and Articulation Arrangements; and where credit is being recognised from a partner)		
Annex 6 : Standard template for Business Proposal		
Programme Specification (draft)		
Compulsory, and a selection of optional, module descriptions		
Partnership Report (for Partnerships only)	CQSD and ADTL	Proposer
After the above have been initially drafted		
Annex 5 : Standard Template for the Report of a New Programme Scrutiny Panel	Scrutiny Panel	1. Proposer and SDTL 2. ADTL via Faculty Office

Programme Documents

20. The proposer should complete all documentation as outlined in each template. During this time the relevant ADTL should be consulted during the process, advising proposers so as to ensure that a high quality submission is made. The relevant Faculty Office and CQSD can also provide support in the completion of documentation.

Business Proposal

21. Where proposals involve new resource, or the reallocation of existing resource (such as student numbers), it is the University's expectation that these will normally be raised initially in the relevant School Operating Plan, for submission into and discussion within the University's annual Three Year Operating Plan process in the Autumn and Spring Terms of each academic year. Schools will be informed of the outcome of the Three Year Operating Plan process towards the end of the Spring Term.
22. The Business Proposal will be as comprehensive as required by the complexity of the Programme proposal. Proposers should consider the academic, operational and commercial reasoning when developing the programme proposal. Proposers should complete a Business Proposal using the template provided and hold discussions with relevant colleagues across the University as indicated in the template ([Annex 6 in Section 5 here: http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx)).

23. In addition to reporting in the School Operating Plan, the Proposer is also required to develop a Business Proposal for all new programmes and programmes involving wholesale changes. The preparation of the Business Proposal will take place at the same time as the preparation of the programme documents.
24. Whilst the Business Proposal should be a reflective document consisting mainly of free text, the Proposer will also be required to provide a financial summary which will come directly from the information outlined in the main body of the Proposal.
25. All documents should be signed by the relevant parties and submitted to the relevant ADTL via the relevant Faculty Office.

Scrutiny Panel

26. In order to provide independent internal and external scrutiny, the ADTL will appoint, on behalf of the relevant Faculty Board for Teaching and Learning (FBTL), a Scrutiny Panel to consider the proposal. UBTL permits that in exceptional cases, the ADTL in discussion with the other ADTLs, the Dean and the chair of STRAM, could agree to defer academic scrutiny of a programme until the Business Proposal has been approved, in principle, by STRAM. In this instance, the final and amended Business Proposal, along with the final Form 1: Programme Approval Form and the final Programme Specification would be submitted to STRAM following academic scrutiny and then referred onwards by STRAM to UBTL.
27. The ADTL will appoint a Chair for the Scrutiny Panel, which will be convened to review the programme. The Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the proposed initiative is scrutinised fairly and rigorously.
28. The typical membership of a Panel should be:
 - Two members of academic staff from within the Faculty, if possible external to the School(s) proposing the programme. The Panel Chair will be one of these Faculty members and should be external to the proposing School(s);
 - One member of academic staff from another Faculty;
 - One external subject specialist from outside the University of Reading (two if one external member does not cover the full subject area of the proposal or if the proposal relates to a new joint honours programme. In the latter case, there should be an external subject specialist for each discipline), to whom a fee, subsistence allowance and travel expenses will be paid;
 - One student member (with effect from 2013-14) from outside the proposing School who shall be a Faculty or Course Representative or Student Officer of the Students' Union²;
 - A Panel Secretary, who will normally be provided by the relevant Faculty Office or the Centre for Quality Support and Development.

Whilst this will be the standard composition of a Scrutiny Panel, FBTL will have the power to vary this, dependent on the nature and width of the content of the programme. Where the programme will include a partnership, blended learning or distant learning, a further external specialising in this area could be

² During the Autumn Term 2013, the role of student member was fulfilled by a Student Officer of the Students' Union with the roll-out to Faculty and Course Reps effective from the Spring Term 2014 onwards.

invited onto the Panel.

All members of a Scrutiny Panel should have relevant experience and, where relevant, undergone training to fulfil their role. All panel members should be approved by the relevant ADTL.

29. Faculty and Course Representatives will apply to be a student panelist via an application process co-ordinated by the Students' Union annually in the Autumn Term. A job description and selection criteria for the role of student member of new programme scrutiny panels are available as Annex 1 and a nomination form is available as Annex 2 here (Section 5a):

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Those students who apply will be invited to attend a Scrutiny Panel training session run by the Students' Union during the Autumn Term. The Academic Representation Co-ordinator, RUSU, will maintain a record of all eligible Faculty and Course Reps, following their attendance at training, and will provide a list to the relevant Faculty Office on request. A student panelist for each scrutiny panel will be appointed by the relevant ADTL in consultation with the relevant Faculty Office and RUSU, in accordance with the published selection criteria.

30. The Chair of the Scrutiny Panel will liaise with the student member prior to the meeting of the Panel to provide guidance on the documentation to be provided and the areas to be considered by the student. The Secretary will provide the student member with any further guidance in advance of the meeting. Further guidance for Chairs and Secretaries is included as Annex 4 here (Section 5):

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

31. The student panelist can allocate the hours undertaken as part of a scrutiny panel to the 35 hours of core activity as part of the RED Award . The student panelist will be required to obtain the signature of the Chair of the Panel/Education Officer (RUSU) on their RED activity checklist³.

32. The Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference are:

- to consider the aims and objectives of the programme and how these are to be achieved;
- to ensure that the programme meets the University's requirements for quality and standards, and complies with its policies;
- to ask fundamental questions about the academic rationale and structure of the programme; and,
- to assist eventual Boards of Studies and Module Providers to prepare for periodic review, subsequent external assessment, and where appropriate, professional accreditation.

33. As appropriate, the Scrutiny Panel will consider: the structure and content of the proposed programme(s); arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment; academic workloads of staff and students; procedures for quality management and enhancement, where non-standard; and the likelihood of the graduates from the programme being successful in finding employment. The Scrutiny Panel will consider the feedback from students consulted as part of the programme design phase.

³ See: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/readingexperienceanddevelopmentaward/reda-doingtheaward.aspx>

34. The Scrutiny Panel should be supplied with all documentation, including a Partnership report where relevant (see below), at least one week before a physical meeting or one week before the deadline for responses if the meeting takes place virtually. Normally the business of the Panel can be completed in a single physical meeting although there may be the requirement for follow-up electronic discussions.
35. Scrutiny will involve three elements:
- considering the documentation and identifying general points and specific issues needing further discussion with the Programme Team/Director. A set of 'questions' is supplied to guide the Scrutiny Panel as to the issues they should be addressing (See Annex 3 in Section 5 here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>);
 - discussion with the Programme Team/Director of any reservations or concerns of the Panel. The aim throughout the procedure is to facilitate the development of the programme and it may be necessary for the Panel to propose alternative approaches or solutions which may not have occurred to the proposer in order to resolve any difficulties and agree how to handle concerns; and,
 - discussion and identification of the items for inclusion in the final report along with recommendations to be made to the Faculty Board for Teaching and Learning.
36. The Scrutiny Panel will produce a report of the Panel's work following the standard template in Annex 5 (section 5 a here <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>) X. the report should include:
- A recommendation either that the programme be approved, or agreement that it be withdrawn;
 - A brief summary of the issues dealt with by the Scrutiny Panel and, where approval is recommended for the proposal, confirmation of satisfactory revisions

The report should be sent to the relevant ADTL, SDTL and the proposer.

The Proposer should write a response to the Scrutiny Panel report, providing comment on each of the Panel's recommendations. The Proposer should also amend any programme documentation in line with the recommendations of the panel.

37. Once the proposer has responded to the Panel's recommendations and made the required amendments, the relevant paperwork will be submitted to the Chair. If appropriate, the Chair of the Panel will confirm that the recommendations have been met and approve the programme to be submitted to the ADTL for approval at Stage 3.
38. All final documentation including the Scrutiny Panel Report and response should be submitted for consideration at FBTL via the Faculty Office.

Partnership Investigations

1. In addition to the standard requirements of the University-Level Approval process, Partnership Investigations are required for all programmes which involve delivery with a partner. Partnership Investigations will take place as early as possible during stage 2 of the University-Level Approval Process in order to inform the development of Programme Documents and the Business Proposal. Results of Partnership Investigations will provide key details for Section C & D of the Business Proposal. Partnership I investigations should take place prior to Scrutiny.
2. Whilst the procedures described in this document relate to the requirements of the University of Reading, it is anticipated that the proposed partner will also wish to undertake reciprocal investigations. Any request by the partner regarding the University's status or policies should be directed to CQSD.
3. The University recognises that delivering a programme with a partner carries risks and it has developed its requirements in relation to Partnership Investigations for new programmes in accordance with Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education⁴ which states that:

‘Whether the benefits presented by a potential arrangement for delivering learning opportunities with others are outweighed by the challenges depends on the nature of the delivery organisation or support provider and on the activity. Delivering learning opportunities with others inevitably carries risks. Arrangements that break down can present difficulties for students and can damage the reputation of participant organisations, as well as that of UK higher education more generally. They can also give rise to high human, financial and legal costs. It is therefore incumbent on degree-awarding bodies (and higher education providers without DAPs that are making arrangements with a third party) to assess the risks involved and manage them appropriately.

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Adopting a risk-based approach to commissioning, developing and managing arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others mitigates these dangers. This approach ensures that the effort invested is commensurate with the complexity of the proposed collaboration, the status of the delivery organisation or support provider, the level of experience of the degree-awarding body, and the risks associated with each of these.’

4. The University therefore anticipates that the scale of Partnership Investigations will vary depending upon the nature of the proposed programme as indicated in the table of risk above. There will be some flexibility in the application of detail and design of the investigations to ensure that they are appropriate to the different timescales and contexts in operation for each proposal. Nonetheless, scrutiny will be equally robust for all programmes to assess thoroughly and mitigate the risks involved.
5. The University will wish to satisfy itself that it has adequately assessed the financial, legal, academic and reputational risks as part of its Partnership Investigations. It will need to satisfy itself that the conditions are such that the programme is likely to succeed.
6. For proposed partnerships with UK universities, it will normally be appropriate to adopt a light touch approach to Partnership Investigations, given that UK Universities

⁴ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Quality-Code-Chapter-B10.pdf>

are subject to robust scrutiny including internal and external governance arrangements, and from statutory bodies such as the Higher Education Funding Councils and the Quality Assurance Agency, and professional accreditation bodies and that most of these reports are in the public purview. Investigations will normally be based on these publically available reports and will not normally require a partnership visit.

7. Please note, 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. This is a continuing obligation throughout the life of the programme.

Undertaking the Site Visit

8. The visit will normally be undertaken by the ADTL, or their delegate, and a member of CQSD. The objectives of the visit are to:
 - Gain a greater understanding of the partner and proposed programme through an evaluation of human and material resources:
 - Strengthen the bi-lateral relationship to ensure the success of the partnership: and,
 - Establish the strengths and areas for development of the partnership.
9. Prior to the partnership visit the Proposer will provide, in liaison with CQSD, the visiting team with:
 - the MoU:
 - any other MoAs with the proposed partner:
 - draft programme specification:
 - draft Business Proposal:
 - reports of any previous visits: and
 - copies of any important correspondence.
10. Guidance for the partnership visit is included in Annex 7 (Section 5 here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>) and covers the responsibilities of those involved, a list of suggested meetings and key questions to address. A schedule should be agreed by the Proposer, visiting team and colleagues at the proposed partner institution. The visit will typically include meetings with Senior Management, teaching, support and quality assurance staff and a group of students. The visiting team will normally undertake a tour of the partner's facilities.
11. Following the partnership visit, CQSD will draft a partnership report on behalf of the visiting team. The report will be submitted to the relevant staff in the School and its contents should inform the further development of the Programme Documents and the Business Proposal. The final Business Proposal should include the partnership report as an annex and the Proposer should provide an account in their Proposal of how the partnership investigations had shaped their proposal. Reports of any other visits to the partner should also be appended to the Business Proposal.
12. Where a desk based due diligence exercise takes place, the same investigations should be conducted, utilising video conferencing to conduct discussions with key stakeholders at the partner. CQSD will draft a partnership report which shall undergo the same follow-on actions as described in paragraph 14.
13. The resulting partnership report will identify recommendations for the Proposer to consider and Proposers may wish to amend other documentation in light of recommendations made in the partnerships report. The Partnerships Report must be

submitted with other documentation to the Scrutiny Panel.

Business Proposal

14. Programme developed with a partner will be required to complete Section 3, Parts C-E, of the Business Proposal. Completion of this section should include:

- The results of the Partnership Investigation.
- Guidance from the Home Office Compliance Officer in respect of the status of the proposed partner with the UK Border Authority and any potential visa issues for incoming students.
- Consultation with CQSD, Academic Legal Services and Finance to assess Partner status by drawing on annual reports, annual accounts, details of Professional Indemnity insurance cover and reports by external bodies such as QAA or funding councils.
- A clear indication of the quality assurance arrangements for the programme, including the operation of the Board of Studies and Examinations Board and arrangements for monitoring the programme and Periodic Review/revalidation. Particular detailed commentary should be included where any quality management functions have been delegated to the partner.

Progression and Articulation - Stage 2 additional steps

1. Form 1: Programme Approval Form is **not** required for progression and articulation arrangements and a partnership visit will not normally be required.
2. Instead, Form 2: Curriculum Mapping Form, should be completed by the Proposer who should use the Form to provide an account of the proposed programme(s) and partnership. A draft Programme Specification and Business Proposal will still be required.
3. Otherwise the same process for Partnerships Programmes should be followed as detailed above.

Stage 3: Formal Approval

No additional formal documentation required

39. The ADTL will submit the completed documents to the relevant FBTL which will consider the programme and make a recommendation to STRAM. FBTL will provide STRAM with:
- Form 1: Programme Approval Form
 - Form 2: Curriculum Mapping Form (where relevant)
 - Annex 6: Business Proposal (including copy of the site visit or partnership investigations where appropriate)
 - Programme Specification
 - Compulsory, and a selection of optional, module descriptions
 - Report of a New Programme Scrutiny Panel and the School's response
40. The ADTL should ensure that, as appropriate, the Form 1: Programme Approval Form includes details of any variations to the normal University policies and procedures (such as the University Credit and Qualifications Framework or the Classifications Framework) or external reference points.
41. STRAM will consider all documentation and the FBTL recommendation; it may send the programme back to the Proposer for further development or recommend approval of the new programme to UBTL in a formal report, submitting all documentation as detailed in paragraph 36.
42. UBTL will consider the programme and the recommendation of STRAM and FBTL; it may send the programme back to the Proposer for further development or it will grant its approval of the new programme.
43. Where the programme has been approved by, UBTL will report its approval of the programme to the Senate. Throughout the Stage 3, the relevant ADTL will be responsible for keeping the proposer and School informed of developments.

Partnership Programmes - No Stage 3 additional steps
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Progression and Articulation - No Stage 3 additional steps
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Stage 4: Post approval

No additional formal documentation required

44. Stakeholders shall be informed of UBTL's approval of the programme, as follows:
- ADTLs and the Faculty Office;
 - Subscribers to the mailing list: programmeapproval@lists.reading.ac.uk. *Staff wishing to subscribe to the mailing list should contact Vicky Howard (v.a.howard@reading.ac.uk) for further details. Current membership of this list includes ADTLs, the Faculty Office and representatives of Student and Applicant Services.*
45. The relevant Faculty Office will request that the programme code is set up by the RISIS Team. The RISIS team will set up the programme code, informing the following stakeholders of the outcome:
- Faculties The relevant Faculty Office
 - Admissions
 - Marketing, Communications and Engagement
 - Student Financial Support
 - Planning & Strategy
 - CQSD - TEL Team

On receipt of confirmation that the programme code has been set up, the relevant Faculty Office will:

- Inform the School and programme proposer of new programme code
- Set up new module shells on RISIS ready for future cohorts
- Set up new module structure ready for future cohorts

Proposers should note that the set-up of programmes will be dependent on the size, complexity and number of Schools or Departments involved in the new programme. In addition, times of peak activity within the areas responsible for programme set up may impact upon turnaround time.

The School shall be responsible for:

- Inputting the programme specification onto the RISIS web portal
- Inputting module description information onto RISIS web portal
- Informing relevant professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs), as required;

46. Marketing of the programme (online and in printed materials) cannot begin until UBTL has formally approved the programme. Work on prospectuses often takes place up to two years in advance of the relevant recruitment cycle. Proposers should liaise with Student Recruitment and Outreach on the appropriate marketing for a new programme. Please note that work starts on the undergraduate prospectus 24 months in advance of the relevant recruitment cycle. For a new programme to be included in the prospectus in time for it to be available to the markets for use by recruitment staff, please ensure information on the programme is provided to Student Recruitment and Outreach by November two years before the proposed start date i.e. November 2013 for October 2015 entry. The prospectus is published in February each year.

For the postgraduate prospectus, work starts 18 months in advance of the relevant recruitment cycle and information on new programmes must be provided to Student Recruitment and Outreach by March to be included in the following year's prospectus (i.e. by March 2013 to be included in the 2014 prospectus).

47. Where a School wishes to market a Programme prior to formal approval at Stage 3, all marketing material must clearly state that the Programme is offered subject to internal formal approval at the University. Any School wishing to market in advance of formal approval must seek the approval of the relevant ADTL.
48. The School will be responsible for implementing and operating the programme according to guidelines prescribed under the *Guide to Policies and Procedures in Teaching and Learning* (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/qualitysupport/guide/qual-guidehome.aspx>).
49. A copy of the final documentation and the report of the Scrutiny Panel should be kept by the School for audit and accreditation purposes.

Partnership Programmes – Stage 4 additional steps

4. CQSD will liaise with the School and the partner to prepare a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) which will act as the contract for the partnership programme. The MoA will set out the rights and obligations on both parties and will normally have an expiration date of six years from the date of signature. Where partners request that the MoA be in a second language in addition to the English language version, the document will be formally translated, or a translation verified, by an external body. The School will be responsible for the cost of any translations. The MoA will be signed by the University's Vice-Chancellor, or their appointed representative, and by an appropriate and authorised representative at the partner. This contract will be legally binding and original copies will be held by CQSD. Recruitment and advertising will not take place until the MoA has been signed.
5. Any further documentation required by the partner, for the purposes of accreditation in the partner's country for example, will be completed at this stage.
6. Schools are responsible for notifying CQSD of projected student numbers and discussing requirement of any training for partnership staff with CQSD.
7. The School will be responsible for day-to-day operation of the programme in accordance with the MoA and develop an Operational Handbook for both University and partner staff. CQSD can provide support in developing the handbook, which should be completed as soon as possible after the programme is approved.
8. The School will be responsible for implementing and operating the programme according to guidelines prescribed under the *Guide to Policies and Procedures in Teaching and Learning* (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/qualitysupport/guide/qual-guidehome.aspx>).
9. The School will be further responsible to operate the programme in accordance with policy and procedure relating to the monitoring and review of academic partnership

programmes which can be found in Section 11 a and e here:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/QualityAssurance/PoliciesandProcedures/cqsd-PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

9. In addition, the School will ensure all marketing materials in relation to the partnership and programme are correct and kept up to date, with the support of the Reading International Office (RIO).

Progression and Articulation – Stage 4 additional steps

1. The same processes should be followed as for Partnership Programmes.
2. The School and the Faculty Office should work with the RISIS team to ensure that accurate records are kept of modules or Parts that Progression or Articulation students are exempt from.