

PARTNERSHIPS POLICY

The University of Law's Partnerships Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognized Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. These definitive reference points for all English higher education institutions set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how excellence in the quality of learning opportunities is assured.

This policy sits within The University of Law's Quality and Standards Code, which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University of Law's Partnerships Policy sits within the University's Quality and Standards Code. This suite of policies is designed to safeguard the academic standards of the University and to assure the quality of learning opportunities leading to the University's award. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the University's Quality and Standards Code.
- 1.2 The University engages in a wide range of activities with Higher Education institutions and other educational and non-educational organisations which can be described as academic partnership activity. This includes delivery of credits and qualifications with others; work-based learning opportunities; continuing professional development; consultative arrangements; and the provision of specialist services for supporting student learning. The scope of this activity and the mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate oversight of partnership arrangements are set out in this policy.
- 1.3 Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Partnership Policy lies initially with the Partnerships Committee. Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Academic Board.
- 1.4 This policy is also informed by the Office for Students Regulatory Framework in relation to the management of sub contractual arrangements.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.5 The University of Law recognizes that central to this policy is its responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students. The development of appropriate processes and procedures to underpin this aim has been delegated to Academic Board and its sub committees.
- 1.6 **Academic Board** will approve policies and procedures associated with the maintenance of standards for academic provision leading to ULaw awards, and to quality assure learning opportunities available to its students. This includes

provision and activities which fall within the University's defined partnership models. Academic Board has formal responsibility for ensuring approved academic policies and procedures are applied appropriately.

- 1.7 **Academic Registry** will review and update the policy to ensure that partnership models and definitions reflect current practice and new developments in the sector, and to ensure continued alignment with the University's Quality and Standards Code, sector benchmarks and reference points e.g. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance.
- 1.8 **Executive Management Board** will consider the business and corporate details for a partnership proposal before making decisions about where they may be approved for development. From time to time, it may delegate authority to Research and Business Development Group (RBDG), to consider elements of the proposal on its behalf.
- 1.9 **Partnerships Committee** will, on behalf of Academic Board, oversee the management of processes for the evaluation, approval and monitoring of partnership arrangements which support learning opportunities leading to the achievement of academic credit or a qualification awarded by the University of Law.
- 1.10 **Research and Business Development Group (RBDG)** will, on behalf of Executive Management Board, review the business and corporate details for a partnership proposal before making decisions about whether they may be approved for development.

2 QUALITY ASSURANCE PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is used as a benchmark for the University's Quality and Standards Code.
- 2.2 The University's defined partnership models are set out below in Section 3.
- 2.3 The University is responsible for the academic standards and quality of all programmes leading to its awards, including those which are delivered and managed by Partners. All ULaw programmes and awards which are delivered through a partnership arrangement in the UK meet the sector expectations for quality and standards and align with the UK Quality Code. ULaw programmes and awards delivered in partnership with non-UK providers meet the principles outlined in the UK Quality Code national frameworks for Higher Education qualifications, e.g. *the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications*.
- 2.4 The University is not responsible for the quality or academic standards of awards made by other institutions. However, where partnerships are established which include an academic contribution towards a ULaw award, or entry to a ULaw programme of study, the University must maintain confidence in the standards of those arrangements.
- 2.5 The University's arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with other organisations are:

- conducive to meeting the strategic aims and objectives of the University;
- appropriately resourced;
- delivered only via methods of learning, teaching and assessment which the University approves;
- confined to partner organisations whose educational objectives or shared understanding about educational ethos, culture, expectations and academic standards are compatible with those of the University;
- confined to partner organisations which are securely founded, governed, financed and managed; and have legal capacity to enter into an arrangement with the University;
- subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review.

2.6 In entering into arrangements with others, the University ensures that financial or other considerations do not jeopardise the integrity of academic quality or standards, or risk damage to the University's reputation. The business case for a partnership arrangement is considered separately from the approval of the academic proposal.

3 DEFINED PARTNERSHIP MODELS

3.1 The University defines the following partnership models:

- i. Service Delivery
- ii. Student Mobility
- iii. Progression
- iv. Articulation
- v. Off-Campus Delivery
- vi. Shared Delivery/Award
- vii. Franchise
- viii. Validation

3.2 Service Delivery

Key characteristics of the Service Delivery model are:

- Involves the provision of non-academic services from a partner organisation to the University (e.g. marketing and recruitment) or the delivery of non-academic services by the University to a partner organisation (e.g. room hire);
- In the case of Online Partners, the partner organisation would be expected to provide the University with non-academic services to facilitate delivery of the University's online provision in the partner's region of operation;
- No academic credit is awarded or exchanged as part of an arrangement of this kind.

3.3 Progression

Key characteristics of the Progression model are:

- involves the establishment of an access route to programmes of study leading to a University of Law award;

- Typically, the University will approve a specific programme or qualification delivered by a partner organisation as being equivalent to its standard entry requirements.

3.4 Student Mobility

3.4.1 Key characteristics of the Student Mobility model are:

- Involves students undertaking work or study abroad as part of their degree programme
- normally includes provision for credit transfer to and/or from a Partner;
- students will receive the award of their home institution on successful completion of their programme.

3.5 Articulation

3.5.1 Key characteristics of the Articulation model are:

- Guarantees entry with or without advanced standing from the Partner's programme to a ULaw programme, based on successful completion of a specified programme and award with the Partner provider.
- Recognition of credit, through a formal agreement.

3.6 Off Campus Delivery

3.6.1 Key characteristics of the Off-Campus Delivery model are:

- some of a programme delivered by staff of another organisation, typically another Higher Education Institution, at a location that does not constitute a University of Law campus (e.g. satellite campus);
- certain defined responsibilities for administrative and other kinds of support for the delivery of the programme, the student experience and the provision of primary learning resources, such as library and IT, may be devolved to the Partner;
- programmes delivered through this model are entirely developed and owned by the University of Law;
- students will receive a University of Law award on successful completion of their programme.

3.7 Shared Delivery/Award

3.7.1 Key characteristics of the Shared Delivery/Award are:

- one or more partners share with the University the responsibility for the delivery of a programme;
- the programme may be owned solely by the University or jointly with partner organisations;
- the partner may share responsibility for the development of the programme;
- the programme leads to a single award of The University of Law or a joint/dual award(s) offered with the partner(s), possibly under separate regulations for each of the awards.

3.8 Franchise

3.8.1 Key characteristics of the Franchise model are:

- some or all of a programme leading to an award of the University is delivered by the staff at a partner provider;
- programmes delivered through this model are normally developed by the University but can be developed jointly with a Partner;
- students are normally enrolled with the University and will normally be part of the University's statutory reporting;
- students will receive a University of Law award on successful completion of their programme.
- University of Law academic regulations and policies apply under all circumstances unless exceptions are approved by the relevant authority at ULaw and reported to Academic Board as appropriate.

3.9 Validation

3.9.1 Key characteristics of the Validation model are:

- most or all of a programme leading to an award of the University is delivered by the staff of a partner provider;
- programmes delivered through this model are normally developed by the partner;
- students are typically enrolled with the partner provider;
- students will receive a University of Law award on successful completion of their programme;
- The academic regulations and policies applicable to this model may be developed by the Partner provider but must always align appropriately with the University of Law's Quality and Standard Code. These will be subject to approval by the Programme Approval Committee on behalf of Academic Board.

3.10 Partnership Taxonomy

Taxonomy Category	Typical Partnership Model	Typical Approval Requirements	Approving Authority
A (typically taught programmes or shared delivery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Off-Campus - Shared Delivery/Award - Franchise - Validation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business case - Proposal Form - DD Report - Site Visit Report - Partner Approval visit - Programme Approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive Management Board or Research and Business Development Group (RBDG) - Partnerships Committee - Programme Approval Committee

B (typically mobility and activities which enable automatic entry to ULaw programmes with advanced standing)	- Articulation	- Business Case - Proposal Form - DD Report - Curriculum Mapping	- Executive Management Board or Research and Business Development Group (RBDG) - Partnerships Committee - Admissions Committee
	- Student Mobility	- Business Case - Proposal Form - DD Report	- Executive Management Board or Research and Business Development Group (RBDG) - Partnerships Committee
C (typically non-academic related or non-credit bearing)	- Service Delivery e.g. Online Partners - Progression	- Business Case - Proposal Form - DD Report	- Executive Management Board or Research and Business Development Group (RBDG) - Partnerships Committee

4 APPROVAL, MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS

- 4.1 All partnership arrangements are subject to the University's academic regulations and policies unless exceptions have been explicitly approved by the appropriate ULaw authority and reported to the University's Academic Board as necessary. Further guidance and operational detail about the approval process are provided by protocols Q10.1 and its appendices.
- 4.2 In addition to the principles set out in section 2 above, the University is mindful of having in place effective mechanisms to ensure that such arrangements are financially viable and feasible, and are fully costed and priced accordingly. This is encapsulated by the proportionate application of its due diligence process. In particular, the University:
- considers proposals against its strategy for academic partnerships to ensure appropriate alignment;
 - assesses whether the University's financial management arrangements are strong enough to manage the risks effectively and ensures that the financial arrangements do not jeopardise the integrity of its academic standards, the quality of the provision or the interests of students;
 - assesses the cost of continuing delivery of the programme for any registered students if the arrangement is terminated.

- 4.3 Where the partnership arrangement results in an award from the University, it will ensure through its programme approval and annual monitoring processes that arrangements are in place to maintain academic standards. The approval of an academic programme and subsequent monitoring and review at programme level is undertaken by the Programme Approval Committee on behalf of Academic Board.
- 4.4 Where, in a partnership arrangement, the University is the awarding institution, it is solely responsible for awarding certificates and transcripts relating to the programmes subject to the arrangement. In the case of joint awards, the University lists the names of all awarding institutions involved in the granting of the award and the certificates and transcripts bear the signature of the competent authorities in each institution.
- 4.5 Following formal approval, all partnership arrangements are confirmed in writing by a formal contract. All such agreement documents are drafted by the University's legal department and approved by the appropriate level of authority at the University. A written agreement may only be signed by the authorised representatives of the University and the partner organisation. The written agreement covers all key provisions and must be signed in advance of the start of any arrangement.
- 4.6 Periodic Review of partnership arrangements are conducted in line with the University's Periodic Review of Partnerships Protocol (PRP). As part of this process, due diligence checks are renewed to ensure any renewal of contract may be duly informed by up to date and relevant information.
- 4.7 In circumstances where a partnership is considered to be under-performing or where a partner organisation has not met the terms of any formal written agreement, the University will take necessary steps to address perceived lapses. If matters remain unresolved from the point of view of the University, it will take steps to end the partnership arrangement in accordance with the terms of the written and legally binding agreement.
- 4.8 In the event that a contracted partner organisation withdraws from a partnership arrangement The University retains responsibility for ensuring that students registered to a programme, leading to one of its awards, will have the opportunity to complete their studies if they wish to do so.
- 4.9 On behalf of Academic Board, Partnerships Committee maintains oversight of a register of all the University's partnership arrangements. The University considers this information to be confidential and commercially sensitive, access is therefore restricted and permission to share contents must be sought from the Chair of Partnerships Committee.

5. REFERENCE POINTS FOR THIS POLICY

5.1 Internal Reference Points

- Financial Regulations

- [Q1 Programme and Campus Design, Development and Approval Policy](#)
- [Q2 Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy](#)
- [Q3 Learning and Teaching Policy](#)
- [Q4 Enabling Student Development and Achievement Policy \(including Safeguarding and Prevent\)](#)
- [Q6 Assessment Policy](#)
- [Q7 External Examiners Policy](#)
- [Q8 Programme Monitoring and Review Policy](#)
- [Q9 Overarching Policy for Academic Appeals and Student Complaints](#)
- [G3 Public Information Policy](#)

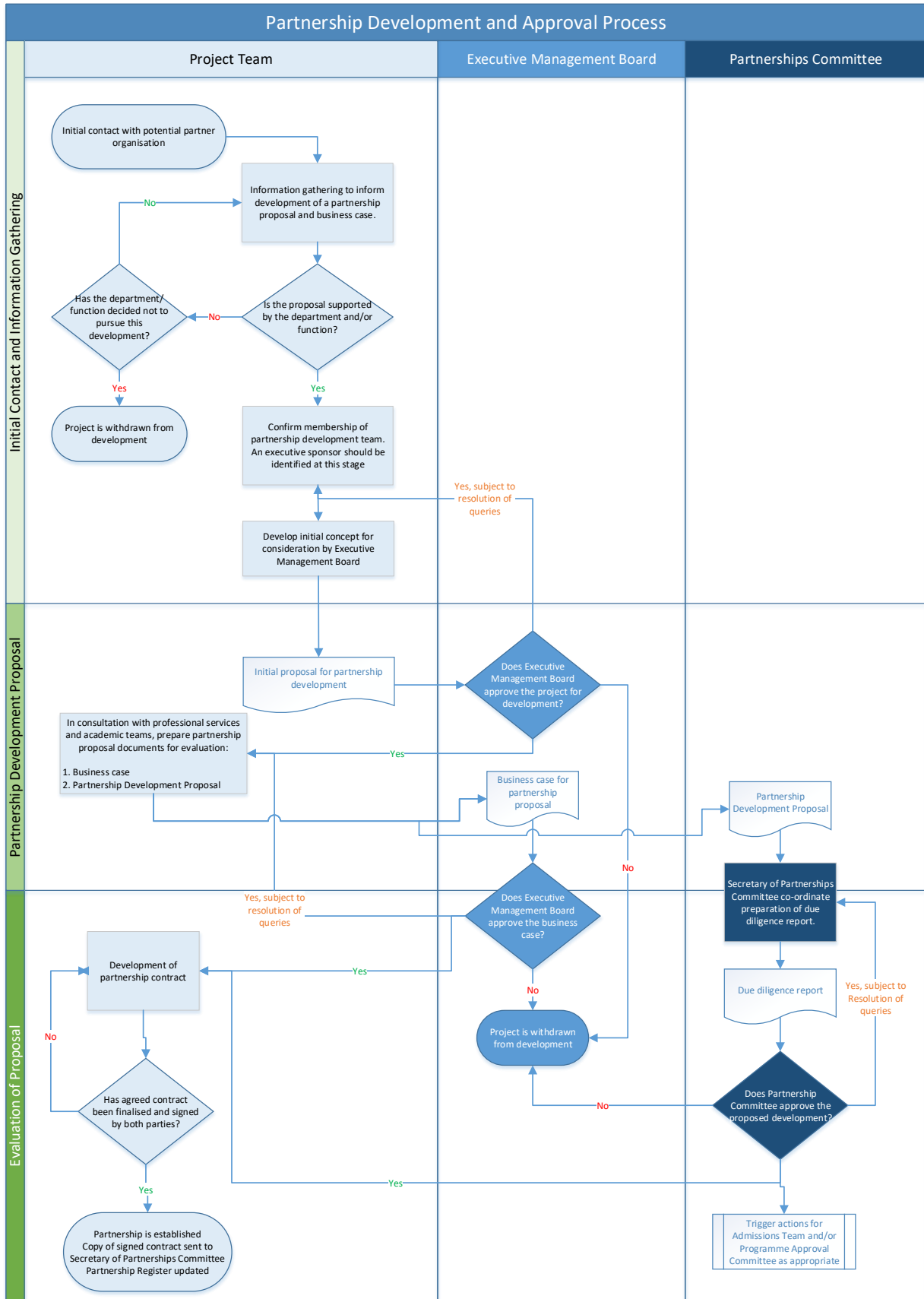
5.2 External Reference Points

- [Securing Student Success; regulatory framework for higher education in England](#), Office for Students (OfS) 2017
- [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance – Partnerships](#), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) 2018
- [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance – Work Based Learning](#), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) 2018
- [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies](#), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) 2014 Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Partnership Development and Approval Process

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Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

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Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Assistant Registrar	Initial drafting group	31/05/13
V1.1	Head of Clients	QA group	05/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	19/09/13
V1.3	Student Officer	Review	13/09/13
V1.4	Academic Board	AB approval	3/10/13
V1.5	VP – AGQS	Sign-Off	19/12/13
V1.6	Disability Support Officer	Updates	11/11/14
V1.7	Chair of B.10 Committee / Head of Quality Assurance/ Quality Officer	Revision	06/09/16
V1.8	Academic Board	Approval	10/10/16
V1.9	Head of Quality Assurance and Deputy Academic Registrar	Stage 1 Review	30/01/20
V2.0	Senior Quality Officer	Change to the document coding convention	31/03/20
V2.1	Head of Academic Partnership Governance	Revisions	11/02/21