



QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 79 – ACADEMIC DELIVERY PARTNER: APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

Introduction and Definitions

The purpose of this document is to outline the approval, monitoring and review of arrangements where Arden University contracts with a partner to deliver or support part of a programme or provision. These procedures are aligned to the University's Regulatory Framework and the QAA UK Quality Code: Advice and Guidance; Partnerships, and ensures the University retains responsibility for academic standards and the quality of the student experience in all academic partnerships

Academic Delivery Partner

A partner institution that is authorised to deliver an element of a University programme or provision. For example; work based learning, skills development, coaching or support. The University will continue to retain full responsibility for academic delivery, content and assessment.

Approval Process

There are seven key stages (please see appendix 1) involved in the approval process for an *Academic Delivery Partner*, namely:

1. Business Case and Plan
2. Approval to proceed by Arden University Executive
3. Due Diligence by Partnership Committee
4. Collaborative Planning Group
5. Approval by Academic Board
6. *Academic Delivery Partner* Agreement
7. Collaborative and Partnership Register

Stage 1. Academic Partnership Business Plan

The Academic Partnership Business Plan (please see appendix 2) will outline the case for the arrangement, including the level of partner involvement, benefits and risks, financial analysis and market opportunity. The proposal will be initially considered by Arden University Executive for an approval to proceed. The Academic Partnership Business Plan will be developed by the International Director or Business Development Director in consultation with the Pro Vice Chancellor and the relevant

Head of School. A preliminary site visit may be conducted by University staff to develop a better understanding of the collaboration and develop initial confidence.

Stage 2. Approval to proceed by Arden University Executive

Arden University Executive will be required to assess the rationale for the *Academic Delivery Partner* against the University's strategic aims and mission. The appropriateness of the proposal will also need to be verified against initial costs, revenue and the perceived student experience. On approval to proceed from Arden University Executive, the proposal will be considered by the Partnership Committee for institutional approval.

Stage 3. Due Diligence by Partnership Committee

The Partnership Committee will be responsible for checking the suitability of the *Academic Delivery Partner* to provide the services they will be contracted for and identifying any possible risk prior to an agreement.

In conjunction with the Academic Partnership Business Plan, the due diligence (please see appendix 3) will aim to demonstrate the following points:

- appropriate professional standing of the *Academic Delivery Partner* and legal capacity to enter into an agreement with the University (including in-country requirements)
- financial stability of the *Academic Delivery Partner* and assurance of registered status, ownership and internal management arrangements. The *Academic Delivery Partner* must be a legal entity operating in accordance with the legal obligations pertaining to the country in which it operates.
- identification of any business and/or ethical links that might pose a reputational risk to the University
- where applicable, the partner organisation's quality assurance track record with external regulators such as Ofsted and/or QAA
- the partner organisation's ability to comply with the University's requirements for safeguarding and the Prevent duty

The development of the *Academic Delivery Partner* due diligence and collation of supporting evidence will be co-ordinated by the Senior Quality Manager.

Where institutional approval is granted by Partnership Committee, a Collaborative Planning Group will be suggested and consist of key individuals across Academic, Quality, Student Support and Commercial.

Stage 4. Collaborative Planning Group

The Collaborative Planning Group will assess and develop the operational requirements for an *academic delivery partner* provision and undertake any further site visits (please see appendix 4). The Collaborative Planning Group will consider the following:

- An assessment of the additional delivery elements and support proposed by the partner;
- The suitability of any learning resources and premises to be used by students, including the provision of an appropriate and safe working environment for students;
- The academic and/or professional capacity of the partner organisation staff to deliver additional elements;
- An understanding of the partner's arrangements for managing, developing and monitoring staff;
- The suitability of the learning environment and services provided to students;
- The modification of student handbooks, induction processes and student feedback mechanisms;
- The appropriate coverage of programme evaluation and annual monitoring within University processes.

The Collaborative Planning Group will determine and maintain operational oversight of all *Academic Delivery Partner* arrangements.

Stage 5. Approval by Academic Board

A report on the institutional approval and collaborative planning, with recommendations will be presented to Academic Board for consideration and approval. Decisions on the approval of a new *Academic Delivery Partner* will be reported to the Senior Management Team and Academic Standards and Ethics Committee.

Stage 6. Academic Delivery Partner Agreement

Following approval from Academic Board a formal agreement will be drawn up with the *Academic Delivery Partner*. Roles and responsibilities will be set out and agreed in a legally binding contract before any *academic delivery* partnership commences. A copy of the agreement will be maintained by the Senior Quality Manager. The agreement will include:

- a schedule of roles and responsibilities of both parties
- authorised delivery
- financial details
- legal aspects
- adherence to quality assurance requirements
- termination arrangements to protect interest of students should the agreement need to end by either party

Stage 7. Collaborative and Partnership Register

All signed *Academic Delivery Partner* agreements will be added to the University's Collaborative and Partnership Register. The Register will detail the start, end and review date of the *Academic Delivery Partner* agreement.

Monitoring Process

All *Academic Delivery Partner* arrangements will be monitored at two distinct levels; programme and partner. The programme level monitoring will be in accordance with the University's academic standard and quality assurance processes and overseen by the Academic Board (delegated to Quality and Standards Committee). The partner level review will be undertaken by The Partnership Committee periodically to ensure continuous suitability of the arrangement.

The annual Partner Review will be undertaken to check a number of key elements of the partnership, including a report from the Collaborative Planning Group; financial performance; student feedback; overall benefits; and consideration of any reputational changes.

The purpose of partner level review will be to:

- Provide assurance that an *Academic Delivery Partner* continues to be a suitable partnership;
- Ensure currency of the *Academic Delivery Partner* agreement and address any needs identified via the review process;
- Assess strategic, financial and operational management of *Academic Delivery Partners* and manage any identified risk or if required, recommend termination of the agreement to Arden University Executive and Academic Board.

The partnership review will be undertaken on a periodic basis and co-ordinated by the Senior Quality Manager.

Termination by University

In the event the University decides to end a partnership with an *Academic Delivery Partner*, then the termination will be carried out in line with terms of the contract. In such cases termination can be actioned due to a variety of reasons (e.g. cost viability, monitoring concerns, change in strategic direction). The termination process may be initiated from any point of the management and governance structure but in all cases will be subject to approval by Arden University Executive and Academic Board.

The termination process will ensure that the student experience is maintained and protected throughout the exit period, taking into account the obligations under the Student Protection Plan

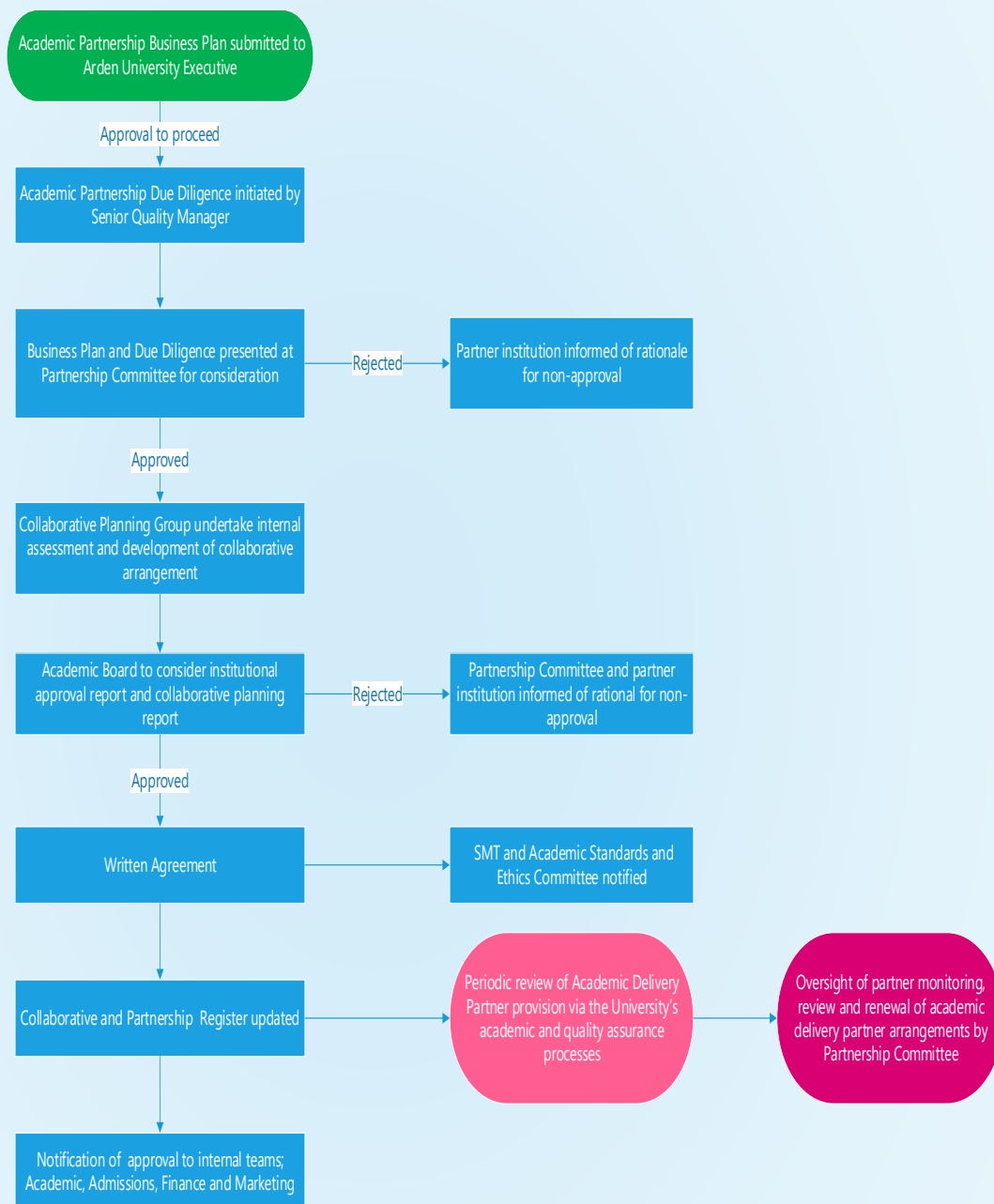
On approval of termination from Arden University Executive and Academic Board, a meeting to confirm the termination decision will be held with the *Academic Delivery Partner*. A formal letter will set out

details of termination and the *Academic Delivery Partner* will be removed from the Collaborative and Partnership Register.

Termination by *Academic Delivery Partner*

A partnership can be terminated by the *Academic Delivery Partner* but must comply with the terms of the contract and the University's Student Protection Plan. The *Academic Delivery Partner* will be advised to send a formal letter of termination with rationale for closure fully communicated. The University will advise the *Academic Delivery Partner* to continue working with the University to ensure students are protected throughout the exit period.

Appendix 1. Academic Delivery Partner Approval Process



ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS PLAN

Proposal Overview

Who is the partner institution?	Click here to enter.
What type of partnership is this? (seek advice from the Senior Quality Manager if unclear)	Choose an item. If 'Other', please provide details. Click or tap here to enter text.
What academic award(s) (if any) does this partnership involve?	Select an award. If 'Other', enter award. Click or tap here to enter text.
Is this an existing or new programme, variation on existing programme or replacement of existing programme?	Choose an item. If 'variation on existing course' or 'replacement of existing course', please describe requirements Click or tap here to enter text.
Who is the Arden University Director for this partnership?	Click here to enter.
Please state what month and year the first students are expected to be recruited under this partnership?	Click or tap to enter a date.

Executive Summary

Proposal Benefits and Risks:

- Please describe the new partnership and explain what the potential benefits are (what would it improve?) and how you might measure this benefit?**

Possible benefits might include cost savings, increased revenue, improved student/staff experience, staff capacity savings/increased staff productivity/reduction in time taken to complete a process, staff upskilling/development, improved compliance with external bodies, and enhanced brand reputation with students/firms/regulators

Click here to enter

2. Please describe what the potential risks of launching this partnership are, and what the potential risks of not launching this partnership are?

[Click here to enter.](#)

3. Please list all the people (at Arden University, partner institution and any externals) who will be involved in the development and delivery of this partnership.

Name	Title	Project Role

4. Please list the people who have been consulted during the development of this Business Plan.

Name	Title	Document Section(s)

5. Please provide anticipated dates for the following actions (where action is not required, then please state 'N/A')

Action	Anticipated Date
Validation of New Academic Programme*	
Programme Approval Event* (existing programme)	
Institutional Partner Approval*(site visit)	
Signed agreement	
Tier 4 visa and Specific Programme Designation documents completed	
Launch of Marketing Activity	
Fee, fee schedule, loans (if applicable) and T&Cs confirmed	
Training and development events	
Applications open	
Programme delivery commences	

* Events can be held as a part of the same visit

Market/Product Analysis:

6. Please summarise the proposition, including who the target students are and why students might choose to study this programme.

[Click here to enter.](#)

7. Please describe the market for this programme, including the size of the target market, any recent trends in this market, the key competitors and our likely market share. Please describe the assumptions made or evidence used to estimate our likely market share.

[Click here to enter.](#)

8. Please describe the fee and revenue sharing arrangement and describe the rationale used to reach these. You may wish to describe comparison versus existing partnership arrangements, competitor fee levels or target profit levels in light of the costs in the financial model. Please consult with Marketing and Finance as necessary.

[Click here to enter.](#)

Financial Analysis:

9. Please confirm that a detailed financial model has been completed in consultation with the Head of Corporate Finance.

Yes No

From your completed financial model, please complete the table (using the base case figures):

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Number of students					
Revenue (£k)					
Gross Margin (£k)					
EBITDA (£k)					
Gross Margin (%)					
EBITDA (%)					
One off costs					

Executive Approval:

Approved by the Executive Board on:	Enter approval date
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Appendix 1: Programme Details

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1.1 What is the programme title? | Click here to enter. |
| 1.2 Is this programme delivered with a partner? | Select an answer.
If 'Yes', please specify here. |
| 1.3 What academic award (if any) does this programme lead to? | Select an award.
If 'Other', enter award. |
| 1.4 Are students allowed to select an award? | Select an answer.
If 'Yes', please specify here. |
| 1.5 What is the programme length? | Select a programme length.
If 'Other', enter duration. |
| 1.6 What is the study mode? | Select a study mode. |
| 1.7 What is the study format? | Select a study format.
If 'Other', please specify here. |
| 1.8 Who is the Head of School? | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 1.9 Who is the Programme Team Leader? | Click here to enter. |
| 1.10 If the programme is F2F, will the programme be delivered in the UK? | Select an answer. |
| 1.11 If the programme is F2F, will staff from the collaborative partner be delivering part or all the programme? | Select an answer. |
| 1.12 Please describe the location(s) this partnership will be delivered in. | Enter location(s). |

Completed by Enter name and title

Completed on: Enter date

Academic Partnership

Due Diligence Checklist

Please supply the following information and ensure all evidence provided is referenced with the numbering below. The International Director or Business Development Director will support you in the completion of this form.

All documents should be supplied and/or translated into English.

Organisation information

Ref. No.	Information required	Nature of evidence – please send evidence/indicate where we can find it e.g. link to website
1.	Name of organisation	
2.	Introduction and history of organisation, inc. activity, mission statement, size, portfolio, geographical reach, etc.	
3.	Organisational Strategic Plan	
4.	Financial report (e.g. last 3 years' published accounts)	
5.	Details of financing arrangements (e.g. reports or agreements with any state, public or private funding agency or organisation)	
6.	Details of insurance arrangements undertaken (liability and indemnity)	
7.	Documentation confirming the legal status of the organisation, the ownership of the organisation, date of establishment, any relevant authorising or government documentation (e.g. Charter, confirmation of TDAP, Licenses, Approvals, Registrations or Permits)	
8.	Details of any current or pending litigations, prosecutions or investigations by government or official bodies	
9.	Reports from external quality and funding agencies (e.g. QAA, HESA, in-country audit/external review reports)	

10.	Details of the management structures	
11.	Details of the governance structures – to include composition and terms of reference for internal committee structures	
12.	Details of management information (application, enrolment, progression, retention and achievement figures)	
13.	Prospectus and marketing/promotional materials including approval procedure for these	
14.	Marketing strategy/plan. Please outline how the proposed partnership will be promoted?	
15.	Full information on other business links and collaborative arrangements in the UK and overseas. Please note, references will be sought from other collaborative organisations.	
16.	Institution/organisation Managing Collaborative Provision policy and associated regulations and procedures	
17.	Information about any professional, statutory and regulatory bodies that accredit the institution/organisation or any of its programmes	
18.	Data protection policy	
19.	Institution/organisation Health and Safety policy	
20.	Institution/organisation Equality and Diversity policy	
21.	Human Resources policy covering where applicable the following: a) Partner to confirm they have carried out the Right To Work in the UK checks for staff who are involved with the relevant programme, according to Home Office and UKVI guidelines and have the evidence, if requested, to present to Arden University.	

	<p>b) Partners to ensure that any staff (including contracted non-employed labour) are paid in accordance with minimum wage requirements applying to the country of employment or engagement (as applicable).</p> <p>c) Please include any relevant policies for staff recruitment, induction and training and development</p>	
22.	<p>a) Institution/organisation Safeguarding Policy for students who are Under 18 and Adults at risk.</p> <p>b) Institutions/organisations in the UK adhere to the Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015 and the Prevent Duty in Higher Education 2016 with respect to its staff and students.</p> <p>c) For students enrolled on an Arden University award studying at an institution outside of the UK the following questions require responses under the UK PREVENT duty:</p> <p>c-1 Describe the welfare services which would be provided for Arden University students.</p> <p>c-2 Does the institution have a process for raising concerns regarding the welfare of a student? If so, describe the process.</p> <p>c-3 How does the institution ensure that their staff are aware of the process for students to raise concerns about their welfare?</p> <p>c-4 How does the institution ensure that their staff are aware of the indicators for the welfare concerns of students?</p> <p>c-5 How will the institution report a student welfare concern to us?</p>	

Quality Assurance information

	Information required	Nature of evidence – please send evidence/indicate where we can find it e.g. link to website
23.	Programme approval and amendment policies and procedures for current collaborative arrangements.	
24.	Programme monitoring and review policies and procedures for current collaborative arrangements (to include both annual and periodic).	
25.	External Examining policy and procedures	
26.	Student Engagement policy and procedures or information about how student feedback is collected and evaluated for collaborative arrangements. To include information on student representative structures and processes.	
27.	Student Feedback policy and procedures or information about how students receive feedback on assessed work for collaborative arrangements	
28.	Teaching and Learning policy or strategy and procedures or information about how T&L is approached, evaluated and enhanced for current collaborative arrangements.	
29.	Assessment policy and procedures including information about its management and administration and assessment regulations	
30.	Concessions (mitigating or extenuating circumstances) policy and procedures	
31.	Admissions policy and procedures for current collaborative arrangements.	
32.	Academic support and guidance for students registered on current collaborative programmes.	
33.	Student complaints and appeals policy and procedures	

34.	Pastoral support for students registered	
35.	Careers/employability support for students registered on current collaborative programmes.	
36.	Student Charter and example Student Handbook	

Completed by:	
Title:	
Date:	

Appendix 4.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP – SITE VISIT

1. PREMISES		
	Detail/Information	Action required
When was the premises built?		
How many floors does the Premises have?		
Does the premises have any on-site parking? Please provide details.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Can the premises be accessed via good public transport links? Please provide details.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Does the premises have a welcoming and accommodating reception area for students and visitors?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Does the premises have an access control system?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Does the premises provide an opportunity to support any University signage and branding – internally and/or externally?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Will the premises be shared with other parties? If so, please provide details of all other	Choose an item. Additional comments:	

parties, nature of business and number of staff and/or students involved.		
Please provide details of furniture and equipment available in designated classrooms.		
What is the student number capacity of classrooms?		
What is the student number capacity of the centre and is this in line with the Business Plan expectations?		

2. FACILITIES		
	Detail/Information	Action Required
Do students have access to a quiet area for study?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Do students have access to recreation space and facilities?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Do students have access to dining facilities either on the premises or nearby in a local restaurants or cafes?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	

3. STUDENT WELFARE		
	Detail/Information	Action Required
Will the Academic Delivery Partner offer any pastoral support to students? Please provide details.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Will the Academic Delivery Partner offer access to accommodation, financial, legal, employment or other advice to students? Please provide details.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	

4. LEARNING RESOURCES (inc. IT)		
	Detail/Information	Action Required
Does the premises have a library to offer students and will it be adequate to support proposed University programmes?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
What IT resources does the premises have? Please outline number of printers and computer terminals, and the print facility which will be offered to staff and students.		
What internet services come into the building?		
Who is the internet provider? What is the capacity and can this be shared?		

What is the internet connection speed?		
Is there wi-fi already available throughout the building which could provide guest connection for students?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Do classrooms have any audio-visual equipment?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	

5. HEALTH & SAFETY (all relevant certificates and policy documents should be appended to the completed form)

	Detail/Information	Action Required
Does the premises have a health and safety policy and is there evidence that it meets its legal obligation in this respect?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Does the premises have an appropriate number of fire extinguishers, fire marshals, emergency signage, emergency lighting, evacuation procedure and annual testing of evacuation procedures? Does it have appropriate certification to confirm the above as appropriate? Please provide details.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	

<p>Are their periodic fire tests at the premises? Please provide details</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments.</p>	
<p>Does the premises have adequate first aid arrangements including appropriate notices, first aid boxes and trained staff?</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments:</p>	
<p>What training has the first aider(s) received? Do they receive regular training and updates? Please provide details.</p>		
<p>Is there evidence that the premises meets legal obligations in respect of disabled access, walkways, toilet facilities and evacuation procedures?</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments:</p>	
<p>Does the premises have adequate flooring, lighting and heating? Is air conditioning available? Do windows require restrictors and are blinds available to address sunlight glare?</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments:</p>	
<p>Does the premises have availability of drinking water? Is there regular testing of the water supply?</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments:</p>	
<p>Does the premises have availability of security patrols and CCTV?</p>	<p>Choose an item. Additional comments:</p>	

Has the premises been tested for asbestos?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
Is there regular PAT testing of electrical equipment?	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
What is the general condition of the premises, fittings and fixtures?	Choose an item.	
Is there a named person with responsibility for ensuring health and safety at the Premises? If so, please state name and title.	Choose an item. Additional comments:	
What qualifications does the person responsible for Health and Safety possess? Do they receive regular training and updates? Please provide details.		

6. DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Please outline any plans for improving premises, service or facilities over the next 12-months.	
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