UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

PERIODIC PARTNERSHIP QUALITY REVIEW (PPQR)

From the Delivery Partners Handbook:

All Delivery Partnerships will be reviewed, normally every 5 years. The main aim of partnership review is to provide assurance that the partnership is operating, on the part of both partners, in accordance with the terms of the agreements in place and that it is an arrangement to be recommended for continuation.

OBJECTIVES OF PERIODIC PARTNERSHIP QUALITY REVIEW

The objectives of partnership review are to:

- Provide an opportunity to reflect at institutional level on the experience of academic collaboration;
- Consider both strategic and operational arrangements for the effective management of the partnership;
- Review ways of working, identifying potential improvements to the management and operation of the partnership and enhancing the quality of the student experience;
- Check the effectiveness of arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement on the part of the partner and the UoA;
- Evaluate and confirm the overall academic standards and quality of the programmes delivered under the partnership arrangement;
- Review the support provided to partners by the UoA, and make recommendations regarding the term of office of the Link Tutor;
- Periodic Due-diligence Checks: In line with Principle 8 of the QAA Quality Code, the UoA will carry out periodic due diligence reviews of its partners;
- Consider renewing the partnership or otherwise.

PROCESS

The Partnership Management Group will co-ordinate the preparations for a partnership review. Reviews will normally take place over a day, normally at the Partner institution or via Microsoft Teams.

(i) A **Review Panel** will be established comprising a member of the Quality Assurance Committee, a senior member of staff from another academic school, a student officer of the Students' Union, and a member of Academic Policy and Quality Team.

Chair: Experienced member of the Quality Assurance Committee
Academic Staff: Experienced academic from a School not involved in the Partnership Operation
Student: Sabbatical Officer from Students' Union
Clerk: Member of Academic Policy and Quality Team

(ii) **Meetings with Staff**: The Review Panel will expect to meet with senior managers from the partner institution, course leaders and representatives from staff teaching on the programmes, and any other individuals who play a key role in the programmes (for instance administrators or technicians). During these meetings the Panel will discuss/consider:

a. Developments within the aims of the partnership to date
b. Successes and challenges encountered to date
c. Experience of working with UoA systems and processes
d. Relationship with the UoA and Schools
e. To discuss plans for future development
f. Experience of course development

g. Teaching and learning issues

Meeting 1: Senior Leadership of Partner Institution
Meeting 2: Academic Staff and Programme Team
Meeting 3: Support Staff and Professional Services

(iii) **Meetings with Students** to discuss the experience of studying on a programme and experiences of being a student of both the partner and the UoA

Meeting 4: Students (Undergraduate and/or Postgraduate (Taught and/or Research) specific, dependent on partnership)

(iv) **Meeting with Link Tutor** to discuss engagement with UoA colleagues and processes and Quality assurance and enhancement issues

Meeting 5: Quality Assurance Session with Link Tutor(s)

(v) **Review of Key Documentation**

Documentation to be Prepared for Review
Short overarching narrative document to be prepared by the School(s) and Partner (no more than 2 pages) providing a summary of key issues, successes and weaknesses within the partnership. If a review has taken place previously, an update on actions following the previous review.

Existing Documentation
Annual Partnership Reports
Annual Course and Programme Reviews
External Examiner Reports
Course Feedback and Reflection Forms
Staff-Student Liaison Committee Minutes

(vi) **Outcomes, Recommendations and Report**: A formal report of the partnership review and the action plan will be submitted to the QAC for approval, and will be reported to Senate and SMT, via University Partnerships Committee (UPC).

Drafted by the Clerk, and approved by the Panel prior to submission to QAC. The Partner/School will also have the opportunity for a factual accuracy check before the report is submitted to the QAC for approval.

The review panel will reach a recommendation on the basis of the discussions held during the review meetings. Normally, this will be a recommendation that the partnership is effective or not effective in the management of quality and standards. In exceptional circumstances, a recommendation may be put to the University Partnerships Committee (UPC) that the partnership be discontinued.

In recommending the effectiveness of the partnership, the review panel may identify areas for development by the partner (or UoA), as conditions (to be met by a specific date) or recommendations (not mandatory but response to be reported through next APR / Annual Partnership Report report) based on their implications for the effective continuation of the partnership.

The review panel may also identify areas of good practice in partnership working, which will be disseminated to relevant staff in the UoA and at partner institutions.

If the outcome of the review is to recommend discontinuation of the partnership, both partners should work closely to ensure that any existing students already enrolled on programmes at the partner institution are given the opportunity to complete their studies (as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement).

PARTNERSHIPS IN SCOPE

The Periodic Partnership Quality Review applies to all partnerships in scope of the Delivery Partners Handbook. This is defined in the Handbook as: ***National and International Delivery Partner*** *activities in which a partner organisation delivers the academic material provided by the UoA leading to the award of a taught UoA degree.*

From Academic Year 2026/27, this includes:

- AFG College with the University of Aberdeen
- University of Aberdeen Mumbai
- South China Normal University (Joint Institute with Business and NCS (Data Science and AI))
- South China Normal University (Joint Institute with Business (Finance))
- China University of Geosciences (Beijing) (Joint Institute with Business and Geosciences)
- Northwestern University (Joint Institute with Business)
- Athens University of Economics and Business (Delivery of Double Degree (Postgraduate Taught))
- Tianjin Foreign Studies University (Delivery of UoA Degree (Postgraduate Taught))

From Academic Year 2027/28:

- University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (Delivery of UoA Degree (Postgraduate Taught))
- Huaqiao University (Delivery of UoA Degree (Postgraduate Taught))
- Nanjing University of Post and Telecommunication (Joint Institute with Business)

The reviews are scheduled as follows:

Academic Year	Term 1	Term 2
2026/27		South China Normal University (JI with Business and NCS (Data Science and AI))
2027/28		
2028/29		AFG College with the University of Aberdeen (Qatar Campus)
2029/30	South China Normal University (JI with Business (Finance))	China University of Geosciences (Beijing) Northwestern University
2030/31	University of Aberdeen Mumbai (India Campus) Athens University of Economics and Business	University of Shanghai for Science and Technology Huaqiao University
2031/32	Nanjing University of Post and Telecommunication Tianjin Foreign Studies University	

DRAFT SCHEDULE

In order to assist with preparations for a PPQR, an indicative draft schedule is included below. It is recognised that each partnership arrangement will vary, and the format of the review may require amendment dependent on the mode of delivery and time zones (e.g. if a review is conducted via Microsoft Teams, cognisance will be required for both the UoA and Partner time zones.

Meeting	Timing	Required Attendees
Panel Briefing	09:00-09:30	Panel
Meeting 1: Senior Leadership	09:30-10:45	Panel & Selected members of Senior Leadership (Principal, Vice-Principal, Dean etc) of Partner
Meeting 2: Academic Staff	10:45-12:30	Panel & Selected members of Academic Staff, including Programme Team and those with relevant roles (e.g. Course Coordinator, Personal Tutor)
Panel Break	12:30-13:30	Panel

Meeting 3: Support Staff	13:30-14:30	Panel & Selected members of Support and Professional Services Staff, including Programme Administration, Careers, Student Support, Library, Registry functions.
Meeting 4: Students	14:30-15:30	Panel & Selected cohorts of students (Undergraduate and/or Postgraduate (Taught and/or Research, dependent on partnership arrangement)
Meeting 5: Link Tutor	15:30-16:00	Panel & Link Tutor
Panel Break	16:00-16:15	Panel
Panel Discussion	16:15-17:00	Panel