INITIAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN PROPOSER AND HEAD OF SCHOOL

PARTNERSHIP PROPOSER:
with support of Head of School, submits Partnership Proposal Form (PPF) online, which initiates initial discussion of proposal between the Proposer, Convener of
the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and Regional Dean

CONVENER OF QAC AND REGIONAL DEAN:
initial agreement to proceed

PARTNERSHIPS UNIT:
arranges meeting(s) with the Proposer and others as necessary to clarify the
details of the partnership in order to draw up an initial draft Agreement

PARTNERSHIP PROPOSER:
submits PPF and initial draft Agreement for formal approval to:

VP (INTERNATIONALISATION):
EU partnerships and international partnerships in region not covered by a Dean
+ Convener of QAC

REGIONAL DEAN:
partnerships in relevant region
+ Convener of QAC

VP (LEARNING & TEACHING):
UK partnerships and all major partnerships (accreditations, validations and joint degrees)
+ Convener of QAC

CONVENER OF QAC AND REGIONAL DEAN/VICE-PRINCIPAL:
formal approval

PARTNERSHIP PROPOSER AND REGIONAL DEAN:
commence formal negotiations with partner regarding draft Agreement in consultation with Convener of QAC, Partnerships Unit and Head of School,
plus other Professional Services departments as required
(eg Finance, HR, SRAS, Registry)

PARTNERSHIPS UNIT:
amends Agreement as required through negotiations to reach final version

CONVENER OF QAC, REGIONAL DEAN/VP, HEAD OF SCHOOL:
approval of final version of Agreement

PARTNERSHIPS UNIT:
co-ordinates signing of Agreement by Aberdeen’s authorised signatories;
Partnership Proposer co-ordinates signing by partner’s authorised signatories;
fully executed Agreement lodged with R&I and partnership added to Aberdeen’s ‘Register of Partnerships’ and published on StaffNet

STUDENTS MAY BE ADMITTED

Further information: can be found on StaffNet at: Partnerships and Collaborative Provision
Contact: web: Contact the Partnerships Unit; email: collaborative@abdn.ac.uk

Appendix I
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE PROVISION:
PROCEDURE FOR SETTING UP A PARTNERSHIP

There is a vast array of different types of partnerships involving students, and in the UK all institutions are required to have a legally binding Agreement (contract) in place, signed by the authorised signatories of both parties, before students may be permitted to enrol on the partnership/collaborative programme. In addition, UK institutions are required to show that all such partnerships have gone through a rigorous procedure involving the separate consideration of the business case and academic quality assurance before approval is given and an Agreement is signed. This applies to all Agreements involving students, whether undergraduate, postgraduate taught or postgraduate research.

The ‘Partnerships Lifecycle’ below provides an outline of the various stages involved in setting up a new student-related partnership or renewing or amending an existing student-related partnership.

Further information: can be found on StaffNet at: Partnerships and Collaborative Provision
Contacts: web: Contact the Partnerships Unit; email: collaborative@abdn.ac.uk

PARTNERSHIPS LIFECYCLE

STAGE 1: PROPOSAL AND APPROVAL

(1) ASSESS THE VALUE OF THE POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP:
Before undertaking a great deal of work on a potential partnership, first assess the value of the partnership – whether it will clearly contribute to University’s strategic goals, whether the School has the resources required to support the partnership, and what the benefits and risks might be. Discuss your initial idea with the Head of School and, if the Head of School is supportive, you should then submit a Partnership Proposal Form (see below). If you have any discussions with a potential partner, it is important that it is made clear that the discussions are exploratory only at this stage.

(2) SUBMIT A PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL FORM (PPF):
Complete and submit a Partnership Proposal Form (PPF) online through the Partnerships and Collaborative Provision submission link, which will initiate the process to approve the proposed partnership.

(3) DISCUSS WITH REGIONAL DEAN AND CONVENER OF QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE:
Following submission of the PPF, you will be invited by the Partnerships Unit to meet with the Regional Dean and the Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to discuss the business and academic cases of your proposal.

INITIAL APPROVAL:
If the Regional Dean, Convener of QAC and Head of School agree that the business and academic cases are strong and that the proposal should be pursued, the proposal can then move to the next stage.
(4) DRAFT AGREEMENT:
The relevant experts in the Partnerships Unit will draw up an initial draft Agreement; in order to do this the Unit will work with the proposer to discuss the many details that might need to be clarified regarding academic standards and quality assurance, applications and admissions, awards, fees, finance and HR, and the responsibilities of each party.

(5) SUBMIT FOR FORMAL UNIVERSITY APPROVAL:
Once the initial draft Agreement has been agreed internally, the PPF (perhaps revised by this stage) and the draft Agreement should be submitted for University approval as follows:

- **International partnerships in areas with a Regional Dean**, submit to the Regional Dean and Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee.
- **EU partnerships and international partnerships for areas that do not have a Regional Dean**, submit to the Vice-Principal (Internationalisation) and Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee.
- **UK partnerships and major partnerships (Accreditations, Validations and Joint Degrees)**, should also be submitted to the Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching), for initial approval (major partnerships require the further final approval of University Committees including Senate and Court, see below).

**FORMAL UNIVERSITY APPROVAL:**
If approved by the Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee and by the Regional Dean/Vice-Principal, the proposal can then move to the next stage.

STAGE 2: NEGOTIATIONS AND SIGNING THE AGREEMENT

(6) NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PARTNER:
Formal negotiation of the draft Agreement with the potential partner can now commence. It is likely that there will need to be quite a few discussions with the partner before both/all parties agree the details of the Agreement and it is for this reason that this stage can take several months to complete. It is therefore important that no assurances are given to potential students until negotiations are complete and a final signed Agreement is in place.

Negotiations may be led by the proposer, but must involve the Partnerships Unit, Head of School and Regional Dean (if relevant), and may also require input from HR, Finance, and other Professional Services departments.

(7) FINAL APPROVAL OF THE AGREEMENT:
The final version of the Agreement resulting from the negotiations requires the approval of the Convener of the QAC; the Partnerships Unit will arrange this.

NB: Major partnerships (Accreditations, Validations and Joint Degrees) require the further approval of the University Committee on Teaching & Learning, Senate and Court, and may require a QAC validation event and/or evaluative visit by members of the QAC, before an Agreement can be signed.

(8) INTERNAL PLANNING:
As well as negotiations with the partner, internal planning discussions will need to take place to ensure that there is clarity regarding who will do what, how and when in relation to the implementation and ongoing management of the partnership programme – all will need to be in place before the first students are admitted.

(9) SIGNING THE AGREEMENT:
Following the conclusion of negotiations, the formal Agreement governing the partnership can be signed. The Partnerships Unit will co-ordinate the signing of the Agreement by the authorized signatories at Aberdeen and at the partner, and will ensure that Aberdeen’s copy of the signed Agreement is retained in the University’s central database held by R&I. Copies will be available to the School and Partnership Board (see below), as necessary, for the management of the partnership.

(10) ADMITTING STUDENTS:
In the UK, institutions are required to have a legally binding Agreement signed by the authorized signatories of both (all) parties in place before any students are admitted or exchanged.

Students may only be admitted to a partnership programme once an Agreement has been signed by all parties.

It is important for purposes of statutory reporting, audit and award that students who are on a partnership programme can be distinguished easily from students who are on a parallel non-partnership programme. For this reason, students must be assigned to the correct version of the programme on admission and on registration.

FURTHER INFORMATION:
Further information, including that on ongoing management, quality assurance procedures, monitoring, review and annual reporting, renewal and termination can be found at Partnerships and Collaborative Provision on StaffNet.

TYPES OF PARTNERSHIP:
Types of partnership requiring approval through the route indicated above include:
- Articulation (eg from UK FE Colleges or 2+2 arrangements with international partners)
- Distance Degree (eg Aberdeen degree delivered on a partner site with distance and/or in-country teaching)
- Double and Dual Degrees
- International Student Exchange and Study Abroad
- Joint Degree
- Joint Delivery (eg Aberdeen and partners contribute courses to an Aberdeen or partner degree)
- Joint Supervision/Co-tutelle/European Doctorate (eg of individual or small cohort of PhD students)
- Split-site Degree (Aberdeen degree delivered partly on partner site and partly at Aberdeen)
- Validation of Partner Programme (usually including delivery of programme)
- Validation of Partner to deliver Aberdeen Programme
- Hybrids of one or more of the above

Types of partnership that do not require approval following the route indicated above include:

- European Joint Doctorate (EJD) (eg Horizon 2020) Funding Bids
  *(NB: The related Double/Joint PhD Agreements DO REQUIRE the approval of the Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee, which can be facilitated through the Partnerships Unit)*

- Entry with Advanced Standing from Foundation Programmes
  *(NB: The related Agreements MAY REQUIRE the approval of the Convener of the Quality Assurance Committee, which can be facilitated through the Partnerships Unit)*

- Funded studentships (ie where the Agreement relates only to the provision of funding/sponsorship of a student)

- Placement/Internship/Elective

**DEFINITIONS** of these various types of partnership/collaboration can be found on the Partnerships and Collaborative Provision webpages at [Types of Partnership](#).

**Further information:** can be found on StaffNet at: [Partnerships and Collaborative Provision](#)

**Contacts:** web: [Contact the Partnerships Unit](#); email: collaborative@abdn.ac.uk
**ACCESSING PARTNERSHIPS**

To access Partnership, navigate to [https://365abdn.sharepoint.com/sites/instres/partnership](https://365abdn.sharepoint.com/sites/instres/partnership).

You may be asked to login – please enter your [username@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:username@abdn.ac.uk) and your password to continue.

**VIEWING YOUR PROPOSALS**

You will be presented with a tabbed window with a tab for partnership proposals you can complete. Select the tab to view proposals you have saved on the system.

**COMPLETING A PROPOSAL**

**TO START A NEW PROPOSAL**

From the ‘My Proposals’ screen, select the ‘actions’ tab and then select New Partnership Proposal.

**SAVING YOUR PROPOSAL**

To save your progress, select ‘Save’ from the top ribbon bar. You will then be returned to the ‘My Proposals’ screen. Your proposal will then become available under the appropriate tab.
EDITING YOUR PROPOSAL

To continue editing a proposal that you have saved, open it from the appropriate tab and select ‘Edit’ from the top ribbon bar.

SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

Once you have completed and saved your proposal and you are ready to submit it for approval, open it from the appropriate tab and select ‘Submit Proposal’.

The system will then submit your proposal and start the approval process. After a few minutes the system will generate a Partnership Proposal ID and you will receive a confirmation email that your proposal has been received.

You will be notified via email once your proposal has been approved or rejected.

APPROVING A PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL

If you receive an email requesting approval of a proposal, you can navigate to the site and approve the proposal via the ‘Partnership Approval Tasks’ tab, or you can open the task directly from the email. This will open the task page as shown below:
APPROVING A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

If you receive an email requesting approval of a partnership agreement, you can navigate to the site and approve the proposal via the ‘Partnership Agreement Tasks’ tab, or you can open the task directly from the email. This will open the task page as shown below:

![Diagram showing task page with options to approve, reject, or send agreement back for amendment]

Use buttons to Approve, Reject or Send Agreement back for Amendment and leave comments.

Click on the Draft Agreement ID to review Draft Agreement.

This is a task page for Partnership Agreement Approval for draft agreement. Please click draft agreement ID 45 to review the proposal. And use buttons on top left corner to Agree/Reject.

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SUPPORT

If you experience any technical difficulties, please contact the SharePoint Team (sp@abdn.ac.uk) or raise a call with the IT Servicedesk (servicedesk@abdn.ac.uk).

BUSINESS OWNER

AGNES VIDA, PARTNERSHIP UNIT (AGNES.VIDA@ABDN.AC.UK)
VIMAL SUBRAMANIAN, PARTNERSHIP UNIT (vimal.subramanian@abdn.ac.uk)

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