

## **CHAPTER I - COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

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**Managing Higher Education Provision with Others**

**QAA Expectation and Indicators (appendix 1)**

Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organizations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

**Indicator 1**

A strategic approach to delivering learning opportunities with others is adopted. Appropriate levels of resources (including staff) are committed to the activities to ensure that the necessary oversight is sustained.

**Indicator 2**

Governance arrangements at appropriate levels are in place for all learning opportunities which are not directly provided by the degree-awarding body. Arrangements for learning to be delivered, or support to be provided, are developed, agreed and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the degree-awarding body.

**Indicator 3**

Policies and procedures ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial impropriety or conflicts of interest that might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities. Consideration of the business case is conducted separately from approval of the academic proposal.

**Indicator 4**

Degree-awarding bodies that engage with other authorized awarding bodies to provide a programme of study leading to a joint academic award satisfy themselves that they have the legal capacity to do so.

**Indicator 5**

The risks of each arrangement to deliver learning opportunities with others are assessed at the outset and reviewed subsequently on a periodic basis. Appropriate and proportionate safeguards to manage the risks of the various arrangements are determined and put in place.

**Indicator 6**

Appropriate and proportionate due diligence procedures are determined for each proposed arrangement for delivering learning opportunities with an organization other than the degree-awarding power. They are conducted periodically to check the capacity of the other organization to continue to fulfil its designated role in the arrangement.

**Indicator 7**

There is a written and legally binding agreement, or other document, setting out the rights and obligations of the parties, which is regularly monitored and reviewed. It is signed by the authorized representatives of the degree-awarding body (or higher education provider without degree-awarding powers arranging provision by a third party) and by the delivery organization, support provider or partner(s) before the relevant activity commences).

**Indicator 8**

Degree-awarding bodies take responsibility for ensuring that they retain proper control of the academic standards of awards where learning opportunities are delivered with others. No serial

arrangements are undertaken without the express written permission of the degree-awarding body which retains oversight of what is being done in its name.

#### **Indicator 9**

Degree-awarding bodies retain responsibility for ensuring that students admitted to a programme who wish to complete it under their awarding authority can do so in the event that a delivery organization or support provider or partner withdraws from an arrangement or that the degree-awarding body decides to terminate an arrangement.

#### **Indicator 10**

All higher education providers maintain records (by type and category) of all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others that are subject to a formal agreement.

#### **Indicator 11**

Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name. This responsibility is never delegated. Therefore, degree-awarding bodies ensure that the standards of any of their awards involving learning opportunities delivered by others are equivalent to the standards set for other awards that they confer at the same level. They are also consistent with UK national requirements.

#### **Indicator 12**

When making arrangements to deliver a programme with others, degree-awarding bodies fulfil the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory body that has approved or recognized the programme or award, in relation to aspects of its delivery and any associated formal agreements. The status of the programme of award in respect of PSRB recognition is made clear to prospective students.

#### **Indicator 13**

Degree-awarding bodies approve module (s) and programmes delivered through an arrangement with another delivery organization, support provider or partner through processes that are at least as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for assuring quality and academic standards for programmes directly provided by the degree awarding body.

#### **Indicator 14**

Degree-awarding bodies clarify which organization is responsible for admitting and registering a student to modules or programmes delivered with others, and ensure that admissions are consistent with their own admissions policies.

#### **Indicator 15**

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that delivery organizations involved in the assessment of students understand and follow the assessment requirements approved by the degree-awarding body for the components or programmes being assessed in order to maintain its academic standards. In the case of joint, dual/double and multiple awards or for study abroad and student exchanges, degree-awarding bodies agree with their partners on the division of assessment responsibilities and the assessment regulations and requirements which apply.

#### **Indicator 16**

Degree-awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment, briefing and functions of external examiners. The external examining procedures for awards where learning opportunities are delivered with others are consistent with the degree awarding body's approved practices.

#### **Indicator 17**

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that modules and programmes offered through other delivery organizations, support providers or partners are monitored and reviewed through procedures that are consistent with, of comparable to, those used for modules or programmes provided directly by them.

### **Indicator 18**

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that they have effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to learning opportunities delivered with others which lead to their awards. Information is produced for prospective and current students which is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. Delivery organizations or support providers are provided with all information necessary for the effective delivery of the learning or support.

### **Indicator 19**

When degree-awarding bodies make arrangements for the delivery of learning opportunities with others, they ensure that they retain authority for awarding certificates and issuing detailed records of study in relation to student achievement.

The certificate and/or record of academic achievement states the principal language of instruction and/or assessment where this is not English. Subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and/or the record of achievement records the name and location of any other higher education provider involved in the delivery of the programme of study. Where information relating to the language of study or to the name and location of the delivery organization or partner is recorded on the record of achievement only, the certificate refers to the existence of this formal record.

## **1.2 Introduction**

- 2.1 Trinity Laban enters collaborative partnerships for the delivery of new programmes or new pathways within existing programmes, in order to advance its mission and strategic plan.
- 2.2 Trinity Laban's criteria and processes for recognition are designed to meet the precepts of the UKHE Quality Code and the requirements of the validating partner. The specific process for recognition will be determined by the Registrar and will vary depending on the nature of the partnership.
- 2.3 The process of recognition will usually be followed by the development of new programmes; major modifications of existing programmes; or the introduction of new modules requiring specialist delivery unavailable within the Institution. Such developments are subject to the standard processes for internal or external validation. Where the partnership involves the validation of a new programme, the partnership recognition and validation events may be combined.
- 2.4 This process is particularly intended for partnerships relating to academic credit-bearing provision. The Academic Standards and Quality Board (ASQB) has discretion to allow the use of a modified version of this procedure to support the establishment of partnerships with performing ensembles and other types of partnerships for educational delivery or to address the particular risks of commercial partnerships. Such arrangements should address the standard criteria for recognition, as appropriate (as set out in D3 below), including emphasis on the position of the partner in relation to:
  - legal and financial stability;
  - strategic compatibility with Trinity Laban;
  - the availability of adequate and suitable resources;
  - sound systems for the maintenance of quality and standards;
  - student support
  - ASQB will inform the Academic Board about the use of any modified version of this procedure.

### **1.3 Criteria for Recognition**

- 3.1 The partnership will be based on quality assurance processes at least as rigorous and transparent as those applying to programmes delivered wholly within the Institution. Any awards will meet the expectations and good practice of the UK and European quality assurance frameworks and systems, including the QAA UKHE Code and Trinity Laban's own academic regulations.
- 3.2 The partner must have appropriate legal status and governance arrangements with sufficient safeguards to ensure the probity of the partnership and suitable strategic direction. The central authority of the partner must fully support the proposed agreement, and be willing and legally able to enter a written and legally binding contract (the Memorandum) explicitly setting out the rights and obligations of the parties.
- 3.3 The partner must be financially stable and legally competent to enter the agreement, as evidenced by audited accounts and business plans.
- 3.4 The partner must have an Institutional mission compatible with that of Trinity Laban, with a clear rationale for the collaboration.
- 3.5 The proposed collaboration must be compatible with any previous or current relationship between the partner and a third party.
- 3.6 The partner must have effective management systems to assure the quality and academic standards of any programmes covered by the agreement, evidenced by its management and committee structures, administrative staffing, and the systems designed to underpin the organization of academic programmes and Institutional quality assurance.
- 3.7 The partner must offer an ethos and an environment for learning and teaching appropriate to the level(s) of the programmes covered by the agreement, and commitment to the provision of an academic environment that facilitates critical reflection and personal development for students and staff. The partner must be able to demonstrate appropriate strategies and policies for learning and teaching, staff development, admissions, equality and diversity and widening participation.
- 3.8 The partner must have appropriate resources to support learning and teaching on the programmes covered by the agreement, as evidenced by the qualifications and experience of the staff; the academic provision, adequate equipment and learning resources and provision for the support and welfare of students.
- 3.9 The partner must have appropriate procedures and mechanisms for assuring that it can meet the standards and academic quality and regulatory framework of Trinity Laban. All regulations, policies and procedures should accord with those of Trinity Laban.
- 3.10 The partner must have appropriate academic and administrative policies and practices, as evidenced by regulations governing student progression, assessment, academic misconduct and appeals and complaints. The partner must provide evidence that its procedures satisfy the precepts of the QAA Code for the assessment of students.
- 3.11 Where relevant, the partner must demonstrate appropriate procedures relating to student recruitment, admissions (including RP(E)L); registration, fee payment, student complaints and grievances, and equality and diversity and widening participation.
- 3.12 The partner's policies and procedures must be consistent with the aims of Trinity Laban's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 3.13 Where relevant, the partner must demonstrate commitment to ensuring that the cohort of registered students will be able to complete studies satisfactorily, as evidenced by the provision of current data on existing students' entry qualifications, progression and achievement.

- 3.14 The partner must be able to demonstrate commitment and systems to provide accurate and reliable information to applicants and students at least comparable in quality to that offered by Trinity Laban to its own potential and registered students, and in compliance with the Institution's obligations to publish information within the national quality assurance framework.

#### **1.4 Arrangements for Recognition Process**

- 4.1 All arrangements for the recognition process will be carried out by the Academic Quality Unit in the Registry, reporting to ASQB. The recognition process may only proceed with the consent of ASQB, on the basis of a preliminary assessment of the compatibility of the proposed partner with the Institution. ASQB will appoint a recognition panel to consider the prospective partner's compliance with the criteria for recognition.

- 4.2 The Recognition Panel may include:

- Director of Music or Dance or another senior member of staff (in the chair) (The Chair must not be involved in proposing the partnership)
- Registrar or nominee (Secretary)
- An Assistant Director, a Head of Programmes or another senior member of academic staff from another subject area
- Representative nominated by the President of the Students' Union
- ASQB has discretion to appoint an external specialist to sit on the panel

ASQB may vary the membership of the panel depending on the nature and scope of the partnership.

- 4.3 The Recognition Panel will seek evidence to substantiate the prospective partner's capacity to act as a Recognized Partner and to meet the recognition criteria, through documentation and meetings with staff and students.

- 4.4 The Recognition Panel will determine the content, format and deadlines for the submission of documentation required from the prospective partner, in advance of the recognition event. The Panel will have discretion to vary requirements for documentation depending on the standing of the partner, ensuring, however, that there is a full body of evidence to enable the testing of the criteria for recognition. The documentation will normally include information on:

- the mission and strategic plan of the prospective partner:
- prospectus:
- Institutional regulations:
- the previous three years' audited accounts or annual report and other information on the financial standing of the prospective partner, including any relevant reports from funding bodies:
- statement on the legal status of the partner:
- information on funding arrangements for students:
- insurance arrangements to cover the prospective partner's liabilities towards students:
- organizational diagrams:
- governance and management structure, including the membership and terms of reference of the governing body and the most senior internal committees:
- any proposals for the management and administration of the proposed partnership at Institutional and programme level:
- quality assurance arrangements and any reports from quality assurance bodies:
- learning and physical resources:
- information on the recruitment and monitoring of teaching staff (including English Language requirements for non-native English speakers):
- staff development arrangements;

- equal opportunities policy:
- 4.5 The Recognition Panel will pay a formal visit to the prospective partner where programme delivery is proposed to take place on their premises, having determined a programme of meetings with senior managers, the proposed programme team(s), existing students (where appropriate) and a review of the Institution's physical resources.
  - 4.6 A member of the Recognition Panel (normally the Panel Secretary) will prepare a report of its findings for approval by the Trinity Laban Academic Standards and Quality Board (ASQB). The Chair of the Panel will report the findings to the proposed partner.
  - 4.7 ASQB will decide whether to recommend approval for the recognition agreement, including a proposed time limit - of no more than five academic years - and recommending the setting of any conditions for approval.
  - 4.8 ASQB will consider any resource implications in consultation with the Principal's Management Group before recommending approval for the partnership.
  - 4.9 The Academic Board will then receive the recommendation for final approval.
  - 4.10 ASQB may decide to ask the partner Institution to undergo further examination of performance and academic standards. The Chair of ASQB may appoint a panel of specialists to observe teaching in the partner Institution. The Chair of the panel will report to ASQB on the outcome of the examination.
  - 4.11 A proposed partner may not hitherto have delivered education or training at FHEQ level four or above and, may, therefore, not have been able to provide evidence of compliance with the criteria relating to learning, teaching, quality assurance and regulatory requirements. Under these circumstances, ASQB may, following advice from the Recognition Panel, recommend Provisional Recognition, subject to a period of developmental engagement with Trinity Laban, designed to address the criteria. A further recognition exercise will then be carried out to consider full recognition.
  - 4.12 Following approval of the partnership by the Academic Board, PMG will approve the memorandum of collaboration (see section D6).

## **1.5 Process for Re-Recognition of Collaborative Partners**

- 5.1 The Academic Standards and Quality Board will oversee procedures for the re-recognition of a partnership normally taking place in the year preceding the expiry of the current agreement. ASQB will seek confirmation through the re-recognition process that the original recognition criteria and any additional requirements set out by the Institution have been met by the partner.
- 5.2 Any continuation of the agreement will be for a further defined period of no more than five academic years, as approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of ASQB.
- 5.3 Should serious concerns be identified through Institutional monitoring processes, ASQB may initiate a formal review before the end of the approval period, informing the Academic Board. The Chair of ASQB, assisted by the Registrar, will have responsibility for alerting ASQB to any serious concerns that may arise.
- 5.4 The Academic Quality Unit in the Registry will make arrangements for re-recognition exercises, reporting to the Chair of ASQB.
- 5.5 ASQB will approve the format for the re-recognition process. This will include provision for:
  - a review visit to the partner Institution, typically taking one-half day; the exercise must take place at the partner institution if teaching is delivered on their premises:
  - submission by the partner Institution of the self-evaluation document (addressing the headings in section 5.8 below).

- 5.6 ASQB will appoint the review panel, normally including:
- Director of Faculty or an academic member of ASQB (in the chair)
  - Registrar or nominee (Secretary)
  - Two members of academic staff from another subject area
  - Representative nominated by the President of the Students' Union
  - ASQB has discretion to appoint an external specialist to sit on the panel

ASQB may vary the membership of the panel depending on the nature and scope of the partnership.

- 5.7 The review visit to the partner Institution will typically take one-half day, including interviews with senior managers; the programme team(s) and students, and a tour of physical resources.

- 5.8 The self-evaluation document will be completed using the standard template (appendix D.9.1). The document will:

- evaluate how the partner Institution manages academic standards:
- evaluate how the partner Institution manages and enhances academic quality, including the provision of learning and teaching resources, including an explanation of how any requirements for improvement have been addressed comment on the operation and management of the partnership with the Institution:
- comment on the continued strategic match between the mission of the partner and the mission of Trinity Laban:
- confirm the continued financial stability of the partner
- provide any other information to confirm the continued compliance of the partner Institution with the recognition criteria of Trinity Laban

The appendices will include:

- Current versions of marketing materials and standard programme/course documentation – handbooks etc.;
- Diagram and details of management structure and terms of reference and membership of quality committees (if applicable):
- Details of academic policies and regulations
- Information on student admissions, progression and achievement:
- Staff development strategy and activities;
- Description of learning and teaching resources:
- Any reports from funding or external quality assurance organizations

- 5.9 The panel may request further information to assist with the completion of the report and the recommendations. A member of the Panel (usually the Panel Secretary) will prepare a report on the findings of the Panel. The report will be presented to ASQB for approval. The Chair of the Panel will report the results to the Partner.

- 5.10 ASQB will decide whether to recommend the renewal of the recognition agreement, agreeing a proposed time limit, of no more than five academic years and recommending any conditions.

- 5.11 ASQB will consider any resource implications in consultation with the Principal's Management Group before recommending approval.

- 5.12 The recommendation will be presented to the Academic Board for final approval.

- 5.13 ASQB may decide to ask the partner Institution to undergo further examination of performance and academic standards. The Chair of ASQB may appoint a panel for relevant specialists to observe teaching in the partner Institution.



## **1.6 Memorandum of Collaboration and Annexes**

6.1 The formal partnership and the responsibilities of the Institution and the Partner will be articulated in the form of a Memorandum. The Memorandum will define the relationship between Trinity Laban and the Partner. The document will define the rights and obligations of each party with regard to:

- Programme delivery and management
- Quality assurance
- Publicity and marketing
- Copyright and data protection
- Access to facilities and resources
- Financial arrangements (which may be the subject of a separate Annex to the Memorandum)
- Procedure for dispute and provisions for arbitration
- Length of the agreement and procedures for termination

The document will make clear that any 'serial' arrangement (as specified in indicator 8 of the UKHE Code) may be undertaken only with the express written permission of the awarding Institution in each instance.

6.2 The annexes may cover:

- Financial arrangements
- Administrative and liaison arrangements and student support, student admission induction, assessment procedures, complaints and appeals etc.

## **1.7 Monitoring of Partnerships**

- 7.1 Trinity Laban will ensure that arrangements are in place for the effective monitoring of the quality and academic standards of programmes or modules/components, delivered through collaborative partnerships. This will include the use of Trinity Laban's standard procedures for student evaluation of programme and modules.
- 7.2 ASQB will nominate a member of the Music/Dance Management Group, as appropriate, to act as Liaison Officer, and to be the first point of contact for any substantive matters relating to the partnership. The Liaison Officer, or a nominated deputy, will pay at least two visits per year to the partner Institution and will meet representatives of teaching staff and students, as well as academic and Institutional managers, as appropriate. The Liaison Officer will address written reports on these visits to ASQB and to the Music/Dance Management Group, as appropriate.
- 7.3 ASQB will constitute programme committees in accordance with Trinity Laban's policies, with the committees reporting to ASQB.
- 7.4 The Principal's Management Group will regularly monitor the register of partnerships subject to a formal agreement. Reports on the status of collaborative partnerships will also be received periodically by ASQB and the Academic Board.

## **1.8 Closure of Partnerships**

Formal agreements with collaborative partners will include provisions committing the partner and Trinity Laban to meet their respective obligations towards students in the event of the closure of a programme or a decision by either party to disengage from the Institutional partnership. The parties will conclude a termination agreement, setting out the rights and responsibilities of both parties and a transitional plan as a basis for the management of the change (refer also to the Trinity Laban procedure for the closure of programmes).