

## **CHAPTER I - COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

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## I.I Introduction and Types of Collaborative Partnerships

- 1.1 Trinity Laban enters into collaborative partnerships in order to advance its mission and strategic plan, to enhance learning opportunities and the student experience and to build its reputation and international reach.
- 1.2 To ensure that partnership initiatives are of high quality and potential, all new collaborative partnerships are subject to a staged approval process set out in this Chapter. In a small, specialist institution it is important that staff time and resources are not spent on initiatives that are not likely to succeed or that pose risks to the institution that outweigh any potential benefits.
- 1.3 An collaborative partnership at Trinity Laban is defined as any partnership between Trinity Laban and an external organisation that relates to recruitment to and/or design, delivery and provision of degree programmes or other credit-bearing activity.
- 1.4 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 particular risks of commercial partnerships. ASQB will inform the Academic Board about the use of any modified version of this procedure for the purposes mentioned in this paragraph.
- 1.5 Any collaborative 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 involving an collaborative partnership must comply with the Institution's collaborative regulations and any relevant external requirements and guidance.
- 1.6 The types of collaborative partnership at Trinity Laban are defined below:

Type	Definition	Main benefits	Main risks
Progression	An arrangement with another institution, normally overseas, to promote the opportunity for the partner institution students on a specified programme(s) to apply to a specified programme(s) at Trinity Laban. Students will be expected to meet all our standard entry requirements and will be admitted to year one of any programme (i.e. without advanced standing). Admission to Trinity Laban programme(s) is therefore not guaranteed.	The opportunity to promote, together with the partner institution, our programme(s) to a specific group of students who are likely to meet our entry criteria.	The quality and accuracy of the partner institution's communications about Trinity Laban and our programme(s).
Articulation	A partnership whereby all students who <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. successfully complete a specified programme of study at the partner institution;</li> <li>ii. pass the Trinity Laban audition process; and</li> <li>iii. meet the applicable English language requirements</li> </ol> are entitled to be admitted, with advanced standing, to year 2, 3 or 4 of a named undergraduate programme at Trinity Laban. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) rules set out in the Academic Regulations relating to the	Increasing recruitment.	<p>The partner students having the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed on the Trinity Laban programme(s).</p> <p>The quality and accuracy of the partner institution's communications about Trinity Laban and our programme(s).</p>

	maximum number of external credit that can count towards a Trinity Laban qualification will apply.		
Collaborative delivery	An external organisation delivers a module(s), or a significant part of a module(s), for a Trinity Laban programme, normally at their premises (or online).	Enriches curriculum and provides the students with the opportunity to learn in different environments.  Sharing experience and practice in teaching and learning.	The quality of teaching by the partner institution.  Partner institution's knowledge of and compliance with relevant Trinity Laban regulations and quality processes.
Study abroad	Trinity Laban students on certain programme(s) can apply to study abroad at a partner institution, with the period studied at the partner replacing the equivalent period of their programme at Trinity Laban.  A study abroad partnership can also refer to external students studying at Trinity Laban for a period as part of their programme at their home institution.  Study abroad partnerships can be reciprocal in which case they can also be referred to as student exchange partnerships.	Provision of international experiences for students.	Quality of curriculum, teaching and student experience at the partner institution.

1.7 For the avoidance of doubt, Trinity Laban does not validate other organisations' programmes or franchise its own degree programmes to be delivered by external organisations.

1.8 While placements and work-based learning are not covered by this Chapter, Placement Guidance and templates are provided in Appendix 1.6 and apply to the management of placements across the institution.

## 1.2 Collaborative Partnership Approval Process

2.1 The collaborative partnership approval process consists of the following sequential stages:

1. Initial Assessment
2. Institutional Due Diligence
3. Partnership Approval
4. Memorandum of Agreement

2.2 The proposers of any new collaborative partnership should contact the Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality & Governance) in the first instance for advice on the collaborative partnership approval process and completing the proposal paperwork.

### Initial Assessment

- 2.3 An Initial Assessment of the proposed partnership must be completed for all collaborative partnership proposals on the template provided in Appendix I.1. Initial Assessment must be completed to assess the risks and benefits of the potential collaborative partnership before its development moves to a more advanced stage.
- 2.4 The Initial Assessment must obtain approval from the Principal's Management Group (PMG) to proceed to the next stage of the partnership development.

2.5

### **Institutional Due Diligence**

- 2.6 Institutional Due Diligence is undertaken for all collaborative partnership proposals after the Initial Assessment has been approved. The level of due diligence depends on the type of the proposed partner institution and partnership, based on a risk assessment undertaken by the Registry. As a rule, articulation and collaborative delivery partnerships will require more rigorous due diligence than progression or study abroad partnerships. For collaborative delivery partnerships, the due diligence process includes a visit to the partner institution. For other types of collaborative partnerships, a visit is recommended but not compulsory.
- 2.7 The purpose of the Institutional Due Diligence process is to ensure that the partner institution
- is financially stable and well managed
  - is a good strategic fit for the Institution
  - has a compatible ethos to that of the Institution
  - has appropriate collaborative policies and quality assurance processes for ensuring good quality learning and teaching
  - has adequate resources and structures to support the partnership activity
  - is legally able to contract with the Institution
  - is committed to the partnership at the executive level
  - is committed to equal opportunities
  - is committed to staff development
- 2.7 The partnership proposer should complete the template provided in Appendix I.2 for the due diligence process, liaising with the partner institution as necessary. The template lists the documentation that should be provided as evidence by the partner institution for meeting the specified due diligence criteria. Once the completed template and appendices have been submitted to the Registry, the financial information is reviewed by the Finance team and the rest of the due diligence information is reviewed by Registry.
- 2.8 ASQB will approve the due diligence on recommendation from Finance and Registry. ASQB may refer any elements of the due diligence to the Principal's Management Group and/or the Board of Governors for approval where the information provided gives rise to a higher-level strategic assessment of risks and benefits involved.

### **Partnership Approval**

- 2.8 Once Institutional Due Diligence has been carried out and approved, the full collaborative partnership approval process can take place. Where the forming of a new collaborative partnership involves a new programme, major amendments to existing programmes or the introduction of new modules, such developments are subject to the standard processes for programme validation, revalidation or programme and module amendment. In these cases, the collaborative partnership approval process will usually be combined with the (re)validation or programme and module amendment process.
- 2.9 The Registry will make the arrangements for the collaborative partnership approval process, regardless of whether it is carried out independently or as part of a (re)validation or programme and module amendment process.

- 2.10 Where the collaborative partnership is proposed as part of a validation or revalidation of a programme, the Collaborative Partnership Proposal Form in Appendix I.3 must be completed (with appendices as indicated) and appended to the (re)validation submission. The (re)validation process will then apply up to the point of drafting the agreement, with elements of the partnership approval process described in this section incorporated as appropriate.
- 2.11 Where the collaborative partnership is proposed without a validation or revalidation of a degree programme, the proposer must complete the Collaborative Partnership Proposal Form in Appendix I.3. (with appendices as indicated). The Programme and Module Amendment Form must also be completed for proposals where module and programme amendments are required. The form(s), with the appendices, must first be approved by the relevant Programme Committee for Faculty-specific proposals. Cross-faculty collaborative partnership proposal forms without programme or module amendment can be submitted to ASQB without prior review by the Programme Committees.
- 2.13 Upon receiving an Collaborative Partnership Proposal Form, ASQB will set up an Collaborative Partnership Approval Panel. The Panel membership will 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 and adviser)
  - A Dean of Faculty or another senior member of academic staff from another subject area
  - Representative nominated by the President of the Students' Union
  - an external specialist where appropriate
  - a professional services member of staff with relevant expertise where appropriate
- 2.14 The Approval Panel (or (Re)validation Panel for proposals where (re)validation is required) will review the Collaborative Partnership Approval Form and any supporting evidence to ensure that
- the proposed division of responsibilities between the parties is appropriate;
  - the arrangements for managing the quality and effectiveness of the partnership are appropriate and in line with the Institution's academic regulations and academic quality policies as well as any applicable external guidance and requirements (such as the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) advice for higher education institutions<sup>1</sup> and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) guidance for delivering learning opportunities with others<sup>2</sup>);
  - the student experience and academic standards are not compromised by the partnership;
  - there is clarity in which student and other policies apply in which situations; and
  - the proposed arrangements can be supported by the Institution's existing systems and resources, or that there is approval from the Principal's Management Group for any extra resources required.
- 2.15 When a proposed collaborative partnership involves delivery of Trinity Laban credit at the partner institution's premises, the Approval Panel (or (Re)Validation Panel) should, on recommendation from ASQB, visit the prospective partner, to meet with senior managers, the proposed programme team(s), existing students (where appropriate) and a review of the partner institution's physical resources. The partnership proposer from the Institution will be expected to take part in the visit.
- 2.16 When a proposed collaborative partnership does not involve delivery of Trinity Laban credit at the partner institution's premises, the Approval Panel (or (Re)Validation Panel) will meet at

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/delivering-learning-opportunities-with-others/>

Trinity Laban, with the proposer presenting the proposal for approval at the meeting. Relevant staff from the partner institution may also be invited to attend virtually as determined by the Panel.

- 2.16 A member of the Approval Panel (normally the Panel Secretary) will prepare a summary of its findings for approval by ASQB, including recommending any conditions for approval. For (re)validations, this will be included in the (re)validation report. ASQB will decide whether to recommend approval for the collaborative partnership to Academic Board, including a proposed time limit (no more than five academic years and normally three years for progression partnerships) and set conditions for approval. ASQB will consider any resource implications in consultation with the Principal's Management Group before recommending approval for the partnership.
- 2.17 ASQB will inform the proposer of its decision and any associated conditions, and deadline for meeting them. The proposer is responsible for liaising with the partner institution to meet the conditions.

### **Agreement and final approval**

- 2.18 Once the conditions have been fulfilled by the proposer and/or the partner institution to the satisfaction of the Chair of the Approval or (Re)Validation Panel, the Registry will draft an agreement for the partnership, using a pre-approved template.
- 2.19 ASQB will submit a report and the draft agreement to the Academic Board for final approval.
- 2.20 The Registry is responsible for coordinating the negotiation process of any agreements with the partner institution, liaising with relevant teams and colleagues across the Institution as necessary. Any amendments made to the agreement following negotiations with the partner institution will need to be approved by the Principal, the Registrar, the Director of Strategy and Business Operations and the Director of Corporate Affairs before the agreement is signed.
- 2.21 Only the Principal is authorised to sign agreements for collaborative partnerships on behalf of the Institution. The Registry is responsible for keeping records of all signed agreements for collaborative partnerships.

### **1.3 Collaborative Partnership Re-Approval Process**

- 3.1 The ASQB will oversee procedures for the re-approval of a partnership normally taking place in the year preceding the expiry of the current agreement. The purpose of the re-approval process is to ensure that the partnership and partner institution continue to satisfy the requirements and criteria originally reviewed as part of the approval process.
- 3.2 Any renewal of the agreement will be for a further defined period of no more than five years following a successful re-approval process, as approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of ASQB.
- 3.3 Should serious concerns be identified through other Institutional quality monitoring processes, ASQB may initiate the re-approval process 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.
- 3.4 The Registry will keep records of when each collaborative partnership is due to undergo the re-approval process, and contact with the liaison person at Trinity Laban to make arrangements for the re-approval process. Where the collaborative partnership is linked to a specific programme, the re-approval process may be combined with the programme revalidation if both are due in the same year and if so advised by the Registry. The collaborative partnership re-approval process will not revalidate any modules or programmes or other parts of the curriculum – that can only be done through the revalidation process.

- 3.5 The Trinity Laban liaison person, with input from the partner institution where appropriate, will complete an Collaborative Partnership Re-Approval Self-Evaluation together with any appendices as indicated on the template.
- 3.6 The requirements of the Self-Evaluation are risk-based, with the most comprehensive documentation (including repeat financial due diligence) required for privately-funded partner institutions overseas and/or collaborative delivery partnerships. The Self-Evaluation template indicates which sections and appendices are required for which type of partnerships and partner institutions. The Self-Evaluation for all types of partnerships and partner institutions is expected to include commentary on:
- the communication between the parties and effectiveness of the operational mechanisms of each party in relation to the partnership;
  - effectiveness of marketing and promotional activities and mechanisms for ensuring the accuracy of material produced by the partner institution;
  - effectiveness of mechanisms for collating student feedback;
  - the student/applicant experience, including analysis of admissions, attainment and progression data over the past five years;
  - external examiner feedback where relevant;
  - any issues during the past approval period and how they were overcome;
  - whether the objectives and purpose of the partnership have been met or continue to be met and future aspirations for the partnership;
  - the continued benefits of the partnership to Trinity Laban;
  - reassessment of risks of the partnership to Trinity Laban; and
  - any changes in the partnership and the external context of each partner institution.
- 3.7 The Self-Evaluation document must be approved at the Programme Committee before submission to ASQB. If the partnership is cross-faculty, the document can be submitted directly to ASQB.
- 3.8 ASQB will appoint a Re-Approval Panel that will normally include:
- Director of Faculty or an academic member of ASQB (in the chair) (The Chair must not be involved in the management of the partnership)
  - Registrar or nominee (Secretary and adviser)
  - One member of academic staff from another subject area
  - Representative nominated by the President of the Students' Union
  - a professional services member of staff with relevant expertise where appropriate

ASQB may vary the membership of the Re-Approval Panel depending on the nature and scope of the partnership.

- 3.9 Where the partnership includes delivery of Trinity Laban credit at the partner institution premises, the Re-Approval Panel will visit the partner institution together with the Trinity Laban liaison person, normally for half a day, for meetings with key staff at the partner involved in teaching and management of the partnership and a tour of the partner institution's facilities.
- 3.10 Where the partnership does not include delivery of Trinity Laban credit at the partner institution premises, the Re-Approval Panel will meet at Trinity Laban or virtually and invite the liaison person, and any other relevant colleagues at Trinity Laban as determined by the Chair of the Re-Approval Panel, to a meeting to present the partnership for re-approval and to answer any questions from the Re-Approval Panel based on the Self-Evaluation. Partner institution staff may also be invited to attend a meeting with the Re-Approval Panel, normally virtually.
- 3.11 A member of the Re-Approval Panel (usually the Panel Secretary) will prepare a summary of its findings for approval by ASQB, including recommending any conditions for re-approval.

ASQB will decide whether to recommend re-approval for the collaborative partnership to Academic Board, including a proposed time limit (no more than five academic years) and set conditions for approval. ASQB will consider any resource implications in consultation with the Principal's Management Group before recommending re-approval for the partnership.

- 3.12 ASQB will inform the proposer of its decision and any associated conditions, and deadline for meeting them. The proposer is responsible for liaising with the partner institution to meet the conditions.
- 3.13 Once the conditions have been fulfilled by the proposer and/or the partner institution to the satisfaction of the Chair of the Re-Approval Panel, the Registry will update the agreement for the partnership.
- 3.14 ASQB will submit a summary report and the updated agreement to the Academic Board for final approval.
- 3.15 Once final approval has been granted by the Academic Board, the Registry will coordinate the negotiation and signing of the updated agreement by the Principal and the partner institution.

#### **1.4 Monitoring of Collaborative Partnerships**

- 4.1 In addition to the periodic re-approval process, the effectiveness and quality of collaborative partnerships is monitored through the Institution's standard quality monitoring processes.
- 4.2 Each collaborative partnership has a liaison person who is the first point of contact for the partner institution at Trinity Laban as well as for colleagues at Trinity Laban for any questions about the partnerships. The liaison person maintains continuous communication with the partner institution and liaises with relevant colleagues at Trinity Laban to raise and resolve any issues. The liaison person also coordinates the management of all applicable quality assurance mechanisms for the collaborative partnership, ensuring that the partnership is represented in and monitored through Annual Programme Evaluation, Programme Committee business, student engagement and feedback activities and external examining. The applicable quality assurance mechanisms are determined based on the type of collaborative partnership. The liaison person will regularly visit the partner institution where relevant, and report to the Programme Committee on any visits.
- 4.3 Music and Dance Management Groups will nominate a liaison person for each collaborative partnership in their Faculty (normally the relevant Programme Leader), for approval by ASQB. For cross-faculty partnerships, the Principal's Management Group (PMG) will nominate the liaison person who is responsible for overseeing the operation, quality and effectiveness of the partnership across both Faculties, reporting to ASQB and PMG as required.
- 4.4 The PMG will regularly monitor the register of collaborative partnerships from a reputational, financial and strategic perspective.
- 4.5 The ASQB will receive an annual oversight report reporting on the status and quality of all collaborative partnerships, including confirmation that quality assurance mechanisms have been used for collaborative partnerships as appropriate, a summary of issues and good practice identified as part of those mechanisms and recommendations for the enhancement of institutional policies and practices in relation to collaborative partnerships. ASQB will bring any major issues or recommendations to the attention of the Academic Board for consideration.

#### **1.5 Termination of Collaborative Partnerships**

- 5.1 Agreements for collaborative partnerships will include provisions committing the partner and Trinity Laban to meet their respective obligations towards students and offer-holders in the event that an collaborative partnership is terminated.
- 5.2 Once the decision has been taken to terminate the partnership by the PMG, on recommendation from ASQB where appropriate, or once a notice to terminate has been



received from the partner institution, the Registry, together with the liaison person, will communicate with the partner institution as appropriate to agree an exit plan setting out the timescales for winding down the partnership and to ensure that the practicalities around the teach out arrangements (where relevant) are clearly documented and agreed to by both parties.

- 5.3 The Registry, together with the liaison person, will also develop an internal termination plan setting out the arrangements for communicating with affected students and offer-holders, any legal and regulatory considerations, termination of any marketing or other publicity activities and actions for monitoring the exit period. ASQB will oversee the termination plan until all teach out and other partnership activities have been completed.