



Academic Quality Framework

Collaborative Provision Processes

TYPE 1: Partner Organisation

Approved by Academic Council

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Overview of Collaborative Provision

1. Context

- 1.1 QQI define collaborative provision¹ as “arrangements whereby two or more providers are involved by formal agreement, nationally or internationally, in the provision of a programme”.
- 1.2 This document sets out the University’s process for establishing and accrediting a collaborative partner, and for managing and monitoring collaborative provision programmes.
- 1.3 TU Dublin participates in a wide variety of collaborative provision arrangements with both national and international external organisations (i.e. collaborative partners).
- 1.4 The provision of collaborative programmes contributes to the achievement of the University’s strategic goals and are provided in such a manner that the financial viability and reputation of the University are not put at risk.
- 1.5 All collaborative providers must demonstrate the capacity to deliver the proposed programme, or their part of it, in accordance with TU Dublin’s Quality Framework and Assessment Regulations. The awards resulting from a validated programme will be

¹ Quality & Qualifications Act 2012

clearly specified and communicated, and aligned to the appropriate level on the [National Qualifications Framework](#) (NFQ) for Higher Education and, consequently, to the [Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area](#).

- 1.6 Collaborative provision may involve the validation of programmes of study leading to major, minor, supplemental or special purpose awards and micro credentials.

2 Definitions of Collaborative Provision Types

There are different types of national and international collaborative provision which include but are not limited to:

TYPE 1 - Partner Organisation Programme Development & Delivery

A programme of study that leads to a TU Dublin award and is developed and delivered in whole or in part by a collaborative provider, which is not an awarding body. This document describes the quality assurance and enhancement procedures applicable to this type of collaborative provision.

TYPE 2 - Partner Organisation Delivery under a 'Contract for Services'

TU Dublin develops and validates a programme of study leading to a TU Dublin award that requires part or all of the programme to be delivered by a partner organisation under a Contract for Services.

TYPE 3 - Collaborative Provider delivery of existing TU Dublin programmes (Franchise)

Franchising is the process whereby a validated programme of study leading to a TU Dublin award is wholly or partly delivered in the partner organisation by its own staff.

TYPE 4 - Off Campus Delivery²

Provision of a TU Dublin programme, delivered, overseen and quality assured by TU Dublin and leading to a TU Dublin award in a facility in Ireland other than in one of the University campus locations and which involves a separate and named local agency in the provision and maintenance of local teaching facilities, learning resources and supports on behalf of TU Dublin.

TYPE 5 - Joint, Dual & Multiple awards

A programme developed and validated by TU Dublin in collaboration with one or more partner academic institutions, with degree awarding powers, which leads to a single award, that is conferred on behalf of all partners is referred to as a Joint Award. Dual and Multiple awards

² Sometimes referred to 'Out Centre Delivery' or 'Transnational Delivery'

are also jointly developed and validated programmes but lead to separate awards from TU Dublin and the partner institutions.

TYPE 6 - Bespoke Provision.

TU Dublin may develop and deliver a programme of study for a partner organisation, tailored for a specific group of students.

TYPE 7 - Student Mobility

Student Mobility is the term employed when a registered TU Dublin student undertakes a minimum of one semester of study in another institution in another jurisdiction which is recognised as part of their programme of study leading to an award of the University. The student mobility arrangement is facilitated by a formal agreement between the University and the partner institution.

TYPE 8 - Articulation Arrangements.

An articulation agreement provides a formalised pathway for students to transfer from a partner University into a programme of study at TU Dublin with advanced standing through recognition of prior learning.

3 Collaborative Provision Partner Requirements

3.1 Both national and international collaborative provision partners must be established legal entities, comply with applicable regulations and legislation in all jurisdictions where they operate, and have:

- Sufficient resources and be stable and in good financial standing to ensure the sustainable provision of the programme(s);
- Fit for purpose governance, management and decision-making structures;
- Arrangements in place to regularly provide the information required by TU Dublin;
- Have in place a system for the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL).

4. Consideration Prior to Embarking on Collaborative Partnership

4.1 When considering embarking on a relationship with a collaborative provider, Schools must give consideration to the specifics of the collaborative relationship and the resources required to fully participate in the relationship and comply with all the requirements set out in this process. The School should consult with the Strategic

Relationships Development Team (SRD Team) within the Partnerships function and Academic Affairs for advice in relation to these requirements and the most appropriate classification of collaborative partnership (see Section 2) for the proposed arrangements.

- 4.2 Consideration should be given to the criteria detailed in Section 3.1 and the compatibility with the proposed collaborative provider.
- 4.3 Consideration should be given to the requirement to comply with the TU Dublin Conflict of Interest policy.
- 4.4 Consideration should be given to the requirement to comply with the TU Dublin Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy, and if applicable what arrangements will be put in place.
- 4.5 Proposed arrangements should be in compliance with the TU Dublin finance model, available from the Faculty Finance Business Partner.
- 4.6 In the case of international collaboration provision, the following should be fully considered before embarking on a partnership:
 - Implications of any local, regional and/or national requirements and/or legislation;
 - Impact of the TU Dublin requirements for Staff Teaching Overseas
 - Ability of the potential partner organisation to deliver and assess the proposed programme(s) through the English language. Where a partner is making a case for part of the programme delivery and/or assessment to be conducted in a language other than English, consideration must be given to how the University quality assurance and enhancement processes will operate, including the University's ability to assign bilingual internal and external staff and examiners.

Collaborative Provision Type 1

5 Stages in Approval Process for Collaborative Provision - TYPE 1

The Approval Process for a new collaborative provider that is proposing to develop and deliver a new programme (either in whole or in part) leading to a TU Dublin award consists of 3 stages:

Stage 1: Outline Proposal

Stage 2: Due Diligence / Programme Proposal

Stage 3: Programme Approval

5.2 At each stage of the process, the staff and committees of the University will be cognisant of the importance of the University's reputation and will consider this in the context of perceived benefits arising from the partnership.

5.3 The approval process flow chart is provided in Section 16.

6 Stage 1 – Outline Proposal

6.1 A request to establish a collaborative provision partnership is submitted in writing by the external organisation to the Head of School.

6.2 If the School wishes to establish a collaborative provision partnership with the external organisation, the Partnership Proposal Form, which provides evidence of how the new partnership would align to the University Strategic Plan and partnership criteria, is submitted by the Head of School to the Faculty Dean.

6.3 The proposal is tabled at the Faculty Executive Team and if recommended to proceed to the next stage, the form is submitted to the Head of Strategic Relationships Development in the Partnerships Function. If the Partnership Function also recommends that the consideration of partnership is recommended to proceed to the next stage, the proposal is submitted to the University Programmes Board for noting. Both the Faculty Executive Team and Partnership Office will aim to have a 2-week turnaround for each stage when all required documentation is submitted.

6.4 If approved, the School nominates a member of staff to act as point of contact between the proposed partner organisation and TU Dublin.

6.5 If either Faculty Executive Team or the Partnership Function decide that a proposal should not proceed, this decision and the objective reasons underpinning the decision will be communicated to the relevant Head of School, who will notify the external organisation. The School may within 20 working days provide the Faculty or Partnership Function with additional information that was not in the initial submission, in which case the proposal can be reconsidered.

7 Stage 2 – Due Diligence / Programme Proposal Form

- 7.1 Due Diligence is the process whereby a third party is evaluated and judged suitable, or not, for assuming responsibility, under prescribed conditions, for the delivery and management of programmes which lead to TU Dublin awards.
- 7.2 Approval of the external organisation will usually involve a due diligence and risk assessment exercise conducted by TU Dublin, which is based on information provided by the external organisation. Due Diligence of an organisation will normally be completed prior to the validation of the programme or programmes of study.
- 7.3 In the case, where it is agreed with the Partnership Function that full Due Diligence is not required, the Head of School submits the Programme Proposal Form to the Faculty Executive Team for approval and proceeds to Stage 3 Programme Validation.
- 7.4 The Head of School or nominee works in liaison with the relevant professional services staff, to update the Risk Register, to complete the Programme Proposal Form and to draft the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). The Head of School should consult with other relevant University functions as appropriate.
- 7.5 The Head of School submits a copy of the completed Due Diligence Information Requirements Form, the Programme Proposal form and Draft MOA to the Faculty Dean to be tabled at Faculty Executive Team;
- 7.6 If the Faculty Executive Team is satisfied that the proposal should proceed, it will forward all the documentation to the Head of Strategic Relationships Development who will liaise with the relevant functions to facilitate an efficient consideration of the documentation. The Programme Proposal Form is sent to University Programme Board.
- 7.7 The Due Diligence consideration process is set out in the Due Diligence Procedure available from the Partnership Office.
- 7.8 Before submission to Faculty Executive Team, the School should ensure that the proposal is in compliance with the TU Dublin [Conflict of Interest Policy](#). Where a conflict of interest or commitment is identified, a copy of the Declaration of Personal Interests Form(s) must be submitted along with the required documentation listed above in Section 7.5. Should the conflict of interest or commitment relate to a member of either the Faculty Executive Team that member may present the details of the proposal, but must be recused from the part of the meeting where a decision on the proposal is made.

- 7.9 Please note that in the case where an external partner is proposing to deliver a micro credential, minor, supplemental or special purpose award, which is delivered in less than three months, the Partnership Function in consultation with Academic Affairs may decide that a Due Diligence Panel is not necessary and therefore may make a recommendation for the proposal to proceed directly to submission of the Programme Proposal Form to Faculty Executive Team as outlined in Section 6.3.
- 7.10 Please note that in the case where a partner is an existing approved collaborative provision partner, the Partnership Function in consultation with Academic Affairs may decide that a Due Diligence Panel is not necessary and therefore may make a recommendation for the proposal to proceed directly to academic programme approval stage and Programme Proposal Form should be submitted to Faculty Executive Team.

8 Stage 3 – Programme Validation

- 8.1 The approved University Programme Validation Process must be followed to validate and approve the programme(s) to be delivered by the external organisation (i.e. the collaborative provision partner)
- 8.2 To allow for differences in collaborative provision partners' contexts and programmes, Academic Affairs, in consultation with the School and Faculty, may make changes to the documentation requirements, the nature of the validation event and the composition of the Panel.
- 8.3 In addition to the Student Handbook and supporting programme documentation required for any new programme to be delivered in the University, the Panel will also receive Supplemental Information for delivery of a programme by a collaborative provider.
- 8.4 The focus of the validation will be to determine the suitability of the programme of study to the award being sought, the environment in which the programme operates, including the management structure and to consider the comparability of the student experience with that of a similar programme of study delivered within the University. As such, the validation may include additional meetings with a range of staff from the partner Institution and the validation panel may include additional members as considered appropriate by the University Programme Board.
- 8.5 The report from the validation panel and response from the School and external organisation should be submitted for approval to the Faculty Board, and in the case of

programmes of 30 ECTS credits or greater the University Programmes Board, for approval.

- 8.6 Upon completion of the validation process, the finalised MOA should be submitted by the School to the Partnership Function who will liaise with the professional services experts and make a recommendation for signature or not as the case may be.
- 8.7 Where a third party provider has completed the due diligence process according to the procedures outlined for micro-credentials, minor, special purpose or supplemental awards of less than 3 months duration, and then wishes to deliver a programme of more than 3 months duration or a major award, then the Due Diligence process as outlined in Stage 2 above should be followed prior to the validation of the programme(s).

9 Memorandum of Agreement

- 9.1 Whilst, the final decision regarding the validation of a programme rests with the University Programmes Board the delivery of the programme is subject to the completion of appropriate Memorandum of Agreement incorporating a Data Sharing Agreement between the TU Dublin and the external organisation. No student can be registered by TU Dublin on a collaborative programme without a signed and dated Memorandum of Agreement being in place.
- 9.2 The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) should be drafted, based upon a standard TU Dublin template, by the relevant School in consultation with the proposed collaborative provider. It should contain appropriate schedules for each programme, which includes details in relation to the contact personnel at each institution, commencement and termination dates, financial arrangements and information on arrangements for the Protection of Enrolled Learners, where applicable.
- 9.3 When the programme validation processes are complete, it is the School's responsibility to ensure that the programme academic and corporate governance arrangements as outlined in the draft MOA align with the information provided and approved as part of the validation or programme review process.
- 9.4 The final MoA along with the MoA approval sheet is submitted to the Partnership Function who will make a final decision in relation to recommendation for signature.

- 9.5 When the MOA is recommended for signature to the University President, two (or more) MoAs including addenda are normally forwarded by the Partnership Function to the proposed collaborative provider for signature. Once these MoAs are returned, the Partnership Function shall forward the MoAs to the University President for signature. The signed MoAs will be returned to the Partnership Function who will forward a copy of the MoA to the relevant TU Dublin School and Academic Affairs and an original MoA to the external organisation, now called a collaborative provision partner. It shall retain an original of the signed MoA for its records and will archive a digital copy of the signed document.

10 Operational Guidelines for Type 1 Collaborative Provision

- 10.1 Any promotional or advertising material should be submitted by the Collaborative Partner for review by the School in adequate time to enable any modifications to be made. The use of the TU Dublin Logo and associated livery must be in compliance with TU Branding Guidelines. No advertising should take place prior to the validation of programmes and signing of agreements.
- 10.2 In advance of the commencement of each year or new cohort of the programme, the student handbook should be updated and a copy provided to the School for review in adequate time to enable any modifications to be made prior to the commencement of teaching.
- 10.3 All teaching staff must meet TU Dublin requirements for teaching delivery and to facilitate oversight the Head of School should be kept informed of any changes to teaching staff and may advise on the criteria for appointment of staff to the programme(s).
- 10.4 Upon acceptance of a place on the programme, the student will be required to give full permission for their relevant personal data to be used. The student will be so advised as to the legal basis by which their personal data will be processed and the extent of such processing. These students must be recorded as TU Dublin students on the University records.
- 10.5 To facilitate the student records process, as agreed in the MOA the collaborative provider or applicant should provide the School and the University registration service with the required data

- 10.6 TU Dublin is required to report student records to the Irish Higher Education Authority (HEA) and their data requirements are subject to change and from time to time collaborative providers may be requested to provide additional data. All of this data transfer will be in compliance with the informed consent of the data subjects and in compliance with the signed Data Sharing Agreement.
- 10.7 If any students leave the programme prior to completion, this detail should be provided to the TU Dublin registration service and the School.
- 10.8 In general, student cards are not provided to students registered on a collaborative provision programme. However, if it is agreed, and included within the MoA, that such students may have access to some TU Dublin services and facilities, and it is agreed that student cards should be provided, student cards will be issued by TU Dublin Students Services subject to the receipt of payment as outlined in the MoA and subject to the receipt of photographs as specified by the Registration Service.
- 10.9 A financial liaison person should be assigned by each collaborative provider who will ensure the prompt payment of TU Dublin fees as outlined in the MoA. This person will be the person with whom TU Dublin liaises in relation to the payment of fees.

11. Programme Delivery & Assessment

- 11.1 The programme must be delivered in accordance with the programme documentation approved by the University. If issues arise and the programme cannot be fully delivered exactly as approved, the relevant Head of School should be informed immediately. The Head of School will liaise with the Faculty Head of Teaching and Learning and, if necessary, Academic Affairs to decide on any remedial action which may be required. Examples of remedial action which may be required include but are not limited to:
- Submission of module and/or programme amendment requests;
 - Change to the resources deployed to deliver the programme;
 - Enactment of the Protection of Enrolled Learners agreement.
- 11.2 In accordance with TU Dublin Policy, the relevant Head of School will nominate an examiner to moderate the assessments on the programme. This person should be a different person to the academic liaison.

- 11.3 If the programme leads to a major award, the examiner will be external to both TU Dublin and the collaborative provider. However, if the programme leads to a micro credential, minor, special purpose or supplemental award, the examiner may be a TU Dublin academic staff member.
- 11.4 The Head of School will consult with the collaborative provision partner prior to nominating the examiner for approval of Faculty Board.
- 11.5 For major awards, the examiner will perform the duties outlined in the TU Dublin External Examiners Policy and the University's Assessment Regulations, and will provide an annual report to both the Head of School and the collaborative provision partner.
- 11.6 Normally, the collaborative provider's liaison will be responsible for co-ordinating the relevant assessment boards.
- 11.7 For major awards, in addition to the examiner, the academic liaison and the Head of School should attend the assessment boards.
- 11.8 The academic liaison will provide all assessment data required by TU Dublin and in the manner prescribed by TU Dublin, including but not limited to, module assessment marks for each student, aggregated marks, decisions of the assessment boards and the recommended award classification for each student. The Head of School will be responsible for ensuring that all required data is inputted into the relevant TU Dublin systems.
- 11.9 The academic liaison will be responsible for working with Student Services to organise the production of parchments and will also be responsible for working with the collaborative provision partner in relation to the requirements for the graduation, where applicable.

11 Collaborative Provision Programme Management

- 12.1 The collaborative provision partner shall have responsibility for delivery and management of the approved programme or a subset of modules of a programme, subject to the oversight of the Head of School. To facilitate this oversight, and in compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement, TU Dublin will assign an academic liaison (with an agreed workload allowance that should be costed into the MOA), normally this is an academic member of staff from the School, for each programme or

set of programmes. Similarly, the partner organisation will appoint an appropriate member of staff to liaise with the School.

12.2 The TU Dublin academic liaison shall provide advice with respect to the implementation of the quality assurance and enhancement procedures, will monitor the delivery of the programme and keep the School informed on any development of issues that arise.

12.3 The partner organisation liaison person is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the Programme Coordinator duties and responsibilities outlined in Management of Quality Enhancement of Academic Programme process. The partner organisation is responsible for ensuring the appointment of class representatives and for organising the meetings of the Programme Team and the Joint Partnership Committee and maintaining minutes of these meetings. They are responsible for the keeping the TU Dublin academic liaison informed on matters relating to the delivery of the programme. These matters include but are not limited to:

- Marketing of the programme;
- Student recruitment and selection;
- Staff teaching on the programme;
- Student performance and progression;
- Resources deployed to deliver the programme;
- Academic standards;
- Any issues affecting the delivery of the programme.

12.4 The academic liaison person and Head of School shall be ex-officio members of a Joint Partnership Committee and assessment board(s) and at least one of which must attend, either in person or via electronic means, each committee meeting.

13 Formal Monitoring Procedures

13.1 Collaborative provision partners are required to obtain feedback from students on their experience on the programme and should agree with TU Dublin whether students registered on the collaborative provision programmes will be included in the TU Dublin Programme and Module Evaluation Survey(s) or if a separate survey will be issued to

them by the partner, in which case a summary of results must be made available to the School.

13.2 As specified in Quality Framework [Annual Programme Enhancement Process](#), an [Annual Programme Report](#) or an agreed equivalent must be completed. In addition, the collaborative provision partner should liaise with the relevant TU Dublin school to complete the Academic Partnership Review Form and to provide a covering memo to confirm that the fees have been paid in full and that the partner organisation:

- Continues to have the capacity to deliver the programme as per the MoA;
- Continues to implement its Protection of Enrolled Learners arrangements;
- Is in compliance with its General Obligations;
- Has fulfilled all Health & Safety obligations;
- Has followed any Intellectual Property requirements;
- Continues to maintain confidentiality as required by the agreement;
- Is in compliance with all data protection requirements as specified in the signed Data Sharing Agreement;
- Continue to have the required insurances in place;
- Is in compliance with Anti Bribery and Corruption requirements;
- Continues to adhere with all applicable laws.

13.3 Faculty Executive Team will consider the operation of Collaborative Provision Partnerships within its Faculty. Faculty Executive Team will update the Partnership Function annually on the operation of partnerships within the Faculty.

13.4 Annually, the School will provide data to the Faculty Executive Team data for the current year, the Annual Programme Report and an update in relation to the payment of fees.

13.5 The Head of School will report to Faculty Executive Team on the operation of the partnership and highlight any issues. Annually, Faculty will arrange a formal dialogue meeting between the Collaborative Provision Partner. The formal dialogue meeting can take place either remotely via electronic means or in person. The membership of the dialogue meeting may vary depending on the issues for discussion but should include the relevant Head of School, the academic liaison person and a nominee of

the Faculty Dean to chair. A representative of Academic Affairs should be invited to attend. From the Collaborative provider, the relevant head of section and the liaison and should attend each meeting. Additional TU Dublin representatives may be invited to attend as required.

- 13.6 Faculty Board will alert relevant TU Dublin personnel and the University Programmes Board of any issues arising that require remedial action.

14 Renewal of collaborative provisions

- 14.1 A Memorandum of Agreement will typically expire after a maximum of 5 years. The duration of the agreement will be clearly stated within the Memorandum of Agreement.
- 14.2 At the commencement of the year prior to the expiration of a Memorandum of Agreement, the relevant School, together with the collaborative partner, should consider whether it wishes to seek a renewal of the collaborative arrangements and, if so, it should instigate the formal renewal and review process.
- 14.3 The relevant Head of School should then ensure with the Collaborative Partner that any programmes that are due to undertake a programme review, complete the programme review process in advance of finalisation of the renewal process. All academic programmes must be reviewed every five years under either the Programme Review Process or the School Review Process. For collaborative Provision programmes, programmes will generally be reviewed under the Programme Review Process unless agreed in advance with the Head of Academic Affairs, that they can be incorporated into the School Review Process.
- 14.4 In parallel to instigate the formal Partnership Renewal Process and the extension / renewal of signed contracts the Partnership Renewal Form should be submitted to the Head of Strategic Relationships Development at least one year in advance of the MOA termination date.

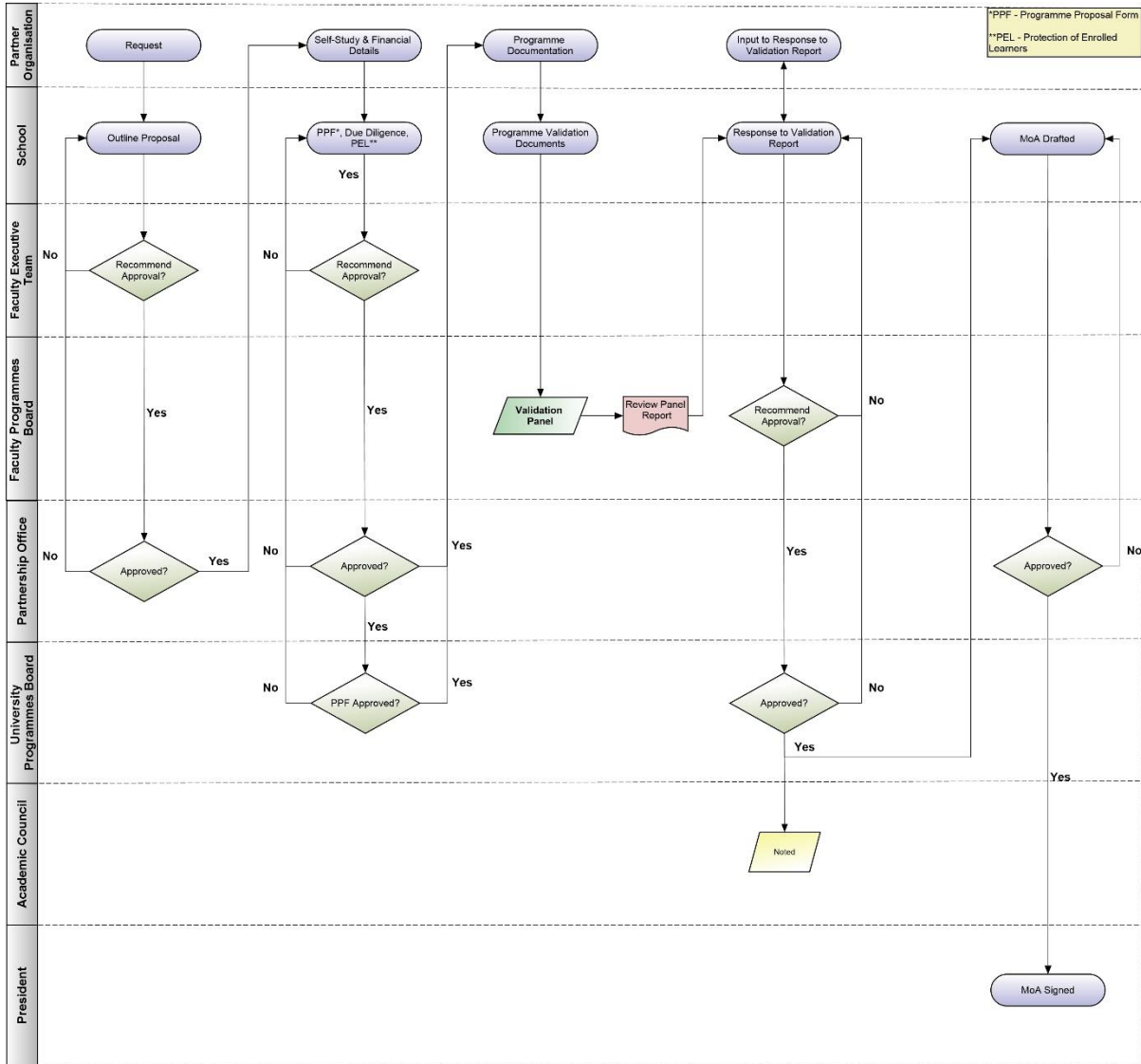
15 Discontinuation of Collaborative Provider Programmes

- 15.1 Collaborative providers must commit that once students are offered a place on a programme, the programme of study will be offered in its entirety. For circumstances that may arise beyond the control of the collaborative provision partner that prevent

the organisation from fulfilling its obligations in this regard, it is imperative that Protection of Enrolled Learner arrangements as outlined in the University's Protection of Enrolled Learners Policy are put in place.

- 15.2 However, a collaborative provider may decide that a programme of study should be discontinued. The collaborative provider should immediately inform the relevant Head of School of this decision and the reason for the decision.
- 15.3 When a decision to discontinue a programme is made, the collaborative partner should ensure that students registered on that programme have a time bound opportunity to complete the programme or where the Protection of Enrolled Learners arrangements are in place that these are enacted as described with the MoA. The Collaborative Provider will be responsible for providing a contact point for students with queries in this regard.
- 15.4 In exceptional circumstances, or in the case of repeat students, agreement may be reached between TU Dublin and the collaborative provider that a suitable alternative programme may be provided.
- 15.5 The Head of School should advise Faculty Board, the University Programme Board, the Partnership Function and Academic Affairs of this decision, using the Academic Partnerships Termination Form clearly stating the reasons and describing what arrangements have been put in place to ensure the protection of the enrolled learners.
- 15.6 The University may likewise make a decision that a programme offered by a collaborative provider should be discontinued. The recommendation to discontinue a programme can be made by the Head of School or Faculty Dean, or it may arise out of the quality assurance process.
- 15.7 The decision to discontinue the programme should be ratified by either University Programmes Board. The University will inform the Collaborative provider of its decision, the reasoning for the decision and the timescale.
- 15.8 The collaborative provider will work with the University to ensure that arrangements are put in place to provide students currently registered on the programme with the opportunity to complete the programme of study.

16 Process Flow Chart



Appendix 1

List of Registrations Requirements

In order for students records to be set up on banner the following information is needed:

- Student Name
- Student Address (Please note we can only input one address on Banner i.e home address)
- Eircode – each student address must include their Eircode as this is required for the HEA Returns
- Contact Telephone Number
- Personal email address
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- PPS No – collection of PPS number is a mandatory field required for the HEA Returns for all students domiciled in Republic of Ireland
- Programme Code
- Programme Year
- CRN codes only where fees are being charged per module. (CRN is Course Reference Number of a Module).
- If the student was previously a student in TU Dublin and the previous student number is known, please include this on the data.