



Academic Quality Framework

Collaborative Provision Processes Type 4 Off Campus Delivery

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Off Campus Delivery

1. Definition

- 1.1 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 or Internationally 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. The delivery can either be
- A: Blended / distance delivery or
 - B: Physical face-to-face delivery.

Off Campus delivery may take place on programmes leading to TU Dublin awards, joint / dual/ multiple awards

1.2 A: Off Campus Blended / Distance Delivery

Blended delivery of complete or parts of programmes may be undertaken by TU Dublin with the support of strategic partners located outside of Dublin, i.e., the local partners abroad. The variety of different supports provided by the local partners will vary from programme to programme and may include but is not limited to:

- Provision of student support services
- Provision of learning resources such as libraries and laboratories
- Recruitment of students
- Provision of examination rooms and invigilation services

1.3 B: Physical Face-to-Face Delivery

Physical face-to-face delivery by TU Dublin staff of programmes or parts of programmes will normally be delivered either on a TU Dublin Branch Campus or in partnership collaborative partner institution. If using a local partner, generally their role will include one or more of the following:

- Provision of physical learning resources
- Provision of student access to on-line learning resources
- Provision of student support services
- Promotion of programme and recruitment of students

The standard of provision of services through local partners should be comparable to provision of services within the University.

2. The Approval Process

- 2.1 The Approval Process for a new off campus delivery consists of 4 stages:
- Stage 1: Outline Proposal
 - Stage 2: Due Diligence
 - Stage 3: Programme Approval
 - Stage 4: Signing of the Agreement
- 2.2 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.

The approval process flow chart is provided in Section 11.

3. Stage 1 – Outline Proposal

- 3.1 When either developing a new programme or planning to deliver an existing programme to a new location with a new local partner the Head of School should liaise with the University's procurement office and puts forward a case to Faculty Executive Team for the use of a new out centre, using the Partnership Outline Proposal Form, which provides evidence of how the new delivery would align to the University Strategic Plan and partnership criteria, is submitted by the Head of School to the Faculty Dean.
- 3.2 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 7.1.3. 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.
- 3.3 If using a local partner in the delivery of the programme, a written letter of support should be provided by the partner confirming their role.

- 3.4 The proposal is tabled at the Faculty Executive Team and if recommended to proceed to the next stage, the form is submitted to the Partnership 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 Function will aim to have a 2 week turnaround for each stage when all required documentation is submitted.
- 3.5 If approved, the School nominates a member of staff to act as point of contact between the proposed partner organisation and TU Dublin.
- 3.6 If either Faculty Executive 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.
- 3.7 At this stage, TU Dublin should also work with the local partner to ensure that TU Dublin complies with any required legal and regulatory requirements and to ensure that the awards delivered will be recognised both locally and internationally.

4. Stage 2 – Due Diligence

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Approval of the external organisation will usually involve a due diligence and risk assessment exercise conducted by TU Dublin, 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.
- 4.3 Please note that in the case where an external partner is proposing to deliver a 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 academic programme approval stage.

- 4.3.1 The Due Diligence process is set out in the Due Diligence procedure available from the Partnership Function.

5. Stage 3 – Programme Validation

- 5.1 The approved University Programme Validation Process must be followed to validate and approve the programme(s) to be delivered in an off campus location.
- 5.2 The Head of School or nominee should then arrange for the development of a Localised student handbook and supporting programme documentation. The supporting documentation should include a section Arrangements for Overseas Delivery by TU Dublin Staff, (where applicable) which specifies how the programme or part of programme will be delivered overseas by TU Dublin staff and the applicable arrangements that will apply to staff. These arrangements should be in compliance with the University's Policies on Staff Working Overseas. This documentation will also outline the role of the local support partner.
- 5.3 To allow for differences in types of off campus delivery, 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.
- 5.4 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 on the role of the local agency.
- 5.5 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 agency and the validation panel may include additional members as considered appropriate by the University Programme Board.

- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 Where a third party agency has completed the due diligence process according to the procedures outlined for minor, special purpose or supplemental awards of less than 3 months duration, and then wishes to facilitate the delivery of a programme of more than 3 months duration or a major award, then the Due Diligence process as outlined in Stage 2 above may need to be followed prior to the validation of the programme(s).

6. Stage 4: Memorandum of Agreement

- 6.1 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 / Programme Provision Agreement (PPA) incorporating a Data Sharing Agreement, if necessary, between the TU Dublin and the external organisation. No student can be registered by TU Dublin on an off-campus delivery if an appropriate Memorandum of Agreement / Programme Provision Agreement has not been put in place with the relevant local agency.
- 6.2 The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) / Programme Provision Agreement 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.

- 6.3 When programme validation processes are complete, the final MoA / PPA along with the MoA approval sheet is submitted to the Partnership Function who will make a final decision in relation to recommendation for signature.
- 6.1 The MOA/PPA including addenda is recommended for signature to the University President or nominee, once signed the MoA/PPA including addenda are normally forwarded by the - School to the proposed collaborative provider for signature. A copy of the signed MoA/PPA will be returned to the Partnership Function and Academic Affairs and an original MoA/PPA to the external organisation, now called a collaborative provision partner. It shall retain an original of the signed MoA/PPA for its records and will archive a digital copy of the signed document.

7. Off Campus Programme Management

- 7.1 TU Dublin's Programme Co-Ordinator shall have responsibility for delivery and management of the approved programme or a subset of module of a programme, in accordance with TU Dublin's Academic Quality Framework and Assessment Regulations, subject to the oversight of the Head of School. The partner agency organisation should appoint an appropriate member of staff to liaise with the Programme Co-ordinator.
- 7.2 The agency liaison should keep the Programme Co-ordinator of the implementation of any roles and responsibilities that have been assigned to the agency as outlined in the MOA / PPA.

8. Formal Monitoring Procedures

- 8.1 As TU Dublin Students, students registered on off-campus programmes should be included in the TU Dublin Programme and Module Survey but due to local considerations, agreement of Academic Affairs should be sought 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.
- 8.2 As specified in Quality Framework Annual Programme Enhancement Process, an Annual Programme Report should be submitted for each location. In addition, the third party agency partner should provide a covering memo to confirm that the fees, is application have been paid in full and the partner organisation:
- Continues to have the capacity to facilitate the delivery of the programme as per the PPA / MoA;
 - 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.
- 8.3 Faculty Executive Team will consider the operation of Collaborative Provision Partnerships within its Faculty. Faculty Executive Team will update the Partnership Function quarterly on the operation of partnerships within the Faculty.
- 8.4 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.

- 8.5 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 Third party agency. 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 programme co-ordinator, a representative of the Partnership Function and a nominee of the Faculty Dean to chair. A representative of Academic Affairs should be invited to attend. From the third-party, the relevant head of section and the liaison and should attend each meeting. Additional representatives may be invited to attend as required.
- 8.6 Faculty Board will alert relevant TU Dublin personnel and the University Programmes Board of any issues arising that require remedial action.

9. Renewal of Collaborative Provision

- 9.1 A Memorandum of Agreement / Programme Provision Agreement will typically expire after a maximum of 5 years. The duration of the agreement will be clearly stated within the Memorandum of Agreement.
- 9.2 At the commencement of the year prior to the expiration of a Memorandum of Agreement/PPA, 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.
- 9.3 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, these 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.

- 9.4 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/PPA termination date.

10. Discontinuation of Collaborative Provider Programmes

- 10.1 Partners 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 partner that prevent the organisation from fulfilling its obligations in this regard, it is imperative that Protection of Enrolled Learner arrangements are put in place prior to the commencement of the programme.
- 10.2 However, a partner may decide that they may no longer facilitate the delivery of a programme of study. The partner should immediately inform the relevant Head of School of this decision and the reason for the decision.
- 10.3 The Head of School using the Partnership Termination Form should advise Faculty Board, the University Programme Board, the Partnership Function and Academic Affairs of this decision, clearly stating the reasons and describing what arrangements have been put in place to ensure the protection of the enrolled learners.
- 10.4 The University may likewise make a decision that a programme offered 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.

- 10.5 The decision to discontinue the programme should be ratified by either University Programmes Board. The University will inform the partner of its decision, the reasoning for the decision and the timescale.
- 10.6 The partner 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.

11. Flow Chart

