



Academic Quality Framework

Collaborative Provision Processes Type 5: Dual, Joint, Double, Multiple

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Type 5: Joint, Dual, Double & Multiple awards

1. Definition

- 1.1 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. Multiple awards are also jointly developed and validated programmes but lead to separate awards from TU Dublin and the partner institutions.
- 1.2 These approval processes should be read in conjunction with the TU Dublin, Joint, Dual and Multiple Awards Policy available at: <https://www.tudublin.ie/media/website/explore/about-the-university/academic-affairs/documents/Joint,-Dual-and-Multiple-Awards-Policy.pdf>

2. Criteria

- 2.1 To be a Joint / Dual / Double / Multiple Provider an Institution should:
- Already have successful existing provision in the subject area and at the academic level of the proposal;
 - Have degree awarding powers at the appropriate level or equivalent.
 - Be in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any countries where they operate.
 - Have access, transfer and progression arrangements that are compatible with TU Dublin's arrangements.
 - Have arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners that meet statutory obligations (where applicable)
 - Have their own established Assessment Regulations and QA procedures.
 - Learning resources and the learning environment should be appropriate to the delivery of the award;
 - The qualifications and experience of academic staff should be appropriate.

3. Stages in Approval Process for Joint / Dual / Multiple Awards

3.1 The Approval Process for a new programme leading to a joint / dual / multiple award consists of 4 stages:

Stage 1: Outline Proposal

Stage 2: Due Diligence (if applicable)

Stage 3: Programme Approval

Stage 4: Signing of Agreement

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 14.

4. Stage 1 – Outline Proposal

4.1 If the School wishes to establish a joint / dual / double / multiple award, the Partnership Outline 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.

4.2 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. In its consideration of the approval of the Outline Proposal, the partnership office will also determine if the proposal should proceed directly to Stage 3. In general organisations that are known degree awarding bodies which are publicly funded will proceed directly to Stage 3. 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.

- 4.3 If approved, the School nominates a member of staff to act as point of contact between the proposed partner organisation and TU Dublin.
- 4.4 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.

5. Stage 2 – Due Diligence

- 5.1 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. In the case of a proposed joint/dual award with a known degree-awarding institution either in Ireland or internationally, the Partnership Function will consider the nature of the due diligence exercise required and the documentation required. It is envisaged that the self-study report and full due diligence report may only be required in certain cases where the collaborating institution is relatively unknown (non-EU, non-US etc). In all cases the School should update the risk register template for each programme.
- 5.2 Should a decision be made that the due diligence process is required, the process to be followed is set out in the Due Diligence Procedure available from the Partnership Function.

6. Stage 3 – Programme Validation

- 6.1 Programme Teams should discuss the programme documentation and validation requirements with the Academic Quality Office at an early stage of programme development.
- 6.2 As specified in the University Programme Validation Process, a Programme Proposal form is completed and approved for all types of joint / dual / multiple awards. The nature of the validation event may vary. If TU Dublin is the leader partner, the validation processes as outlined in the approved University Programme Validation Process are normally followed.
- 6.3 The Validation Panel should receive full documentation on the programme as delivered at the TU Dublin and the partner institution(s). This documentation should clearly outline:
- Roles and Responsibilities of each partner
 - Rights and Entitlements of students in each partner
 - The specific assessment regulations that will apply to this programme
 - The joint quality assurance arrangements that apply.
- 6.4 The Panel shall ensure that the arrangements for the assessment of students and the regulations that pertain to the programme are clear and that any derogations from the University's Assessment Regulations and any other specific issues/requirements are explicit in the Programme Document.
- 6.5 As part of the validation process, the programme documentation should specify the specific programme management, reporting and monitoring procedures that have been agreed between the partner Institutions that will apply. All programmes in which TU Dublin participates should have
- a joint programme committee or equivalent which includes student representatives and staff representatives
 - a joint assessment board or equivalent to make recommendations on progression and the final award
 - an annual monitoring report which incorporates data on student performance and student and external examiner feedback

7. When Partner Validation Procedures are being followed

- 7.1 In accordance with the “European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”, a Head of School or nominee can put forward a proposal to the University’s Programme Board via the Academic Quality Office that the validation procedures of one of the partner institutions or Quality Assurance Agency be followed. The case should include the specific details on the implementation of programme validation and monitoring and review procedures in the partner institution or Quality Assurance Agency. In this case, the programme documentation as outlined above should be given provisional approval by Faculty Board in advance of formal submission to the partner University. TU Dublin may participate in validation procedures. The report arising from the validation procedures, together with a response from the relevant school should be submitted through Faculty Board for formal consideration by the University Programme Board. University Programme Board may make a recommendation for approval of the new award based on this validation report and response.

8. Dual Award arising out of two existing validated awards

- 8.1 In the case of a Dual Award arising out of two existing validated awards in known degree-awarding Institutions, in which it is envisaged that the students will spend a minimum of two semesters for a Bachelor’s Degree and one semester for a Master’s Degree with each partner, the following proposed approval steps are proposed:
- 8.1 Partner Organisation provides details of the validation / accreditation of the existing award (e.g the Quality Assurance Procedures that were undertaken to approve the existing award and any subsequent reviews and copies of relevant reports) and details of any legal requirements within their jurisdiction for dual awards (if applicable)
- 8.3 A representative of Academic Affairs reviews this documentation, consults with QQI, relevant Embassy, NARIC, University staff as appropriate and makes a recommendation on its acceptance to the University Programme Board.
- 8.4 Partner Organisation provides details of the existing curriculum, including Module Descriptors (or equivalent)
- 8.5 School considers the partner’s curriculum against the approved TU Dublin programme and establishes compatibility for the two cohorts of students to ensure that all students to receive the TU Dublin award, will meet the overall

programme learning outcomes and also to clearly identify any pre-requisites that may be required:

A: Cohort TU Dublin: For students who commence programme of study with TU Dublin and then study for an appropriate period of time in the Partner Institution.

B: Cohort Partner: For students who commence programme of study with Partner and then study for an appropriate period of time in the TU Dublin.

- 8.6 Partner organisation provides details of how Students in “Cohort TU Dublin” will be accommodated whilst with Partner
- 8.7 TU Dublin School ensures that TU Dublin Cohort students will be adequately covered with Insurance etc. whilst on Semesters abroad and any other requirements that are needed (e.g. do they need a foreign language proficiency, vaccinations etc.)
- 8.8 TU Dublin School provides sample Student Handbooks, that clearly specify the requirements for the different cohorts of students

9. TU Dublin Evaluation Panel

- 9.1 A TU Dublin Award Evaluation Panel is established with the suggested membership of a Senior Manager with experience of Quality Assurance Processes (within Faculty) (to Chair), TU Dublin Discipline Academic Expert, representative of Academic Affairs and option of External discipline expert
- 9.2 The panel will review Programme Documentation submitted to review the proposed curriculum, (this may include meeting remotely (including online meeting rooms and teleconference facilities) with a selection of staff from TU Dublin and Partner Organisation) and may make a recommendation to:
 - Accept Compatibility
 - Accept Compatibility with caveats (conditions / recommendations)
 - Don't Accept
- 9.3 The panel consider the appropriateness of services that will be provided to students in the Partner University. It may be appropriate and relevant for the Panel or sub-set of Panel to meet (maybe online) with a selection of Students. For example: TU Dublin students who previously undertook exchange with partner (if there were previous exchange students, TU Dublin students from the programme or Partner students (particularly students who may be on exchange in TU Dublin)

9.4 The panel makes a recommendation to the University Programme Board to approve a the Award, with or without conditions / recommendations.

10. Stage 4 – Signing of a Consortium Agreement

10.1 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 Consortium Agreement incorporating a Data Sharing Agreement between the TU Dublin and the external organisation(s). No student can be registered by TU Dublin on a joint / dual / multiple / double programme without a signed and dated Consortium Agreement being in place.

10.2 The Consortium Agreement should be drafted, based either upon a standard TU Dublin template (or partners equivalent,) 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. When a partner's template is used, this must be approved by the University's Governance and Compliance Office at the earliest opportunity.

10.3 When programme validation processes are complete, the final Consortium Agreement along with the Agreement approval sheet is submitted to the Partnership Function who will make a final decision in relation to recommendation for signature.

10.4 When the Consortium Agreement is recommended for signature to the University President, two (or more) Agreements including addenda are normally forwarded by the School to the proposed collaborative provider for signature. Once these are returned, the Partnership Function shall forward the Agreements to the University President for signature. The signed Agreements will be returned to the Partnership Function who will forward a copy of the Agreements to the relevant TU Dublin School and Academic Affairs and an original Agreement to the external organisation. It shall retain an original of the

signed Agreement for its records and will archive a digital copy of the signed document.

11. Formal Monitoring Procedures

- 11.1 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 Survey 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.
- 11.2 An Annual Programme Enhancement Process, an Annual Programme Report or an agreed equivalent must be completed.
- 11.3 Faculty Executive Team will consider the operation of Collaborative Provision Partnerships within its Faculty. Faculty Executive Team will update the Partnership Function on the operation of partnerships within the Faculty.
- 11.4 Annually, the School will provide data to the Faculty Executive Team for the current year, the Annual Programme Report and an update in relation to the payment of fees, if applicable.
- 11.5 The Head of School will report to Faculty Executive Team on the operation of the partnership and highlight any issues.
- 11.6 Faculty will alert relevant TU Dublin personnel and the University Programmes Board of any issues arising that require remedial action.

12. Renewal of collaborative provisions

- 12.1 A Consortium Agreement will typically expire after a maximum of 5 years. The duration of the agreement will be clearly stated within the Agreement.
- 12.2 At the commencement of the year prior to the expiration of the Consortium Agreement, the relevant School, together with the partner, should consider

whether it wishes to seek a renewal of the arrangements and, if so, it should instigate the formal renewal and review process.

- 12.3 The relevant Head of School should then ensure with the Collaborative Partner(s) that any programmes that are due to undertake a programme review / external re-accreditation, complete the programme process in advance of finalisation of the renewal process. All academic programmes must normally be reviewed every five years. Under the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, this review may be undertaken by an agreed accreditation agency or other self-accrediting body. The Process for review of Dual, Joint, Multiple Degree programmes should be agreed in advance with the Head of Academic Affairs.
- 12.4 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 Consortium termination date.

13. Discontinuation of Collaborative Provider Programmes

- 13.1 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 are put in place.
- 13.2 However, a 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.
- 13.3 When a decision to discontinue a programme is made, the provider 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 in the Agreement. In exceptional circumstances, or in the case of repeat students'

agreement may be reached between TU Dublin and the provider that a suitable alternative programme may be provided.

- 13.4 The Head of School should use the Partnership Termination Form to advise Faculty Board, the University Programme Board, the Partnership Function and Academic Affairs of this decision, clearly stating the reasons and describing what arrangements are in place to ensure the protection of the enrolled learners.
- 13.5 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.
- 13.6 The decision to discontinue the programme should be ratified by the University Programmes Board. The University will inform the provider of its decision, the reasoning for the decision and the timescale.
- 13.7 The 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.

14. Flow Chart

