

LTC14D079

Title: Partnerships Strategy
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Issue

The need to formalise a strategy for University partnerships is set out in the QAA Quality Code section B10 Managing HE provision with others, Indicator 1:

A strategic approach to delivering learning opportunities with others is adopted.

Appropriate levels of resources (including staff) are committed to the activities to ensure that the necessary oversight is sustained.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the University adopts a partnerships strategy which aims to deliver:

- A strong regional presence for HE in FE delivery, expanded beyond 2014-15 levels of activity
- Key strategic international partnerships
- Partnerships with local and national employers (possibly in partnership with appropriate FECs)
- Expansion of strategically important 2+2 arrangements which clearly contribute to UEA KPIs
- Increased co-tutelle PhD arrangements with international partners as identified in the international strategy
- Increased numbers of 1+1 masters awards with strategic international partners
- A University-wide understanding of which partnership opportunities to pursue and which to avoid (i.e. high-risk, low income, poor reputation partnerships)
- Partnership arrangements as identified by implementation of the international strategy
- The capacity to respond quickly to new opportunities

Resource Implications

Partnerships activity generates income for the University and is included in the HEBCIS return. The proposed strategy is one of expansion with each partnership costed on an individual basis.

Risk Implications

The adoption of a strategy ensures University compliance with QAA Quality code and should also guide colleagues to appropriate partnerships. The quality assurance processes in place to evaluate each partnership proposal ensure risk is fully considered prior to entering into formal partnership arrangements.

Equality and Diversity

Expanded HE in FE delivery will facilitate widening participation and provide progression to UEA especially for students from a non-traditional background.

Timing of decisions

The development of a University partnerships strategy will help inform the development of the University Corporate Plan 2016-2020.

The partnerships strategy will link to the development of a University international strategy which identifies country links and potential for activity.

Further Information

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Background

The University's Partnerships activity generates around £1 million per annum for the University and currently there are almost 9,000 students studying for UEA awards. Partnership activity is regional, national and international and arrangements are of financial and/or strategic value:

- a) Regionally the University supports
 - The provision of HE in FE colleges
 - Easton & Otley College (Otley and Easton Campuses)
 - City College, Norwich
 - Norfolk University Technical College (Advisory Role)
 - University Campus Suffolk (UCS) and the Learning Network Colleges:
 - UCS Ipswich
 - West Suffolk College
 - Great Yarmouth College
 - Suffolk New College
 - Lowestoft College
 - INTO UEA LLP
- b) Nationally the University supports
 - Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts
 - Institute of Health and Social Care Studies, States of Guernsey
 - A number of potential partnerships currently under consideration
- c) Internationally the University supports
 - MoUs of co-operation
 - Articulation arrangements including 2+2 arrangements
 - Co-tutelle arrangements for PhD study
 - A number of potential partnerships currently under consideration

Developing a strategy

The University has a proven track record in, and strong reputation for, supportive partnership working and could build upon its brand credibility to increase partnerships activity. Evidence of UEA's high quality as a partner was identified in the 2004 and 2009 QAA Institutional Reviews in other recent external reviews of our partners, as follows:

- a) QAA Institutional Review of UEA 2009 (most recent review of UEA) – Features of Good Practice
“the arrangements for the operation of collaboration provision, particularly the work of the central Partnerships Office, which support the sound management of academic standards and the enhancement of quality in the partner institutions” (paragraph 68)
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Reports/Pages/inst-audit-University-East-Anglia-09.aspx>
- b) QAA Institutional Review of UEA 2004– Features of Good Practice
“the sound arrangements underpinning the University's relations with local partner institutions”
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Reports/Pages/inst-audit-University-East-Anglia-04.aspx>
- c) Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts Review of Specific Course Designation for Student Support February 2014 – Features of Good Practice
 - *“the mutually supportive and comprehensive partnership with the University of East Anglia*
 - *the comprehensive annual monitoring process*
 - *the detailed understanding, mapping and implementation of the Quality Code*
 - *the review approach to module enhancement*
 - *the embedded and deliberative approach to student employability”*
- d) QAA Review of UCS via University of Essex's Collaborative Review July 2010
UCS Joint Academic Committee a feature of good practice
- e) British Accreditation Council review of INTO UEA Norwich July 2010
“University [UEA] involvement in quality management is a strength”
- f) QAA Institutional Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) of CCN June 2010 – Features of Good Practice
“the College has a constructive and cooperative relationship with its awarding partner, the University of East Anglia, as exemplified by the Annual Synoptic Report”
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Reports/Pages/IQER-City-College-Norwich-10.aspx>
- g) QAA review (IQER) of Easton College March 2011 – Features of Good Practice
the strategic development of higher education, in line with employer and community needs and supported by robust management structures and clear reporting lines developed in conjunction with the University, leads to highly relevant vocational curriculum development
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Reports/Pages/Easton-College.aspx>

A review of the partnership activity undertaken by Russell Group Universities is summarised in Appendix 1. This shows that the Russell Group tend to work with small numbers of partners for validated provision, both nationally and internationally. UEA, in comparison, can demonstrate a proven track record and build capacity to support UEA's aspirations to enhance local, national and international academic partnerships.

Currently, our partnership activity supports the guiding precepts in UEA's 2012-16 Corporate Plan:

- To serve as a powerful cultural and economic stimulant in Norfolk, the region and beyond through enterprise and vigorous public engagement.
- Through partnership arrangements UEA provides a wide range of vocational courses suitable to the needs of employers in the region.
- To cherish a collegial ethos and pursue social inclusion in the profile of students admitted and in staff selection, promotion and leadership.
- To promote the principles of fairness and equality in work and study to enable all students and staff to fulfil their potential.

Looking to the future UEA's partnerships activity offers the realistic potential to:

- enhance UEA's reputation
- support UEA's international strategy
- widen participation in higher education
- encourage engagement between UEA and the local community
- increase progression to UEA
- develop joint arrangements with industry partners
- enhance specialist expertise and raise awareness of best practice
- work with strategically identified international partners leading to study at UEA, including for example 2+2 models and co-tutelle arrangements for PhDs
- generate income

Consequently, an expansion of partnerships activity is recommended, to take advantage of our expertise, skills and knowledge and our strong reputation as a high quality partner to achieve these benefits.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the University adopts a partnerships strategy which aims to deliver:

- A strong regional presence for HE in FE delivery, expanded beyond 2014-15 levels of activity
- Key strategic international partnerships
- Partnerships with local and national employers (possibly in partnership with appropriate FECs)
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Appendix 1

Summary of Russell Group Partnership Activity as reported through QAA Audit

Cardiff University	<p>Following merger, several existing UWCM arrangements were transferred to the new institution.</p> <p>These include programmes in health and sports medicine and occupational therapy that are offered in collaboration with higher education partners within Wales and three programmes offered with overseas partners.</p> <p>There is also a dual award arrangement with the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Bordeaux) which was approved in 2002.</p> <p>QAA 2008</p>
Durham University	<p>Four validated partnerships were in operation, providing for 517 students in the academic year 2008-09. All were situated in the north-east region. Two of the partners were consortia of colleges validated to provide programmes and make various awards in Theology and Ministry, in support of the Church of England's framework for ministerial education. At the time of the audit, the two consortia proposed to merge and the University was in the process of completing a joint review of both, on the basis of which, a proposal for revalidation could be presented to Senate University of Durham during 2009. For the two other validated partnerships one leads to a postgraduate diploma and the other to an undergraduate diploma of higher education.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
Imperial College London	<p>Small amount of provision, mostly at PhD level</p> <p>QAA 2010</p>
King's College London	<p>At institutional level the College aims to collaborate with a small number of high-quality partners; it has no plans for further validation arrangements or to franchise its provision. Its modest collaborative portfolio comprises joint and dual degrees, partnership programmes and one validation.</p> <p>QAA 2010</p>
London School of Economics and Political Science	<p>Partnerships with a small number (currently five) of high-quality institutions in globally significant cities.</p> <p>QAA 2011</p>
Newcastle University	<p>The collaborative provision register reported around 600 students across 11 partnerships, five of which are overseas. A further six new partnerships (including two overseas) were yet to recruit students at the time of the audit.</p> <p>In addition to the collaborative provision arrangements noted in the institution's collaborative provision register, there is a joint venture with a private provider known as INTO Newcastle. This arrangement includes undergraduate credit-bearing diploma courses in business and computing, the completion of which guarantees direct second-year entry to relevant University honours degrees. The audit team formed the view that this venture clearly falls within the University's definition of collaborative provision.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
Queen Mary, University of London	<p>Queen Mary's most significant partnership, involving almost 2,000 undergraduate students, is with Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications (BUPT). It concerns the joint delivery of taught degrees at BUPT leading to awards of both institutions. Other</p>

	<p>partnerships are mainly with a range of higher education institutions in London (including some within the University of London), as well as one partnership with a local further education college. In addition, Queen Mary has articulation agreements through which it admits students onto its programmes, allowing them to carry forward credit from their previous institution. There are also partnership arrangements associated with joint research student supervision, student exchanges or study abroad, and clinical or professional placements.</p> <p>QAA 2010</p>
Queen's University Belfast	<p>The University has an increasing number and variety of collaborative arrangements involving, in 2008-09, a total of about 1,800 students. It has collaborative agreements with several Northern Ireland further education colleges for undergraduate and Foundation Degrees, articulation arrangements and access courses. It also has collaborative arrangements with six overseas institutions in China, Malaysia, and Brunei.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
University College London	<p>UCL has only a small number of partner institutions with which it works in the joint delivery of taught programmes or in the joint support and supervision of research degrees. UCL does not engage in franchising programmes for delivery by partners, accreditation of partners for the development and delivery of programmes, or the validation of partners' provision for the award of a UCL degree. Typically, UCL operates partnerships, both in the UK and overseas, in which each partner brings an active contribution to the development and delivery of the provision. Examples would include research collaborations, student exchange agreements and intercollegiate teaching.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
University of Birmingham	<p>The University also has some 3,600 students on a single accreditation agreement with the University College Birmingham, which has recently been granted degree awarding powers, but continues to award University of Birmingham degrees. University College Birmingham is responsible for quality assurance arrangements, with oversight provided by an Accreditation Committee chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Students).</p> <p>QAA audit report 2009</p>
University of Bristol	<p>The University's collaborative provision is offered through seven educational partnerships, including one overseas partnership (with City University of Hong Kong).</p> <p>From FD to PHd</p> <p>QAA Audit report 2009</p>
University of Cambridge	<p>The University currently operates four types of collaborative provision which include partnerships with approved University Partner Institutes (UPIs). The University does not offer any joint degrees, although a number of programmes are offered where students receive teaching from another institution.</p> <p>QAA Audit report 2013</p>

University of Edinburgh	<p>The University has a small number of collaborative programmes. The main accreditation agreement is with the Scottish Agricultural College.</p> <p>QAA 2011</p>
University of Exeter	<p>The University has limited collaborative provision at taught course and doctoral levels.</p> <p>QAA 2012</p>
University of Glasgow	<p>The University offers collaborative and validated provision in partnership with a relatively small number of institutions. The University offers some 35 degree programmes in collaboration with five UK universities. The majority of the University's collaborative provision is with the University of Strathclyde. The University also validates provision in four institutions that do not have their own degree awarding powers. Two of these partnerships are with 'associated institutions' (Christie's Education, London and the Free Church of Scotland College); two are with 'accredited' institutions (The Glasgow School of Art and the Scottish Agricultural College).</p> <p>QAA 2010</p>
University of Leeds	<p>Collaborative research degree arrangements with York St John University and Leeds Trinity University College</p> <p>QAA 2012</p>
University of Liverpool	<p>The University had begun to review its rationale and approach to partnerships, and had determined to focus on the building of a limited number of prestigious partnerships with overseas institutions, based in part on the development of the successful links with its partner, Laureate. At the same time, the University has been developing its regional approach to collaborative activity, more recently through links with further education and other providers to underpin the University's widening participation commitment.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
University of Manchester	<p>3,000 students studying in the UK and overseas for University awards through a variety of collaborative links. Most links were in two schools: the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures and the Manchester Business School.</p> <p>QAA 2011</p>
University of Nottingham	<p>The University's collaborative course register comprised eight articulation, progression and credit transfer agreements (whereby students gain entry to a University programme, some with advanced standing); five instances of joint delivery; seven off-campus delivery arrangements; and one validation of a partner's programme. There was a mixture of UK and overseas activities.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
University of Oxford	<p>The University's collaborative provision is relatively small scale, totalling just over 500 students, including around 130 University students on language placements and year-abroad schemes. The policy regarding collaborative provision was revised in 2007 and placed in a framework that would allow an increase in such provision within an overall institutional strategic framework. There has been some modest expansion recently in focused and specialised areas.</p> <p>QAA 2009</p>
University of Sheffield	

	<p>The University has a number of collaborative arrangements which are defined in the Collaborative Framework.</p> <p>QAA 2012</p>
University of Southampton	<p>The provision comprises: franchise arrangements with further education colleges, mostly involving Foundation Degrees or Post Compulsory Education and Training programmes; a well-established accreditation arrangement relating to a bachelor's degree in art; and several partnership arrangements involving master's programmes in engineering and science, including an Erasmus Mundus programme and a programme delivered online.</p> <p>There are, in addition, admissions agreements with overseas institutions and the audit team was informed that the University's internationalisation strategy influenced the choice of partners, in favour of large institutions with international reputations.</p> <p>QAA 2008</p>
University of Warwick	<p>The University has a relatively small portfolio of collaborative provision, with partners in the UK and overseas, and has taken a cautious approach towards managing this provision.</p> <p>QAA 2013</p>
University of York	<p>As well as formal links with York College, there are strong informal local links with, for example, its membership of the Higher York network (which promotes inter-institutional collaboration as well as boosting the local economy) and, slightly further afield, with the other White Rose universities (for example, doctoral training links with the Universities of Sheffield and Leeds).</p> <p>QAA 2012</p>