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**Collaborative Provision: Due Diligence Check**

1. This document should be read in conjunction with the College’s [*Guidelines for Establishing and Reviewing Collaborative Provision*](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/general-principles-for-working-with-others/Guidelines-for-establishing-and-reviewing-HE-provision-with-others.pdf)
2. In order to safeguard the interests of students, the College undertakes appropriate and proportionate due diligence checks before proceeding in any substantive way with the development of an arrangement for a collaborative programme. In formulating the College’s due diligence procedures the College adheres to the guidance provided by the [QAA Quality Code](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code) and [Advice and Guidance on Partnerships](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships).
3. The Academic Strategy Committee is responsible for approving the strategic concept of a partnership with an institution/organisation and whether the partnership should be institution/organisation wide or only with specified departments/subject areas within the institution/organisation. The academic content of individual programmes and awards is subject to further checks that they will conform to, or are equivalent to, College standards and regulations. Depending on the nature of the proposed collaboration, the due diligence enquiries (including site visits) which need to be undertaken will vary. A due diligence check normally includes enquiries relating to the governance, ethos, status, capacity, reputation and general suitability of the potential delivery organisation or support provider. Where necessary, these investigations include checking the legal status of the prospective partner, and its capacity in law to contract with Imperial. Due diligence enquiries are also refreshed periodically and also where circumstances change (for example, if the activities are extended or if the ownership of a delivery organisation or support provider changes).
4. The department proposing the collaboration, with support from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team in Registry, is responsible for collating the information for consideration of strategic approval and the relevant quality committees. The Vice Provost (Education and Student Experience) will determine whether an initial site visit is required as part of the approval of the partnership.
5. The checklist outlines the information that will normally be requested, though the full requirements will be determined on a case by case basis. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement team summarises the findings of the check for consideration by the with the full diligence check undergoing scrutiny by the relevant quality committee at the programme approval stage.
6. The Academic Strategy Committee and/or relevant quality committee(s) may request additional information or undertake further investigations (including site visits) following consideration of the initial submission. The Committees will refer to [*Key criteria for consideration when establishing collaborative arrangements*](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/general-principles-for-working-with-others/Key-criteria-for-consideration-when-est-collab-arrangements.pdf)when making their decision.
7. **Important: Due diligence enquiries and agreements must be completed before the implementation of any academic activities.**

**Collaborative Provision: Due Diligence Checklist**

This checklist should be completed by the Academic Lead / department with support from Registry’s Quality Assurance & Enhancement Team. Please complete one form for each proposed partner. Partners are normally approved for a period of 5-6 years. A high level summary of the information will be prepared for strategic approval by the Registry.

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| **Proposed Partner** | Please state whether this will be an organisation/institution-wide or subject area/department level partner |
| **Name of Proposer** |  |
| **Proposed Award type** | (e.g. joint, dual, or collaborative Imperial award) and description of the nature of the collaboration |
| **Name of proposed programme/module** |  |
| **Imperial College Lead Department** |  |
| **Imperial College Academic Lead** |  |
| **Which partner will be the lead partner?** |  |
| **Partnership Proposal** | Please attach as an appendix |
| **Has the partnership/programme been agreed in principle by the partner organisation?** | Please attach a letter of support for the collaboration from the proposed partner. The letter should be on headed paper. |
| **Notes** |  |

**Information Required for a Proposed Partner:**

| **Area to Consider** | **Documentation** | **Name of person submitting the evidence and date evidence submitted** | **Quality Committee Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategic Plan and Mission**  Please attach a copy of or link for the proposed partner’s Strategic Plan/Mission statement. |  |  | Does it fit with Imperial’s; is it realistic? |
| **Founding documents – Charter, Statutes, etc**. Are there any constraints on the University’s operations? For instance, are they able to award joint or dual awards?  The proposed partner should be asked to confirm their powers and authority and they should be asked to provide a legal opinion from a reputable law firm addressed to the College to confirm their power, capacity and authority to enter into the proposed agreement and perform lawfully their obligations under the agreement.  For UK institutions:  Is the institution included in the Office for Students Register?  For international institutions:  Please supply proof, in English, that the institution can enter into the proposed partnership.  Please supply proof that the partner institution is able to make the proposed award and that the institution is licensed to operate UK programmes. |  |  | Statement from the proposed partner to be checked by Legal Services |
| **Trusted Sponsorship (TS) Status** (UK institutions only)  Does the institution have trusted sponsorship (TS) status for the purposes of student visas?  See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students> |  |  |  |
| **Previous relationships with the proposed partner.**  A statement of known relationships from the College’s Registrar of Collaborative Provision.  The Academic Lead should liaise with the proposed partner institution and include any additional information |  |  |  |
| **Annual Report and Financial Statements**  Is the institution state or publically funded?  Please provide the institution’s annual report and financial statement.  What is the size of the institution’s turnover? Are there any concerns about the institution’s viability? |  |  | If further information is required a statement from the Finance Division on the institution’s financial position should be requested |
| **National and International recognition**  Confirmation of the institution’s position in the league tables:  For example:   * Times Higher Education World University Rankings * QS World University Rankings * Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) * The Times Good University Guide * The Guardian University Guide   If the proposed collaboration is at subject level, subject level rankings should also be provided if available. |  |  |  |
| **REF results**  UK institutions:  A summary of the institution’s latest REF results.  International institutions:  Is there a country-wide equivalent to REF, if so please give details. |  |  |  |
| **Legal Judgements/Actions**  Are there any recent legal judgements against the institution or any pending legal action against it?  Please provide a statement from the proposed partner institution. |  |  | Should the Central Secretariat be asked to comment on this and summarise key findings? |
| **Governing Policies**  Does the institution have policies on equal opportunities, widening participation, health and safety, environmental and sustainability issues, etc. that we would expect to see in a partner organisation?  Is there equality of treatment on basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.  Is there access and support for disabled students, students with learning disabilities? Will there be special examination arrangements for students missing examinations through illness, bereavement, etc. |  |  | Registry will consult with the Director of the Research Office to provide this information |
| **Ethical Considerations**  Does the institution have any other affiliations or relationships that might be of concern (e.g. tobacco companies)?  Are there any other political/ethical issues associated with the institution of which the College should be aware?  International institutions:  Does the country abide by the Human Rights Act, European Convention on Human Rights and/or UN Declaration of Human Rights  Imperial has an [ethics policy](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/secretariat/what-we-do/ethics/) - Does the institution have something similar? |  |  | Registry will consult with the Director of the Research Office to provide this information |
| **Quality Assurance Arrangements**  What are the institution’s own quality assurance arrangements?  International institutions:  Is there a country-wide regulatory body? If yes, please provide evidence that the institution is in good standing with this body |  |  |  |
| **Resources**  Please provide a brief statement on the resources required to deliver the proposed programme and how these will be co-ordinated across the programme – to include as appropriate laboratory and teaching facilities, IT and Library support, student accommodation and social/sports facilities. |  |  |  |
| **Welfare support provided by the proposed partner.**  Please provide a statement from their proposed partner and on their welfare structure and arrangements.  International institutions:  Is there an equivalent to the NHS? What are the arrangements for health care? |  |  |  |
| **The proposed institution’s existing collaborative degree portfolio.**  Please provide a statement from the proposed partner listing their current collaborative programmes, including student numbers. |  |  |  |

**Site Visits**

Is an initial site visit required? Y/N

The Vice Provost (Education and Student Experience) may determine that an initial site visit should be undertaken. This should be conducted by at least one senior member of the College, normally not involved with proposal. This member of staff will make a report of the visit using the [site visit template](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/general-principles-for-working-with-others/Collaborative-provision---site-visits.pdf). The department proposing the programme is required to fund this visit and any subsequent visits carried out by members of the College for due diligence/quality assurance purposes throughout the duration of the partnership.

At programme approval stage, the relevant quality committee will be asked to determine the nature and frequency of any future site visits. The document [*Collaborative Provision: Site Visits*](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/general-principles-for-working-with-others/Collaborative-provision---site-visits.pdf) includes a list of criteria to be considered when deciding whether an initial or on-going site visits are required.

**Conclusion: Quality Committee Findings**

**Is the proposed partner approved?** Yes / No / More details required / Notes:

**Is the proposed award type approved?** Yes / No / More details required / Notes:

**Is a site visit required?** Yes / No

**Nature and frequency of on-going site visits:**

Please note: By approving the strategic partnership, the Academic Strategy Committee are agreeing that the collaboration may be pursued. The programme content and detail will be considered in full by the relevant quality committee.

Approved by Senate

February 2014

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| **Originator:** | | Registry Quality Assurance & Enhancement Team | |
| **Contact for queries:** | | Assistant Registrar (Partnerships, Monitoring and Evaluation) | |
| **Cross References:** | | *Guidelines for Establishing and Reviewing Collaborative Provision*  *Procedure for Establishing Undergraduate and Master’s Level Collaborative Programmes and Awards*  *Procedure for Establishing Research Degree (PhD and EngD) Collaborative Programmes and Awards*  *Procedure for Establishing Collaborative Modules*  *Key Criteria for consideration when establishing collaborative arrangements*  *Site Visits*  *Academic and Governance Issues*  *Criteria for consideration when establishing collaborative Master’s level programmes with Industrial Partners*  *Procedures for the Approval, Renewal and Review of Partner Research Institutions*  *Procedures for the Approval and Review of Split PhDs*  *Imperial Recognised Location* | |
| **Notes and latest changes:** | | Minor modifications made August 2014  Minor modifications made March 2015  Minor formatting changes made April 2016  Updated links February 2018  Updated October 2022 – links and references from Provost’s Board to Academic Strategy Committee  Updated December 2022 – links to key criteria for consideration when establishing collaborative arrangements and ethics policy | |