

Educational Partnership Agreements Procedure

Version 3 - Approved 16 May 2023

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Purpose

This procedure describes the general requirements for developing, executing and reviewing formal educational partnership agreements. Further requirements, based on the type of educational partnership agreement, are described in associated procedures specific to each agreement type. See ‘Related Procedures’ below.

This procedure does not apply to agreements for professional experience placement (PEP) arrangements, where a third party hosts University of Tasmania students for the purposes of work integrated, or experiential learning. Processes around the management of PEP are outlined in a dedicated *Professional Experience Placement Procedure*.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Cth	1.1 Admission 1.2 Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning 5.4 Delivery with Other Parties	N/A
Partnerships Policy	1 Partnerships 3 Educational Partnerships	1.1-1.3 3.1-3.3
Quality Assurance Policy	1 Quality assurance	1.1-1.6
Data and Information Governance Policy	4 Data and Information Management	4.1-4.4

Definitions and acronyms can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy/policy-definitions>

Related policy and procedures can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy>

Procedure

1. Background

The University may enter into educational partnership arrangements of the following types:

- a) **Course articulation and pathway arrangements**, where a University of Tasmania course and a partner course are linked for entry purposes by identifying the content relationships between them. These may or may not involving the granting of course credit.
- b) **Third party course delivery arrangements**, where University of Tasmania students are enrolled in a University of Tasmania award or non-award course of study, that is delivered either wholly or partly by a third party.
- c) **Conjoint research training arrangements**, where a doctoral candidate is jointly supervised by the University of Tasmania and a partner institution, is enrolled at both institutions and receives an award from both the University of Tasmania and the partner, which recognises the conjoint nature of the award.
- d) **Joint and dual awards**, where a single course of study is arranged and delivered by the University of Tasmania and the partner and leads to a single qualification (joint award), or where a course of study results in students receiving an award from both the University of Tasmania and the partner (dual award).
- e) **Student mobility arrangements**, where either University of Tasmania students are provided with opportunities to undertake a study experience, including placement and internship opportunities, either at the premises of, or facilitated by, the partner; or where students from other providers study at the University of Tasmania.
- f) **Courseware licensing arrangements**, where University of Tasmania courseware is provided to the partner institution for incorporation into the partner institution's courses.

Other educational arrangements, which establish a formal arrangement between the University of Tasmania and the partner institution in areas not covered by any of the preceding categories and including, but not limited to, professional development in learning and teaching are also covered by this procedure.

Where a proposed agreement is not related to any of the arrangement categories outlined above, or where the correct arrangement category is unclear to the person proposing the arrangement, that person must seek advice from Partnerships and Learning Abroad as to the appropriate arrangement type.

Where a program of activity involves collaboration across multiple categories of arrangement (for example articulation *and* third party course delivery), separate *agreements* must be entered into for each category of arrangement, except where approved in writing by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

2. Proposing a New Educational Partnership

2.1. The phased 'gated funnel' approach

Proposed educational partnerships are developed by Colleges/Divisions and Partnerships and Learning Abroad and must be aligned with the University's strategic priorities for learning and teaching and research training. Partnerships and Learning Abroad can guide proposers of a new educational partnerships and provide access to a suite of assessment tools.

The development and formalisation of educational partnerships proceeds through a phased 'gated funnel'. (refer Schedule A – Educational Partnerships Phased Gated Funnel) which includes several phases:

- a) initial evaluation;
- b) risk and benefits assessment (including consideration of the business case, if applicable);
- c) agreement execution and delivery; and

- d) ongoing performance review and quality assurance.

Progress through the phased gated funnel is not intended to occur in series. Some considerations may occur in parallel. This is reflected in Schedule B – Educational Partnerships Decision Tree.

2.2. Initial evaluation

Assessment of a proposed partnership must include examination of the rationale for seeking a new partner and take into consideration existing partnerships/partners that may already exist within the proposed jurisdiction and discipline. The assessment phase involves an initial evaluation against key criteria, including alignment with University strategy and risk appetite.

This assessment is typically initially undertaken at the academic organisational unit-level, to be subsequently raised through the College Director/s (Strategy and Business Development) for discussion with Partnerships and Learning Abroad.

An educational partnership arrangement may only continue to the second phase if the initial evaluation determines it should proceed. The decision to proceed will be made by the Associate Director (Partnerships and Learning Abroad) and recorded.

2.3. Risk and benefits assessment

During this phase, Partnerships and Learning Abroad works with the proposing College/Division on an analysis of the risks and benefits of the proposed partnership.

Educational partnership arrangements will only be progressed where the Associate Director (Partnerships and Learning Abroad) is satisfied that the benefits of entering into the partnership and the risks of proceeding can be effectively managed.

A risk assessment must be undertaken for all new arrangements to:

- a) determine the risks relevant to the arrangement;
- b) determine the appropriate delegated signing authority for the specific agreement; and
- c) inform the decision making of the authorised signatory prior to signing the agreement.

For a partnership with an overseas partner, the risk assessment must include, but is not limited to, the following risk categories:

- a) political stability within the partner's country and any other jurisdictions in which the agreement will operate;
- b) matters affecting the safety and security of University of Tasmania staff and/or students travelling to the partner's country and any other jurisdictions in which the agreement will operate;
- c) matters affecting academic freedom in the partner's country and any other jurisdictions in which the agreement will operate;
- d) currency fluctuations and foreign taxation regulations that may affect the operations or financial sustainability of the arrangement; and
- e) where relevant, any local laws and regulations impacting the operation of the agreement.

The risk assessment must identify the ways in which the identified risks will be managed over the life of the agreement. Partnerships and Learning Abroad will liaise with the Director, Academic Quality and Standards on the academic risks/benefits of the proposal.

Where curriculum mapping, or similar, is required, (for an articulation arrangement, for example), mapping is completed by an academic staff member at Level C or above and endorsed by the College Learning and Teaching Committee.

The College, in conjunction with Partnerships and Learning Abroad, is required to develop a business case to articulate return on investment and demonstrate capability and capacity to deliver the partnership program and that appropriate support is available to operationalise the partnership.

The business case must be endorsed by the College Leadership Team prior to being submitted to Partnerships and Learning Abroad. The College Leadership Team's endorsement must be clearly recorded writing and provided to Partnerships and Learning Abroad.

2.4. Due diligence assessment

Partnerships and Learning Abroad will complete due diligence on the business case and seek advice on from Legal Services, Governance and Compliance, Finance and Academic Quality and Standards as appropriate, depending on the nature of the proposed partnership.

Legal Services and Governance and Compliance advice may also be sought on, for example: foreign matters assessment (interference, influence and arrangements), which Partnerships and Learning Abroad will facilitate.

A decision to proceed the agreement to the execution stage will be made through consultation and communication between Partnerships and Learning Abroad and the proposing organisational unit, generally via the College Director/s (Strategy and Business Development).

Educational partnership agreements will only be executed where due diligence has been conducted into, and the delegated signatory is satisfied as to:

- a) the proposed partner's reputation;
- b) the proposed partner's experience in delivering educational services;
- c) legislative requirements and/or restrictions to obtaining in-country approval for the agreed activity (overseas agreements only);
- d) potential impacts on other existing partnerships;
- e) the proposed partner's existing arrangements with other educational institutions;
- f) accreditation or registration requirements relevant to the agreed activity;
- g) the proposed partner's financial standing and legal position; and
- h) the proposed partner's government registration, where relevant.

3. Executing Agreements

All educational partnerships must be formalised through an agreement between the University and the partner institution.

Mandatory inclusions in agreements for the various types of educational partnerships are specified in the procedures pertaining to that *particular type* of partnership.

Partnerships and Learning Abroad will draft the agreement between the University and the partner and arrange for execution of the agreement. All agreements must be reviewed and endorsed by the University General Counsel and the Associate Director (Partnerships and Learning Abroad) prior to signature.

Agreements may only be executed by the authorised delegate, following all required approvals, according to the University's [Academic Delegations Ordinance](#) and as specified in the [Schedule of Academic Delegations](#).

Once executed, Partnerships and Learning Abroad will record the decision in the stakeholder management system, ensure the agreement is sent to the partner and inform relevant stakeholders of the outcome.

Agreements are recorded in the Partnerships and Learning Abroad stakeholder management system and stored in the University's official records.

4. Delivery and Outcomes

The Associate Director (Partnerships and Learning Abroad) is responsible for the administration of all existing agreements, including facilitating approvals, variations and renewals, and is the primary point of contact for all matters related to the agreement itself.

The College Executive Dean/s is accountable for ensuring the partnership is conducted in accordance with the terms of the agreement and delivers on expected outcomes.

5. Renewing an Existing Agreement

The relevant College Director/s (Strategy and Business Development) and Partnerships and Learning Abroad are responsible for preparing supporting material for agreement renewals and ensuring that this is endorsed by the College Leadership Team/s and reviewed by the Director (Academic Quality and Standards) prior to submission to the delegated signatory.

Internal and external discussions around agreement renewals should begin at least six months before the end of the term of the original agreement.

6. Varying an Existing Agreement

Where permitted under the terms of the original agreement, variations may be made, following endorsement by the Associate Director (Partnerships and Learning Abroad), and review by the Director (Academic Quality and Standards).

Variations must be formalised in accordance with the original agreement (for example by the attachment of a revised schedule or exchange of letters). Variations must be endorsed by the University General Counsel and signed by the delegated authority as specified in the [Schedule of Academic Delegations](#).

Variations to agreements are recorded in the Partnerships and Learning Abroad stakeholder management system and stored in the University's official records.

7. Performance Review of Educational Partnerships

Partnerships and Learning Abroad will facilitate the preparation of evidence to inform the cyclic performance review of educational partnerships against the proposed benefits identified in the initial evaluation and risk and benefits assessment. This review will inform decisions around renewal, variation or cessation of the partnership.

Recommendations to renew, vary or cease an educational partnership arrangement will be made through discussion between the relevant College/Division and Partnerships and Learning Abroad, to be endorsed by the relevant delegated authority.

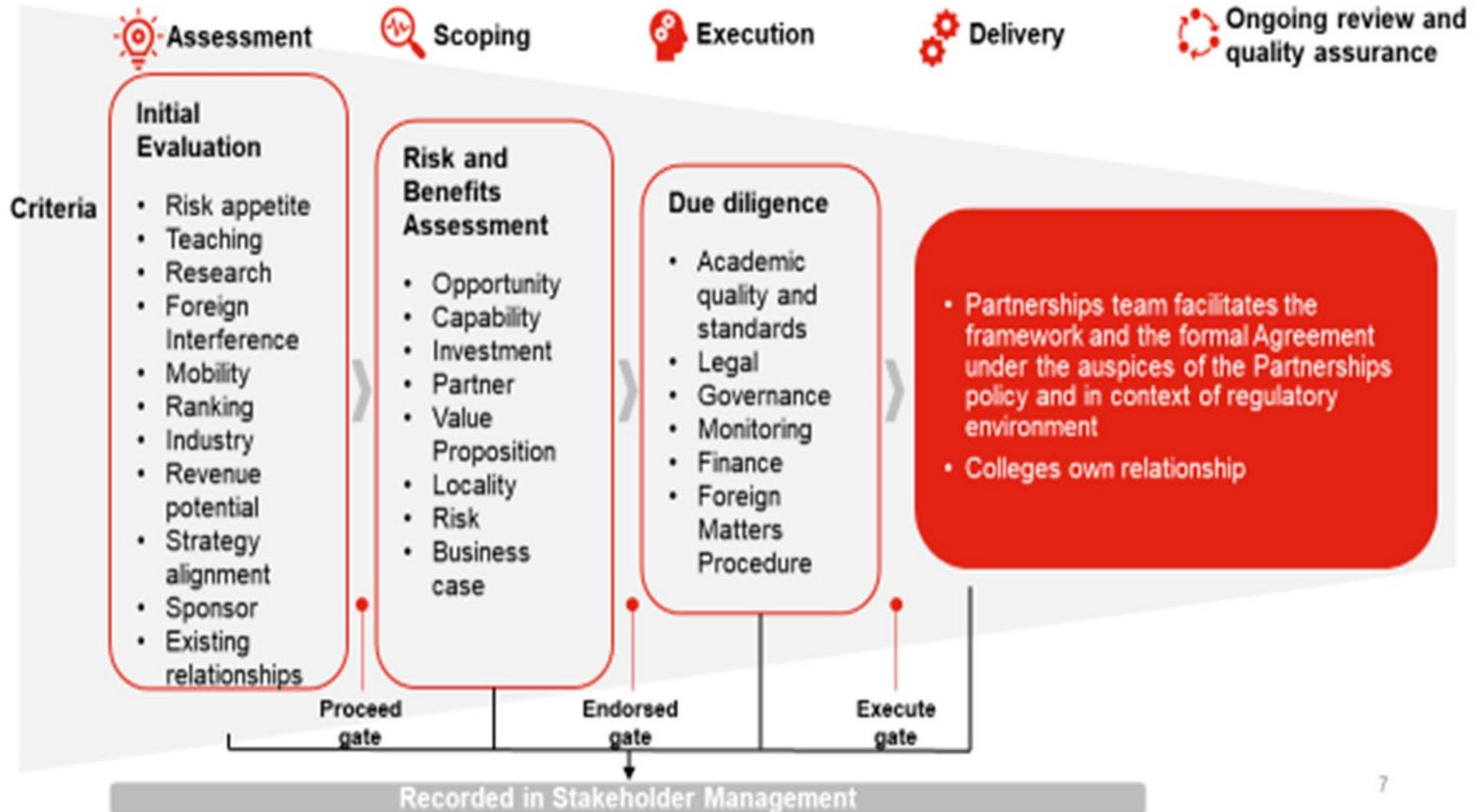
Performance review will be undertaken at least annually and will be undertaken against partnership metrics including risk, performance and quality.

Specific performance requirements and responsibilities for the various types of educational partnerships are specified in the procedures pertaining to that particular type of partnership.

Related procedures*Course Articulation Procedure**Joint and Dual Coursework Awards Procedure**Third Party Course Delivery Procedure***Versions**

Version	Action	Approved by	Business Owner/s	Approval Date
1	Approved	Provost	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Partnerships)	24 February 2022
2	Minor amendment approved (position title changes)	Director Governance and Compliance	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	16 May 2022
3	Approved with minor amendments	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Director, Academic Quality and Standards	16 May 2023

Schedule A – Educational Partnerships Phased ‘Gated Funnel’



Schedule B – Educational Partnerships Decision Tree

