

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Summary

The University participates in a number of partnerships with Higher Education Institutions. The following typical partnership models, based on Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) guidance (e.g. [Characteristics Statement on Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body](#)), are a guide to the spectrum of arrangements which may be developed at Heriot-Watt University (HWU).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Often used as the starting point of partnership negotiations, an MOU demonstrates an intention to commit to a formal partnership in the future and is not legally binding. It differs from a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which is an umbrella term for ALPs, JCPs and Articulations (described below).

Approved Learning Partner (ALP)

In this arrangement, HWU retains responsibility for the curriculum, learning outcomes, assessment, award, approval of all teaching staff and all quality assurance matters. The partner is responsible for providing local support and teaching for specific Heriot-Watt programmes of study. Graduates are awarded a HWU degree certificate.

Articulation Partner

A particular form of formal credit rating and transfer agreement between two institutions. The Partner's programme of study will provide suitable preparation and certified evidence of students reaching the appropriate academic standard to articulate at a pre-defined point of entry to a HWU programme. Graduates are awarded a HWU degree certificate.

Joint Collaborative Partner (JCP)

An arrangement in which HWU and the partner institution are jointly responsible for the development, management and delivery of the programmes of study through a School Collaborative Board of Studies.

These partnerships are typically entered into with peer institutions, where joint degree programmes are delivered or where dual degree arrangements are required under the regulatory framework of other jurisdictions. An agreed Lead Institution takes responsibility for the administration of the programme.

HWU may also work with an education provider to develop a customised HWU programme offer. This will vary in nature but may include provision from the Partner comprising part of the programme of study but will not include joint programmes. In this case, HWU retains responsibility for the overall programme.

JCP Joint Award

Two or more Degree Awarding Bodies jointly develop and deliver a single programme leading to a single qualification. Graduates are awarded a single joint certificate bearing the signatures and/or crests of all the Partners.

JCP Dual Award

Two Degree Awarding Bodies offer a jointly conceived programme that is integrated but results in two independent qualifications. Graduates receive a separate certificate from each Partner (the certificates do not reference the joint nature of the programme).

References and Further Information

For help developing or setting up an international partnership internationaldevelopment@hw.ac.uk

To find partnership approval guidance, supporting documents and templates www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/partnerships/partnership-agreements.htm

Learning and Teaching Policies and Procedures www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm

Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code on Partnerships www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships

Quality Assurance Briefing Papers

This briefing paper has been produced by Academic Quality and is one of a series related to Quality Assurance procedures. The briefing papers aim to provide a concise, informative overview of key processes, and include links to relevant policies, procedures and templates.