**Version Control**

**AU-CPSG-21-4230-A**

**APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

**OF**

**COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY**

**2021/22**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref No** | **Version** | **Responsible Officer** | **Approved by** | **Approval Date** | **Effective Date** |
| AU-CPSG-20-3122 | B | Programme Approval and Modification | CPSG | 10/01/2021 | Sep 2020 |
| AU-CPSG-21-4230 | A | Programme Approval and Modification | CPSG | Nov 2021 | Sep 2021 |

## SCOPE OF THE PROCEDURES

## Purpose of the Procedures

It is an ongoing condition of the University’s registration with the national Office for Students (OfS) and an Expectation of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education that the programmes the University offers are:

‘…well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed.’[[1]](#footnote-1)

In addition, to ensure that

‘…qualifications awarded to students hold their value at the point of qualification and over time, in line with sector recognised standards.’[[2]](#footnote-2)

The University is ultimately responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the standard of all awards made under a collaborative arrangement must be both equivalent to those of comparable awards for programmes delivered by the University and compatible with any relevant benchmark within the UK.

In order to fulfil these conditions/expectations, this document sets out the processes and perimeters for the approval, monitoring and review of collaborative programmes/arrangements; the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) defines a programme as ‘an approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification’.[[3]](#footnote-3)

The procedures aim to assist colleagues in preparing collaborative proposals for approval and provide guidance for the operation of collaborative arrangements. They apply to collaboration with a higher education institution or other organisation that lead or contributes to:

* academic credit or qualification which falls within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education: The [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf?sfvrsn=170af781_16) of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies ;
* qualifications that are not credit bearing[[4]](#footnote-4)

This includes both taught and research provision.[[5]](#footnote-5)

## What is covered by the Procedures

The following areas of activity are covered by this document:

* Preparing to seek approval for new collaborative arrangements;
* Adding a collaborative element to an existing programme;
* Creating a new collaborative programme;
* Detailed planning of proposals;
* Agreements: approval and signatures;
* Ongoing oversight, review and renewal;
* Exiting from Collaborative Arrangements

## Who is covered by the Procedures

The following must be aware of and/or comply with the procedures set out within this document:

* College Senior Management Teams;
* Programme Directors;
* Programme Design Teams/Proposers;
* College Quality Managers or equivalent;
* Collaborative Provision Strategy Group (CPSG) members;
* Programme Approval Steering Committee (PASC) members;
* Graduate School Committee (GSCM) members;
* Other internal/external stakeholders e.g. External Advisors, Students, Employers, Professional and Statutory Bodies (PRSB)

Failure to follow the procedures set out within this document could potentially lead to loss of OfS registration and the inability to meet QAA Expectations as set out in the UK Quality Code.

## PROCEDURES

All Collaborative activities relating to provision which falls with the FHEQ require University level approval via CPSG[[6]](#footnote-6), sometimes this may be together with the Programme Approval Steering Committee (PASC)[[7]](#footnote-7) or Graduate School Management Committee (GSMC)[[8]](#footnote-8).

The following procedures are based on the principles set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, May 2018, in particular the Advice and Guidance [Partnerships](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships) theme. A description of the types of collaborative activity can be found in the documents ‘Descriptions of Types of Collaborative Activity’ and ‘Taxonomy of Collaborative Provision’, both available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page.

## Preparing to seek approval for new collaborative arrangements

It should be stressed that any collaborative activity must have the commitment and support of the College, the University and the head of the partner organisation that will ultimately be demonstrated by a signed collaborative agreement. All such agreements must be in place before the activity commences.[[9]](#footnote-9)

In seeking approval for new collaborative arrangements proposers should be able to show that the following have been considered, discussed and addressed.

### Case for Collaboration

There should be a strong case for collaboration. The College should be able to articulate a clear rationale for its choice of partner and activity and to answer the following questions positively:

* does the collaboration promote the University’s position in the local region and/or assist the widening participation agenda and/or help achieve the University’s International Strategy?
* does the partner have successful existing provision in the subject area and at the level proposed?
* does the partner enhance the reputation and/or brand impact of the University?
* is there is a strong business or reputational case for collaboration?
* is the collaboration financially viable?
* are any risks in proportion to the advantages of the proposal?
* does Aston University have mainstream provision in the subject area of the proposed collaborative provision?
* (if proposing a joint award) does the partner have legal capacity to grant the award and to grant it jointly with a UK institution?

### Regulatory matters

Proposers should note that Aston University’s Credit and Qualifications Framework prohibits the award of any qualifications (including interim awards) which do not meet the following requirements:

* Undergraduate programmes (including Foundation Degrees and Graduate Diplomas): a minimum of one third of the academic credits for any Undergraduate award should be delivered and assessed by Aston University;
* Postgraduate Taught Programmes: Aston academic staff must have a formal role (as defined by General Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes) in both the supervision and the marking of the dissertation module.

### Language

Proposers should note that English should be the language of teaching and assessment, unless there are compelling academic reasons for the use of another language and the External Examiner and academic staff of the University are able to assess in the other language. Language translation may introduce a risk in making reliable and valid judgements about student achievement.

### Due Diligence

One of the principles of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, is that an institution should satisfy itself of the good standing of any partner. Due Diligence should be carried out for all collaborative activity involving programmes within the FHEQ. A [guidance note](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/documents/Quality/Collaborative%20Provision/GUIDANCE%20NOTE%20ON%20DUE%20DILIGENCE%20CHECKLIST%202019.docx) and [checklist](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/documents/Quality/Collaborative%20Provision/DUE%20DILIGENCE%20CHECKLIST%202019.docx) for Due Diligence is available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page. A proforma for collecting a sub-set of this information for due diligence on student exchange partners is also available.

The extent of due diligence is not expected to be the same for all proposals; it should be proportionate to the risk involved and the College may make an initial assessment of what it requires from the checklist. CPSG may require more information to be added later. The University’s International Office may be able to assist with, or provide contacts for, gaining the information needed for Due Diligence.

Due Diligence should be considered carefully by College Senior Management Teams at the First Filter stage, see section 2.2.1.

### Risk Assessment

It is important to note that there is a reputational risk attached to collaborative agreements, which is often as significant, or greater than, the financial risk.

Risk Assessments must be completed for all collaborative activity involving programmes within the FHEQ. A proforma and Guidance Notes can be found on the [Collaborative Provisio](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision)n web page. A separate proforma, designed to assess risk for research students working away from the University, is also available.

All risk assessments should consider the potential impact or relevance of:

* the complexity of the proposed collaboration;
* the status of the partner organisation, its financial stability and turnover of staff;
* Aston University’s level of experience in this type of arrangement;
* whether the activity is part of the University’s strategy;
* the scale of the activity;
* the resources to support the arrangement (both at Aston and the partner);
* the political climate of partners location

The Chair, Secretary and members of CPSG can provide advice. The University’s Head of Strategic Risk and Insurance is able to provide detailed guidance on the assessment and management of risk.

Risk Assessments should be considered carefully by College Senior Management Teams at the First Filter stage.

### Financial Arrangements

Collaborative activities should be fully costed and accounted for accurately, in discussion with School Accountants, using the Proforma for Calculating Costs and Income available from the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page.

The staff at the partner should be appropriately qualified and trained. The Education Team may be consulted regarding any professional development needs and these should then be included in costings. The resource implications of providing Library support for the collaboration should also be included in costings.

In addition, it is important to identify any costs associated with necessary tax and legal advice which may be required in respect of the collaboration at the outset, particularly where it is overseas. This will include up-front tax and legal external costs relating to any regulatory or compliance obligations arising as a result of the collaboration as well as any ongoing costs associated with compliance during the life of the collaboration. These costs can be significant and should not be overlooked. Legal Services as well as the University Tax Manager should be consulted at the outset in this regard.

The financial aspects of a collaborative arrangement must satisfy any statutory and funding body conditions.

All collaborative agreements should provide clarity about who will take responsibility for the commitment of the different kinds of resource involved in the collaboration (e.g. travel, subsistence and other appropriate costs).

In each collaboration, the parties should be very clear regarding any “income” arising that will be income of the University. Where there is an “income sharing” arrangement, the agreements should be explicit where an entity receives 100% of the income in the first instance and whether the “split” of income is in fact, payment for services. The Head of Corporate Accounting should be made aware of any significant new sources of income and the full extent of that income i.e. care should be taken not to “net off” any amounts paid to partner institutions from Aston University income.

For all international collaboration involving new countries consideration of any taxation implications and the repatriation of funds should be a factor. The University’s Tax Manager can advise.

### Visits

Visits to collaborative partners may occur for a number of reasons: to carry out due diligence, to review facilities or to meet students, for example. Proposers may find it helpful to visit prospective partners early on. CPSG will also give initial scrutiny to a potential collaborative arrangement and will decide if a further or independent visit to the other organisation is required and whether that visit should be carried out by a person external to the University.

Where a visit is carried out as part of due diligence, a draft programme might comprise

* an initial meeting with the head of the organisation or other appropriate person;
* a meeting with key programme staff responsible for learning and teaching and student support;
* a tour of premises: teaching rooms; library provision; IT resources; social spaces;
* a meeting with current students if appropriate;
* a meeting with support or technical staff;
* feedback to the organisation’s programme team.

The costs of such visits should be quantified, evaluated and validated and captured against relevant job codes.

Global mobility of staff should also be assessed from a tax perspective to ensure that there are no personal tax implications for the University and/or no personal tax and social security implications for the individuals travelling overseas.

A suggested template for a visit report and a guidance note are available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page.

## Adding a collaborative element to an existing programme

An existing Aston programme might be adapted to encompass the following arrangements[[10]](#footnote-10):

* Double of Multiple Award;
* Shared Delivery;
* Off Campus Delivery;
* Accreditation of Employer based learning;
* Franchise (including Degree Apprenticeships where provision is delivered by a third party);
* A new partner, where a collaborative programme already exists;
* Articulation: entry into an Aston programme from a partner with advanced standing[[11]](#footnote-11)

A step by step guide outlining the process for adding a [collaborative element to an existing programme](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/migrated-assets/clipp/clipp-pdf/FLOWCHART%20EXISTING%20PROVISION%202017.pdf) is available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page.

The proposal should be notified to the CPSG and PASC secretaries, who can advise if it should be registered as a major modification to the programme (this will need to carried out via MAP[[12]](#footnote-12)), which processes for approval are likely to apply and confirm the documents needed. In the case of research proposals, the secretary to GSMC should also be informed. CPSG will decide if a visit / further visit to the collaborative partner is required. The process document for Programme Modifications which is available on the [Programme, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page should also be referred to.

### First Filter

The proposal should undergo a ‘First Filter’ scrutiny by the College Senior Management Team, before more detailed programme documentation is drawn up. Where more than one College is involved, all SMTs should be consulted. The following documents should normally be prepared and considered:

* [First Filter](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) form
* [Proforma for calculating costs and income](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval)
* [Risk Assessment](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) form
* [Due Diligence](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) on the prospective partner

The Senior Management Team should consider whether:

* the proposed collaborative activity is consistent with the mission and plans of the College and the University;
* there is a sufficiently strong business case for collaboration, (by referring to the Proforma for Calculating Costs and Income);
* the potential partner organisation is of appropriate standing (by referring to the Due Diligence);
* the partner’s quality assurance procedures are robust and they have sufficient understanding of UK quality assurance procedures (by referring to the Due Diligence);
* there are any significant risks (by referring to the Risk Assessment).

If the SMT considers that the proposal is consistent with mission, there is a sufficiently strong business case, the partner is of good standing and the level of risk is acceptable, the First Filter form should be signed by the Executive Dean and forwarded to the secretaries of PASC/GSMC and CPSG.

At this stage, the College/School should take time to give careful consideration to section 2.4 below, ‘Detailed Planning of Proposals’. An Operational Checklist for evidencing this planning can be found on the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) webpage. This includes arrangements for:

* Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs);
* regulations and governing law;
* assessment and external examining;
* certificates and transcripts;
* visa requirements;
* programme management;
* staffing and staff development;
* facilities and learning resources;
* recruitment and registration of students;
* student discipline;
* complaints and appeals;
* student welfare and personal tutoring;
* legal agreements and signatories.

### Approval Committees and documentation

#### College

Following First Filter consideration/approval, the proposal may then progress to the College Learning and Teaching Committee (CLTC) (or relevant sub-committee) or the College/School Research Committee (C/SRC). Where more than one College is involved, all CLTC’s/ C/SRC’s should be consulted. A list of documentation required for consideration at this stage can be found in Appendix 4. Depending upon the nature of the proposed arrangement, some or all of the documents should be prepared and submitted.

The CLTC/C/SRC should consider whether:

* the delivery and outcomes of any programme delivered by a partner organisation will be consistent with the standards of the University and, if accreditation is sought, of any professional/accrediting bodies;
* staff, staff development provision and other resources are available to support the arrangement;
* sufficient and appropriate student support and administrative structures will be in place.

#### University: CPSG, PASC, GSMC

If the CLTC / C/SRC considers that the above criteria are met, the proposal may then progress to CPSG and PASC (and GSMC and the University Research Committee for research proposals). PASC may require a College FinalEndorsement[[13]](#footnote-13) formto be signed at this stage for some types of arrangement. In the case of research proposals, if the proposal is approved by CPSG and PASC/GSMC, a recommendation for approval will be made to the University Research Committee.

If the proposal is complex or if there is significant risk, CPSG may require approval to be considered via a Collaborative Programme Panel. This applies particularly to:

* shared delivery;
* off campus delivery;
* franchised delivery.

##### Collaborative Programme Panel

Such panels will comprise at least one member of CPSG and one member of PASC/GSMC (neither of whom should be associated with the proposed programme, and one of whom will Chair the meeting), and the Secretary to CPSG or a nominee.

The CPP will need to assure itself that the:

* appropriate infrastructure and resources are in place to support the proposal and that the environment within which a programme will be offered is satisfactory;
* academic standards and the quality of teaching achieved at the University can be maintained at the partner organisation;
* arrangements for managing the collaborative programme are appropriate and are clearly set out in a draft legal agreement.

The CPP will consider the documentation (see Appendix 4) and will normally hold discussions with the relevant Executive Dean (or nominee(s)), and staff of the University and partner organisation responsible for delivering the programme. The Panel Chair may choose to co-opt others to the Panel, which may include an external representative. The Panel Chair may choose to see employers who have been involved in programme development or current students at the partner organisation, and may also choose to visit the partner organisation and view facilities.

The Panel will present a written report to CPSG and PASC/GSMC outlining its recommendations, the suggested duration of approval, and any conditions to be met by a given date. If conditions are imposed, the College and partner organisation will prepare a written response by a specified date, indicating how the conditions have been met. The Panel may decide that the programme should be subject to a **Collaborative Interim Review,** which provides more scrutiny than Annual Review and takes place at a shorter interval than Periodic Review, with a timescale as determined by CPSG. More information about Collaborative Interim Reviews may be found in section 2.6, below.

Following approval, Colleges should refer to the process documents[[14]](#footnote-14) available on the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page regarding the setting up of programmes in SITS, seeking the appointment of a new External Examiner, and what happens if the programme does not recruit.

## Creating a new collaborative programme

Examples of arrangementswhich might be put in place for a new collaborative programme include[[15]](#footnote-15):

* Dual, double or Multiple Award (when these are interdependent);
* Joint Award;
* Validation.

### Registering the intention to develop a new programme

All proposals for new programmes should be registered on MAP, guidance on how to do this can be found in the process document for Programme Approval available from the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page. The MAP alert will notify the CPSG and PASC secretaries of the proposal. CPSG will decide if a visit / further visit to the collaborative partner is required.

### First Filter

This should follow the same process and due consideration by SMT as outlined within section 2.2 ‘Adding a collaborative element to an existing programme’. Documentation requirements will be the same.

### Approval Committees and documentation requirements

A step by step guide outlining the full process for [creating a new collaborative arrangement](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/migrated-assets/clipp/clipp-pdf/FLOWCHART%20NEW%20PROVISION%202017.pdf) is available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page.

#### Programme Specific Approval Panel (PSAP)

The process for programme approval of taught programmes will follow that set out in the [Process Document for New Programmes](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/documents/Quality/Programme%20Approval/programme-approval-and-design.docx) which is available from the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page. Proposals will be considered by aPSAP.

The documents listed in Appendix 4 are required. The PSAP secretary will confirm whether a visit/further visit to the partner is required.

#### College/School Research Committee

Research proposals will be considered by the College/School Research Committee (C/SRC), which in turn should review whether:

* the delivery and outcomes of any programme delivered by a partner organisation will be consistent with the standards of the University and, if accreditation is sought, of any professional/accrediting bodies;
* staff and resources are available to support the arrangement;
* appropriate student support and administrative structures will be in place.

If the C/SRC considers that the above criteria are met, the proposal may then progress to CPSG and GSMC.

#### CPSG/GSM for Research Proposals

CPSG may require approval of a new research proposal to be considered via a Collaborative Programme Panel (see section 2.2.2, above).

The PSAP/CPSG may decide that the programme should be subject to a **Collaborative Interim Review** which provides more scrutiny than Annual Review but takes place at a shorter interval than Periodic Review, with a timescale as determined by CPSG. More information about Collaborative Interim Reviews may be found in section 2.6, below.

Following approval, Colleges should refer to the process documents[[16]](#footnote-16) available on the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page regarding the setting up of programmes in SITS, seeking the appointment of a new External Examiner, and what happens if the programme does not recruit.

In the case of research proposals, if the proposal is approved by CPSG and PASC/GSMC, a recommendation for approval will be made to the University Research Committee.

## Detailed Planning of Proposals

Consideration of the following aspects is expected to be evidenced during the approval process. An Operational Checklist for evidencing this planning is available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page **and** should be included in the submission for approval.

#### Professional and statutory bodies

The College should inform any professional or statutory body which has approved or recognised a programme, which is the subject of a possible or actual collaborative arrangement, of its proposals and of any final agreements which involve the programme. It is important that no student or employer may be misled about the extent of any programme’s accreditation.

#### Regulations and governing law

(For joint awards) all institutions should agree the regulatory framework that will apply and the grading and classification system to be used for the award. This framework must be consistent with that of the University and the standards of the award must meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code.

Any changes to Aston regulations require the approval of the Regulation Sub-Committee. A bespoke framework may take time to be processed and this time should be factored into projected timescales for programme approval.

#### Assessment Arrangements and External Examining

The procedures for assessment should be the same as, or demonstrably equivalent to, those used for internal Aston programmes. This includes the procedure for setting and moderation of assignments and examination papers and the marking strategies, including double/anonymous/blind marking.

External examining procedures for programmes offered by a partner organisation should be the same as, or demonstrably equivalent to, those used for internal, Aston programmes. The procedures should be clearly specified and documented, and rigorously and consistently applied. Many countries do not have the equivalent of the UK external examiner system, **but the external examining procedures for programmes offered through collaborative arrangements must be consistent with the University’s usual practices**. For example, University General Regulations for the Conduct of Boards of Examiners, paragraph 2.8.1, state that ‘*External Examiners must see the module specifications for all modules which contribute to degree classification or award grades*’.

Wherever possible, the External Examiner for a parent programme delivered at Aston should be invited to extend their duties to include consideration of students under an associated collaborative agreement.

(For joint awards) it should be decided who will appoint and pay the External Examiner.

#### Certificates and Transcripts

The University should retain oversight of the issuing of all award certificates, diploma supplements and transcripts. The name and logo of a collaborative partner will not normally be included on any award certificate unless the award is a joint award of the two institutions.

(For joint awards) it should be decided what the award title will be and which institution will provide the award certificate, diploma supplement and transcript. The format of all certification must be agreed and should normally refer to all partners. Graduation arrangements should be decided. Any new award type must be approved and added to the University’s Ordinances. The Regulation Sub-Committee of University Learning and Teaching Committee considers such requests.

#### Visa requirements

If a programme based in the UK has applicants from outside the European Economic Area, consideration must be given to the visa implications and monitoring requirements before students are recruited.

International students must be in full-time attendance and any periods of study away from the Aston campus officially authorised. The programme of study itself must meet Home Office requirements. The University’s Visa Compliance Team can provide further advice on a case by case basis.

#### Global Mobility of Staff

Where a programme involves University staff travelling overseas for either short or longer term periods, the personal tax and social security implications of this should be considered. The University may have additional employment tax and social security obligations in respect of the employee in another country and in addition, the employee may need to be aware of personal tax and social security obligations in-country. The provision of tax advice to an employee in their personal capacity by the University can be deemed to be a taxable benefit under their employment in the UK so this should be considered.

The University Tax Manager should also be made aware where any staff may cumulatively be spending significant periods of time in-country (particularly more than 90 days per year) as this can have other tax implications for the University.

#### Programme Management

A University Programme Director should be appointed to oversee each collaborative programme with a partner organisation. It is the responsibility of the Executive Dean (or nominee) to appoint the Programme Director.

A Programme Management Committee, consisting of members from Aston and the partner/s, should be established where there is significant collaboration and/or the programme should be included within an Aston Programme Committee.

The College should clarify the following:

* What is the extent of any collaboration on development of the curriculum?
* Will any use be made of flexible and distributed learning methods?
* Who will co-ordinate monitoring and review and submit the annual review report?
* What is the composition of the Programme Management Committee and Boards of Examiners?
* Are there opportunities for mutual representation and participation in each organisation's internal processes for quality assurance?
* Are the respective responsibilities of the University and the partner organisation for quality assurance clear, explicit and documented?
* How will the partner/collaborative organisation’s quality assurance systems relate to and feed into College and University mechanisms?
* How are standards set and maintained across both organisations?

#### Staffing and Staff Development

It should be clear which Aston staff are going to teach and support the programme. Module leaders should be aware when there will be students coming from the partner into their module. Support staff should be consulted about additional load and tasks.

The staff at the partner who deliver teaching and/or who assess work or supervise students should be appropriately qualified and trained. This normally means they should have a PGCert or equivalent. The PVC Education (Education Team) should be consulted prior to the signing of any legal agreements to decide upon the appropriate level of qualification required. Any professional development needs should be included in costings.

The Education Team is able to provide generic staff development for staff new to UK Higher Education through the Introduction to Learning & Teaching Practice (ILTP), Aston Credits, or through the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

* If new appointments need to be made, have they been included in costings and how long might recruitment take?
* Are the appraisal and performance monitoring arrangements at the partner robust and in line with Aston’s processes?
* Will University insurance cover staff in the country visited and how easy is it to gain visas?
* Can staff from abroad easily gain entry to the UK if needed?

#### Facilities and Learning Resources

Buildings and facilities at partner institutions should be viewed by Aston staff. See also Visits, above. The College should assure itself that the students will have learning and/or research opportunities comparable to that at Aston.

If students are to be taught, assessed or carry out research in a language other than English, sufficient language preparation must be built in.

Students will in most cases be enrolled at Aston and so entitled to use Aston’s library. For some courses use of the physical collection might be a reasonable expectation. Students on all courses will be able to use e-resources but, due to licensing restrictions, access to all collections may not be automatic*.* Each programme needs to be discussed with Library Services who can provide advice and estimates of costs.

* Will students need access to printed materials at Aston?
* Will they need access to e-books at Aston? (Existing titles may not be automatically available)
* Will they need access to journals and databases at Aston? (Not all collections may be automatically available. For some collections there may be additional costs to provide access and for some, access may not be permitted)

The College should ensure that the resources to be provided by the partner are adequate.

For each module/research area:

* what books are available?
* what journal coverage is available?
* what measures are there to ensure that reading lists will be available to students?

Library support must not rely on the proximity of another university to the site of learning as they will not be set up to provide that cover and a reliance on Sconul Access – the cross access scheme - will undermine their willingness to participate.

It should be clear who will be responsible for teaching students information literacy. If Aston services are to be used at least some of this advice needs to be provided by Library Services and must be discussed with them. Academic and library staff in the partner institution will need to be aware of what is available to students and be able to direct them accordingly. Library Services can provide relevant material.

It should be ascertained whether staff at the partner institution require access to Aston’s library services. This would need to be discussed with Library Services as the same issues regarding access to e-resources apply to staff as to students, although licence terms tend to be more restrictive.

The resource implications of providing Library support for the collaboration should be included in costings.

#### Recruitment and Registration of Students

The recruitment procedure and responsibilities of each partner should be made clear and due regard given to the expectations of any professional and statutory bodies. Clear protocols must be in place for student tracking and management information systems and for exchange of information.

The use of the University’s standard forms by partner organisations is strongly

encouraged for enrolment, module registration, interruption of studies, change of module, change of programme and withdrawal. The University will need to be told promptly by the partner organisation about any non-completing students.

It should be made clear what the expected student numbers will be and who is responsible for marketing activity. Aston University should normally have control over admissions targets, set the minimum entry qualifications and have overall responsibility for approving any exceptions and for Recognition of Prior Learning.

#### The rights and responsibilities of students in the areas of discipline, complaints and appeals should be defined. It should be clear how students and their advisers will be made aware of information on the procedures for complaints, academic appeals, student discipline, examination malpractice and plagiarism and the equal opportunities policy.

#### Student Welfare and Personal Tutoring

Arrangements for the provision of pastoral care, including the provision for students with additional needs should be in place.

The personal tutoring system should meet the standards of the University’s personal tutoring policy.

#### Financial Management

Consideration should be given to the financial arrangements and accounting structure to allow all income and expenditure to be captured in respect of the collaboration. This will involve engaging with the College Finance Business Partner and possibly the University Head of Corporate Accounting where there will be a new source of income (particularly from overseas) or significant areas of expenditure.

Arrangements should be made to capture all costs associated with the collaboration within clearly defined Job and Account codes, particularly where overseas tax reporting and financial reporting are required.

It should also be clear that the full extent of Aston University income is reflected correctly from an accounting perspective. Where there is an “income sharing” arrangement, care should be taken. The University’s Head of Corporate Accounting and the University Tax Manager may need to be consulted.

#### Legal Agreements

The Office of the General Counsel should be involved in the drafting of a collaborative agreement at an early stage in the development of the proposals. Template agreements are held by the OGC. See Section 2.5 for further information regarding approval and signature of agreements.

## Agreements: approval and signatures

All agreements must be approved by the Office of the General Counsel and by CPSG or the Chair of the CPSG (at the Chair of the CPSG’s sole discretion), and, for research proposals, GSMC, before signature by the University’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee (except for exchange partnership agreements, which are subject to different arrangements, as set out in the Guidance Notes for Student/Staff Mobility Exchanges available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page).

OGC also require a Cover Sheet to be signed for all types of agreement. For the template, cover sheet and advice on who should sign it refer to the [Legal Services](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff/legal-services) web page.

A CPSG Checklist available from the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page must be attached before the agreement goes for signature.

All Collaboration Agreements, Articulation Agreements, Progression Agreements, Cotutelle Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding require signature by the University’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

If both partners cannot be present at the same time to sign an agreement, the agreement may be signed in counterpart, again the Legal Services web page should be referred to for a guidance note on executing in counterpart.

Student Exchange Partnership Agreements are signed by the Associate Dean International of the relevant College/s, the Director of International Development, the Institutional Quality Lead for Collaborative Provision and the Pro Vice-Chancellor International.

The original versions of all signed agreements should be lodged with the OGC. Copies should be lodged with the Quality Team in the Education Team, the International Office (for international agreements) and the relevant College Offices.

## Ongoing Oversight, Review and Renewal

#### Record-keeping

The original versions of all signed agreements and copies are lodged as outlined in section 2.5.

[Up-to-date registers of all collaborative arrangements are maintained by the University:](http://www.aston.ac.uk/registry/staff/regsandpolicies/collaborativeprovision.jsp) international agreements by the International Office and agreements involving programmes within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (including UK based agreements) by the Quality Team in the Education Team. Both registers are available on the University’s Collaborative Provision intranet page. Undergraduate placements records are held by the University Placement Team on MAP.

Each College has a similar responsibility to keep up-to-date records of their approved partners, and of any activity that falls outside the FHEQ such as non-accredited CPD provision.

#### Collaborative Programme Director and Programme Management Committees

Ongoing day to day oversight of collaborative taught programmes is the responsibility of the Programme Director. A Handbook for Collaborative Programme Directors, which includes an annual checklist of activity, can be found on the [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page. It should be read in conjunction with the University’s generic Handbook for Programme Directors. New Collaborative Programme Directors and Programme Directors taking on oversight of collaborative arrangements should refer to the Notes for New Collaborative Programme Directors also available from the Collaborative Provision web page. An outline of the role of the collaborative Programme Director can be found in Appendix 1.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Dean (or nominee) to appoint a University Programme Director to oversee each collaborative programme with a partner organisation. At the beginning of each academic year, the Executive Dean will provide the Collaborative Provision Strategy Group with a list of Programme Directors for each collaborative taught programme in which the College is engaged.

Where there is a significant degree of collaboration, for example shared delivery and joint degrees, a Programme Management Committee should be established, consisting of members from all partners and normally meeting at least twice per year. Where a suite of similar Aston programmes exists, a new collaborative programme may also be overseen by an existing Aston Programme Committee, with partner staff invited to participate, to allow for sharing of practice and comparisons of student performance.

Where collaborative arrangements relate to existing programmes and the degree of collaboration is less significant, for example articulation, the relevant Aston Programme Committee should have oversight of the management of the collaborative activity. Feedback from partners should be sought at regular intervals and/or staff from partners invited to participate, as appropriate.

Actions arising from External Examiners’ reports will form part of the agenda for visits and Programme Management Team meetings.

Partner organisations should be included in monitoring and review processes and reports shared with them.

#### Collaborative Interim Review

The University has a number of collaborative arrangements where a Collaborative Programme Panel (CPP) has approved a collaborative activity for a fixed period, but with a further review after one or two years. The ‘interim’ review that follows is based on the University’s Monitoring and Review procedures but with a greater emphasis on student and employer feedback.

The objectives of interim review are:

* to review feedback from students, staff, external examiners, professional bodies and other external stakeholders;
* to review application, recruitment, and progression;
* to develop any necessary improvements to the programme structure and curriculum;
* to inform School and partner institutions of developments and policies in terms of curriculum, good practice and resource allocation;
* to help identify issues that require action at University level.

The review will, wherever possible, be carried out by a minimum of two of the members of the CPP that approved the collaboration, within the timescales recommended by the CPP. Additional members may be invited to join the group where it is considered that their expertise may be useful. Where original CPP members are not available, the review will be carried out by members of staff nominated and approved by the Collaborative Provision Strategy Group.

The evidence base for the review may vary depending on the nature of the activity being reviewed and the timescale agreed for the review but should include consideration of the evidence set out in Appendix 5.

Meetings will be held with staff, students and, where appropriate, employers.

The requirements of the interim review are:

* that the review takes place using the evidence listed in Appendix 5;
* that a report identifies:
* any issues arising since the programme’s approval which have been resolved
* items for commendation and dissemination of good practice
* matters for further development and the action plan and timescales required;
* the findings of the review are forwarded to the Programme Director to check factual accuracy and to agree a response.

The review report and response are considered by CPSG, which will consider any further action that needs to be taken. Aston has the right to require a partner institution to implement decisions made by the Collaborative Interim Review panel. Any failure by the partner to implement such a decision may be deemed a material breach of the legal agreement. Following a satisfactory interim review, the programme will be included in the established University Monitoring and Review and Periodic Review procedures and cycle.

#### Continual Monitoring and Enhancement

Programme Level Reviews

Programme Level Reviews will take place at a minimum of four points throughout the academic year, aligned to release of key datasets. Programme Teams will review relevant programme level datasets at each review point against the agreed performance thresholds[[17]](#footnote-17)

At each review point the Programme Director will generate an Enhancement and Development Action Plan that is proportionate to the outcome of the review against the performance thresholds.

College Level Reviews

The Associate Dean (Education) or nominee, will be responsible for reviewing and approving the Enhancement and Development Action Plans following each review point.

Monitoring oversight of implementation of Enhancement and Development Action Plans falls under the remit of College Learning and Teaching Committee. Reporting can be by exception, reporting only where there is significant deviation from the original action plan.

The Associate Dean (Education) or nominee, should summarise to College Learning and Teaching Committee the overarching strengths and any identified good practice, areas for development and enhancement and associated timelines. College Level reports will focus upon the College’s academic standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

The University Learning and Teaching Committee will have responsibility for:

* + - * reviewing all Enhancement and Development Action Plans generated in response to a programme falling significantly below a performance threshold or a programme being referred by the Associate Dean (Education) where there is significant deviation from the original action plan. This is to ensure that there is sufficient support at both College and University level to enable implementation of agreed actions.
      * identifying institutional wide themes for further development and areas of good practice for wider dissemination.

Programmes, which follow a non-standard delivery pattern will still be required to engage with the Continual Monitoring and Enhancement process as outlined in this policy, however the timing of their engagement with each stage of the process is determined by the date delivery commences.

Degree Apprenticeship Programmes will be required to undertake Continual Monitoring and Enhancement activities as outlined in this policy. Depending upon the nature of the delivery Degree Apprenticeship Programmes will either align to the standard or non-standard process.

All Collaborative Programmes must have a specific Development and Enhancement Action Plan.

Where a collaborative arrangement results in students entering a programme through different routes (e.g. a franchise of articulation agreement) the review must include an evaluation of parity of experience and outcome for each different cohort.

For research programmes, annual review is carried out by GSMC. Where there is joint supervision or provision for research to be conducted at another organisation, annual review is carried out by the research supervisors and by SRCs; agreements remain in place for the duration of a student’s enrolment unless there are issues identified at Annual Review.

The Placements Team is responsible for the monitoring of all undergraduate placement activity.

Colleges are responsible for the monitoring of all collaborative activity that falls outside the FHEQ, for collaborative, non-accredited CPD activity for example.

#### Periodic Review

Six yearly Periodic Reviews for collaborative programmes have the additional purpose of considering whether or not the collaboration continues to have a strategic purpose; the effectiveness of the arrangements set out in the collaborative agreement and whether or not the arrangement should be renewed for a further period. Representatives of the partner organisation should be involved in the process and be invited to be present at the review event. Reference should be made to the full Policy for Periodic Review of Taught Programmes available from the [Periodic Review and Revalidation of Taught Programmes](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/programmereview6-year) web page.

For research programmes, Periodic Review is carried out by the Graduate School Management Committee (GSMC).

#### Renewal of collaborative agreements

##### Articulation Agreements

The Programme Director should alert the SMT and CLTC/ C/SRC to the approaching expiry date of the legal agreement for the arrangement and provide the documents outlined in Appendix 6 if making a case for continuation:

If the SMT and SLTC/SRC consider that the arrangement is still viable, the documents should be forwarded to CPSG (and where relevant, GSMC) for approval. If CPSG approves the continuation of the arrangement, OGC should be asked to draw up the relevant documents to extend the agreement.

##### Other Agreements e.g. TNE/Franchise

Normally other types of arrangements would be considered as part of the Periodic Review process[[18]](#footnote-18). Reference should be made to the full Policy for Periodic Review of Taught Programmes available from the [Periodic Review and Revalidation of Taught Programmes](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/programmereview6-year) web page.

Once approval is sought for revalidation of the programme, recommendations from the Periodic Review Panel (where applicable) are fed into amended/renewal agreement. The amended agreement is then taken to College SMT for approval and CPSG, prior to signing by the partners.

The signed agreement is then sent to OGC and a copy is received by the quality office.

## Exiting from Collaborative Arrangements

Requests to withdraw from collaborative programmes or arrangements should be brought promptly to the attention of CPSG and the OGC and referred to the College Senior Management Team (SMT). If an entire programme is to be withdrawn the process for programme withdrawal is available from the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page should be followed.

The Programme Director or the member of staff designated as responsible for that activity should refer to the Agreement between the parties. If circumstances should make it necessary to suspend or terminate the arrangement without giving the full period of notice set out in the Agreement, the advice of CPSG and the OGC should be taken **before proceeding.** In addition, the tax implications of termination should be reviewed and the advice of the University Tax Manager should be sought.

Providing that advice has been sought from CPSG and the OGC, a statement should be submitted to the SMT containing:

* the programme title and the proposed date of withdrawal;
* the nature of the collaboration and details of the partner;
* the effect of the withdrawal on the planning and resources of the
* College(s) involved;
* the reasons for the withdrawal;
* details of any other programmes affected by the withdrawal, with evidence of liaison with other Colleges regarding the withdrawal if appropriate;
* transitional arrangements for students currently on the programme,
* including students who need to repeat assessments and those granted leave of absence.

In any withdrawal of a collaborative arrangement the proposer must be mindful of the position of students who are enrolled on that module or programme, or who have been accepted for admission, and procedures put in place that include the provision of guidance and support for students.

In some cases this may mean the University taking responsibility for the teaching out of a programme or activity, and new financial arrangements being put in place. Only in exceptional cases, and with the express agreement of the students involved, may the awarding authority be transferred to a third party degree-awarding body.

The normal monitoring and review arrangements will remain in place for any activity or programme until all students have completed.

If the SMT approves the withdrawal, the proposal should be submitted to the College Learning and Teaching Committee / College/School Research Committee, and then to CPSG and the PASC or GSMC for consideration and approval.

Where a collaborative arrangement has been terminated early, CPSG will consider the reasons for the termination and whether the decision has an impact on other or future collaborative activity.

## Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

##### Collaborative Provision Strategy Group (CPSG)

CPSG focusses on collaborations that lead or contribute to academic criteria or a qualification. Separate governance arrangements exist for research or commercial collaboration.

CPSG is responsible, with PASC, for approval of complex proposals, especially proposals which involve new types of activity and new methods of delivery and which indicate a high level of risk and commitment of resource. The CPSG role is to assess the strategic merits of the proposal; compliance with the University Guidelines for Collaborative Activity; the assessment of risk; the consideration of any ethical issues and to determine the level of scrutiny required.

CPSG also oversees monitoring, review and renewal of collaborative arrangements.

##### Programme Approval Steering Committee (PASC)

On behalf of the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), PASC considers and makes recommendations to LTC on all matters concerning the quality assurance and enhancement of programme approval.

PASC is responsible for:

* ensuring programmes are aligned with the Aston Strategy, Learning and Teaching Strategy, and Digital Aston project;
* taking a balanced approach to risk management to assure responsible development and, where possible, to mitigate against risk to reputation or academic standards, whilst supporting innovation and progressive design;
* adopting a holistic approach to curriculum developments to ensure quality and equity of student experience;
* setting programme-specific design requirements including those that relate to collaborative provision;
* the approval and monitoring of proposals for major curricular revisions to existing programmes, including resource issues where they impinge on the quality of the programmes;
* confirming and ratifying the timeline for the completion of the design process, referring any apparent delayed progress to College management;
* recording all programmes approved by Programme Specific Approval Panels (PSAPs);
* maintaining a record of programmes approved for withdrawal or suspension;

##### Graduate School Management Committee (GSMC)

The GSMC considers and makes recommendations concerning the regulation, assurance and enhancement of the quality and standards of research degree programmes, including the supervision, training and examination of postgraduate research students.

##### Programme Director

The Programme Director should ensure that the financial aspects of collaborative agreements are reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with College accountants who will arrange for invoices to be raised according to the agreed schedule.

The Programme Director should be aware of the expiry date of the legal agreement covering the collaborative programme and ensure that preparations are made in good time for renewal or termination.

Programme Directors should ensure that face to face visits to partners are normally made at least once per year, to include meetings with students. They should inform partners of any University or College policy changes and encourage the sharing of good practice.

They are responsible for checking on staff changes before the start of each year and for making sure that new staff receive an induction and gain understanding of the expectations of both the University and the UK Quality Code. Peer observation and other staff development activities are overseen by the Programme Director.

There is an expectation that all summative assessment should be reviewed by the University module leader or Programme Director and that a sample of all marked student work (coursework as well as examination scripts) is moderated by academic staff at the University. It is expected that at least one representative of the staff having a major responsibility for teaching and/or assessment of each module will attend Examination Boards.

Reference should also be made to the Handbook for Collaborative Programme Directors for a more detailed description of the role.

## Appendix 2: Definitions

* **Office for Students (OfS)**: Independent regulator of Higher Education in England
* **Qualification:** “A degree, diploma or certificate awarded by a competent authority (in this context a degree-awarding body) in recognition that particular programme or qualification outcomes have been achieved following the successful completion of a recognised higher education programme of study.” (defined by the QAA in the ‘[The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf?sfvrsn=170af781_16)’)
* **Aston Credits**: an Aston Award given to students who successfully complete any taught course that does not give sufficient credit to lead to a qualification under the Aston University Credit and Qualification Framework. This may comprise a single module, a pre-defined suite of modules or a flexible credit accumulation framework.
* **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**: a short period of teaching and learning which has no formal (summative) assessment and carries no award of credit. CPD events may require students to attend sessions on campus, at an external venue or be comprised of on-line learning activities.
* **Collaborative**: Collaborative provision encompasses all learning opportunities which lead or contribute to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body.
* **Due Diligence**: assessment of the good standing of any partner
* **Degree Apprenticeships**: Similar to higher apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships are available at levels 6 and 7 (full bachelor’s and Master’s).
* **Student Information System (SITS)**: Students records management system.
* **Programme Specification**: Significant element of the proposal documentation and is particularly important in relation to the requirements of consumer law as advised by the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) because it contains much of the ‘material information’ that students use to choose their degrees. Consequently, the CMA will regard the Programme Specification as information that underpins a potential students’ ‘purchasing decision’ and the expectation is that it is always an accurate description of the degree.
* **Module Specifications**: Significant element of the proposal documentation and can either be new modules or existing ones which have been modified/adapted for the new programme. Modules should be written to show how they support the students’ achievement of the intended Learning Outcomes at the programme level.
* **Assessment Strategy/Map**: significant element of the proposal documentation which provides an overview of the assessment strategy for the entire programme.
* **Curriculum Map**: Demonstrates the links between the modules and the Stage level Learning Outcomes, showing how each outcome will be achieved. It should be completed as part of developing a programme specification.
* **College LTC**: read ‘College LTC’ as College LTC or any other body to whom LTC has delegated responsibility of considering Programme Approval documentation to.
* **Quality Manager:** this could be the Quality Officer, Programme Manager etc. who has involvement with the Programme Approval process within the College.

## Appendix 3: Related Regulations, Statutes and Related Policies

* UK Quality Code: [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf?sfvrsn=170af781_16)
* [subject benchmark](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements) statements;
* [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code);
* Degree Apprenticeship Standards (including UK Quality Code: [Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships: Current Approaches](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/quality-assuring-higher-education-in-apprenticeships.pdf)
* [Forward 2020: A Strategy for Aston University](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/migrated-assets/applicationpdf/news/116884-Aston_2020_MINI_strategy.pdf)
* [Legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/) for statutory requirements, such as those relating to special educational needs, disability, equal opportunities and diversity, health and safety
* [Ordinances](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/about/management-structure/charter-statutes-and-ordinances) and [Regulations](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/general-regulations) of the University
* [Collaborative Programme Director Handbook](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision)
* [External Examiner Guidance Notes](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/externalexaminers-framework/index)
* [Collaborative Guidelines](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision)
* [Aston Credits and non-credit bearing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events guidelines](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/ama-recognising-module-achievement/index)

## Appendix 4: Documentation requirements

Templates for each of the \*documents below can be found either on the [Programme Approval, Update and Approval](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) or [Collaborative Provision](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision/index) web page. If you experience any difficulty accessing any of these documents, please contact the Quality Team at [clipp\_quality@aston.ac.uk](mailto:clipp_quality@aston.ac.uk)

The documents listed below are required for both adding a collaborative element to an existing programme and creating a new collaborative programme.

* First Filter form, updated to include any revisions and with commentary from the College Accountant/s following consideration by SMT;
* Proforma for Calculating Costs and Income, updated to include any revisions following consideration by SMT;
* Risk Assessment form, updated to include any revisions following consideration by SMT;
* Due Diligence on the prospective partner;
* [Programme Specification](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) for taught programmes (or Programme Description for Professional Doctorates);
* Module Specifications include any amended or new module specifications (a template is available for new modules from the [Programme Approval, Update and Withdrawal](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) web page;
* [Assessment Map](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval);
* [Curriculum Map](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/prog-approval) (for taught programmes);
* CVs of partner staff;
* Visit Report;
* Explanation of how student support and administrative structures will be adjusted to deal with the proposed activity;
* Draft Agreement;
* Other contractual agreements, such as degree apprenticeship agreement;
* A degree apprenticeship inspection report template, if relevant;
* Operational Checklist evidencing the Detailed Planning of Proposals

## Appendix 5: Collaborative Interim Review documentation requirements

The following documents should be submitted when a Collaborative Interim Review is undertaken:

* Report of the Collaborative Programme Panel and response to any recommendations;
* Collaborative agreement;
* Programme and module specifications;
* Annual Review report (if Annual Review has already taken place)
* Statistical data
* Admissions: applications/recruitment/intake qualifications/demographic profile;
* Progression: retention/attrition/completion and employment rates
* Module level feedback;
* Evidence that appropriate moderation of assessment has taken place;
* Student feedback: Staff Student Committee/questionnaire returns/informal feedback and responses;
* External Examiners’ Reports and responses;
* Any recent reports from internal and external bodies and responses;
* Any feedback from partners, employers and other external stakeholders and responses.

## Appendix 6: Documentation Requirements Renewal of Agreements

The following documents are required when renewing Articulation Collaborative Arrangements:

* Current agreement;
* Any Interim Review reports and responses;
* Annual Review reports;
* Periodic review reports;
* Proforma for Calculating Costs and Income (with commentary on any changes);
* Risk Assessment (with commentary on any changes);
* Due diligence (with commentary on any changes).

For all other types of agreements, reference should be made to the Policy for Periodic Review and Revalidation of Taught Programmes for documentation requirements.

1. Office for Students, OfS 2018.01, Condition B1, ‘Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Office for Students, OfS 2018.01, Condition B4, ‘Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See Appendix 2 ‘Definitions’ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Approval and quality assurance of collaborative activity which is not credit-rated has been delegated by the Collaborative Provision Strategy Group (CPSG) to the Colleges. Students may be provided with a record of attendance but not with any other document that may be confused with an Aston Credits award or with an award within the FHEQ. Approval and quality assurance of collaborative credit-bearing Aston Credits outside the FHEQ has also been delegated by CPSG to the Colleges, according to certain procedures. Guidance on Aston Credits for collaborative proposals outside the FHEQ with credit recognition can be found on the [CPSG](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/cpsg) web page and specifically for Aston Credits on the [Aston Credit and CPD](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/ama-recognising-module-achievement/index.) web page. All activity outside the FHEQ must be reported to CPSG, to enable a central record to be kept. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Separate governance arrangements exist for research or commercial collaboration; for guidance on research collaboration, contact the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office, for guidance on commercial collaboration, contact Legal Services. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities of CPSG [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities of PASC [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities of GSMC [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Irrespective of the type of activity, Colleges are encouraged to alert the CPSG Secretary and their College Quality Officer to any collaborative activity they are considering undertaking as early on as possible. A [list of contacts](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/documents/Quality/Collaborative%20Provision/Collaborative-Provision-Contacts-list%20(7).docx) is available on the [CPSG](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/clipp/quality/a-z/collaborativeprovision) web page. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Reference should be made to the documents ‘Descriptions of Types of Collaborative Activity’ and the ‘Taxonomy of Collaborative Provision for wider definitions/information. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Separate process documents exist for articulation arrangements which are available from the Collaborative Provision web page. There is also a separate [step by step guide for the development and approval](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/migrated-assets/secure-assets/clipp/about/management-structure/Flow%20chart.pdf) of these types of arrangement. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See the process document for Modifications, which outlines how to register a modification on MAP [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The aim of the College ‘Final Endorsement’ is to ensure that as the programme has evolved it has kept within the requirements of the First Filter stage and can still underwrite the resources required for launching the programme. If any changes to the financial model have taken place, the Final Endorsement form should include a commentary on the financial model from the College Accountant and updated versions re-submitted to SMT. In addition, SMT should also receive a brief outline of arrangements for pastoral and academic student support; these should have been considered as part of the design process. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. In particular the process documents for Programme Approval and Withdrawal/Suspension of Programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Reference should be made to the documents ‘Descriptions of Types of Collaborative Activity’ and the ‘Taxonomy of Collaborative Provision for wider definitions/information [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In particular the process documents for Programme Approval and Withdrawal/Suspension of Programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Reference should be made to the Continual Monitoring and Enhancement of Taught Programmes policy document for full details of the process, including performance thresholds and deadlines. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. If the agreement is due to end but a Periodic Review is not imminent or cannot be brought forward, the term of the agreement may be extended. A legal letter outlining the extension will be drawn up which will enable sufficient time for completion of a Periodic Review and negotiations to take place to renew the agreement and complete signing. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)