



Collaborations Annual Review Process

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Version History

Version	Approved	Revisions made	Date
1	David Holliman	Chris Maskell	15/11/2023
2	Chris Maskell		19/03/2026

1. Purpose

1.1 This procedure and guidance notes have been prepared to ensure consistency with the Office for Students Conditions of Registration, UK Quality Code for Higher Education, PSRB Regulatory Requirements, Consumer Protection Law, and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation.

1.2. The aim is to ensure that the University of Buckingham sets and maintains review systems that are high-quality leading to valued qualifications, with explicit positive learning outcomes for students.

1.3. The Collaborations Department can provide further guidance on the application of this procedure and guidance document as required.

1.4 This process will consider the provision at both strategic and operational levels, and will report on the financial, quality and operational aspects of the arrangements.

1.5 The purpose of annual monitoring process is:

- To consider the effectiveness of each programme in achieving its stated aims.
- To consider the success of students in achieving the intended learning outcomes.
- To identify strengths and weaknesses with a view to improvement.
- To evaluate financial viability, recruitment and marketing provision.
- To ensure that appropriate action is taken to remedy any identified shortcomings.
- To ensure the best possible student experience including reviewing student feedback.
- To build up information required for the periodic review of programmes.
- To reflect on the actions taken following the previous annual review.

1.5 The annual review seeks to highlight good practice and areas for improvement or enhancement. It is the Universities hope, where appropriate, to assist in the development of partnerships to ensure ongoing success and innovation.

1.6. By holding partnership reviews annually, it provides the Collaborative Partner a structure to plan workload for any changes to be implemented and completed and students notified where appropriate in good time for the start of the new academic year or next intake.

2. Scope

2.1 The annual review process applies to all awards and short courses that constitute the University's definition of collaborative provision (see 1.2 Definitions of Collaborative Partnerships – Collaborations Handbook).

2.2 This procedure is designed to work with all undergraduate and postgraduate provision (both taught and research) in consultation with Buckingham's internal academic faculties.

2.3 Every 5 years, a periodic review will take place, and where a Collaborative Partner is subject to a periodic review, this will replace the annual review process for that Collaborative Partner, in that year. The Periodic Review will be led by the Collaborations Department and will utilise the previous 4 year's annual reviews together with additional information detailed by that procedure.



3. Timing

3.1 The Annual Review process should be completed in February each year. Preparation should begin from August of the previous year.

4. Overview

4.1 All awards that fall within the University's definition of collaborative provision are monitored annually with the outcomes recorded on a Risk Analysis and Development Plan (RADP; Section 2 Business Case Approval – 2.5) along with a set of action points that are then reviewed continuously throughout the year.

4.2 The University will make decisions on the continuation of each collaborative provision based on the information provided in the RAPD (note, there may be other situations where a decision is made to terminate a partnership that does not fall under this annual monitoring procedure).

4.3 The continuous monitoring of courses delivered by Collaborative Partners is undertaken through a process led by the Collaborations Department working with Finance and relevant Faculties to provide a series of monitoring outcomes that will inform the overall appraisal of the partnership at an institutional level.

5. Procedure

This annual monitoring process will consist of the following:

- Interim visits as required by The Collaborations Department.
- Completion and maintenance of the Collaborative Partners RADP.
- An annual financial review of each partner (including student numbers).
- An Annual Partnership Review Meeting (including strategic oversight of continuous course monitoring) in two parts:
 - Part 1: The Faculty(s) concerned and;
 - Part 2: The Collaborative Partner.

Please see the Annual Review Process Flowchart for a visual representation of the process. The process is also explained in more detail below.

5.1 Risk Analysis & Development Plan

5.1.1 The RADP is the main oversight document which is used by the University to provide a summary of the current risks and opportunities with each collaborative partner.

5.1.2 The RADP is completed and regularly updated by the Collaborations Coordinator/Manager for each of their collaborative partnerships. The document is internal to the University and is not shared directly with partners, although they will be aware of areas of concern and development opportunities.

5.1.3 The RADP enables the University to understand and manage any risks and opportunities with each Collaborative Partner. Oversight through this process includes analysis of external, commercial, operational and academic risk and opportunities. It allows sensible consideration of risk and appropriate control mechanisms and mitigation to be applied.

5.1.4 Outcomes from the annual financial review, continuous course monitoring and the Annual Partnership Review Meeting will be entered into the RADP.



5.1.5 The section in the RADP relating to programme/module development activities should be completed and agreed with partners with at least 8 months' notice before the affected academic year / intake unless immediate changes are required. In these cases, please refer to the University's Change Procedure and pay special consideration to requirements around consulting students.

5.2 Annual Financial Review (including student numbers)

5.2.1 Once a year, the Collaborations Department will collect the updated company accounts and management accounts (where available) to allow the University Finance Team to undertake an appraisal of the current financial situation. Additional information will be collected using the Annual Due Diligence Checklist (Section 5 Annual Monitoring - 5.6) and reviewed by Finance and Legal Services. Comments will be provided, and an overall RAG rating will be produced for each partner in consultation with the Collaborations Coordinator/Manager.

5.2.2 Within these comments, the University Finance Team will also summarize the partners' payment behaviour over the last year and provide a RAG rating to assess future payment activity. Any concerns will be followed up by the Collaborations Coordinator/Manager, raising to the Head of Collaborations where necessary.

5.2.3 The outcomes of the financial review will be entered into the RADP and reflected in the Collaborations Report to Faculty (Section 5 Annual Monitoring - 5.7). Concerns will be either addressed immediately where necessary and/or discussed in the Annual Partnership Review meeting.

5.3 Collaborative Partner Internal Review Report

5.3.1 The Collaborative Partner is required to comment on the operation of the partnership over the last year. Ideally, this would reflect the data collected and outcomes from their own internal review process. This report is based on a variety of information sets and is consolidated in the following form - Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.4 Annual Partnership Review Information Set.

Areas of review are:

- Student Continuation.
- Student Completion.
- Student Progression.
- External Examiner Report(s).
- Student Feedback.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Ethical Considerations, particularly in relation to research.
- Compliance on Assessment Turnaround.
- Academic Support and resourcing.
- Annual Programme Review and Updating.

In addition, partners must indicate compliance with the Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines and OfS C1 condition of registration (5.11 CMA Partner Self-Check Form).

Partners must provide C.V.s for all teaching staff.

Where partners provide courses at multiple levels (foundation, undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research) they must complete a separate information set for each.



5.3.2 Where a programme or programmes are being taught out, the Collaborative Partner is required to complete a separate report. This report is designed to capture specific information to ensure an adequately managed teach out of programmes:

- Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.5 Teaching Out Programmes Review Report.

5.4 Collaborations Department Report

5.3.3 The Collaborations Department will produce a report (Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.7 Collaborations Report to Faculty) drawing on evidence from the following areas:

- Academic Link Tutor feedback.
- Continuous course monitoring.
- The contingency plan.
- The financial review comments.
- Working practices review.
- A summary of the RADP and day to day working practices including details of visits.

5.5 Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 1 (Internal)

5.5.1 A meeting will then be held between the Collaborations Department and each Faculty to review all its partnership provision. The intention of this meetings is to hold a pre-meeting mini review before the main review with Collaborative Partner (Part 2). These meetings will be arranged and led by the Collaborations Department and will involve:

- The Dean / Associate Dean.
- Collaborations Department representative(s).
- Members of the faculty senior management team.
- Academic link tutors.
- A representative from UALTC.
- Representatives from other Buckingham departments where appropriate.

5.5.2 The meeting will cover a range of topics (see Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.8 Agenda for Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 1) and will consider information from:

- Collaborations Report to Faculty.
- Annual Partnership Review Information Set.
- Staff C.V.s.
- Any other sources of information deemed necessary.

5.5.3 Recommendations, conditions, comments and other topics for further discussion will be recorded on the Collaborations Report to Faculty.

5.6 Annual Admission Audit

5.6.1 Either before or during the Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 2 takes place, the Collaborative Partner will be required to make the admission records they hold for each student available for audit by University of Buckingham staff. Depending on the system used and ease of access, this can be made available in-person or remotely. Whichever format is used, data privacy and data sharing principles must be in line with the Data Processing Agreement.

5.6.2 The admissions audit seeks to confirm that students meet at least the minimum entry requirements for the programme they have been registered on.



5.6.3 University of Buckingham staff will use the Admissions Audit Template (Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.10 Admissions Audit Template) to sample and record admissions documents relating to 10% of all current students distributed evenly across all programmes.

5.6.4 Results are reported and discussed as part of the Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 2 and appropriate actions included in the outcomes.

5.7 Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 2 (External)

5.7.1 The meeting with the Faculty will inform the final meeting with the Collaborative Partner (see Section 5 Annual Monitoring – 5.9 Agenda for Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 2). This will be an Annual Partnership Review Meeting, led by the Head of Collaborations to allow an open and honest discussion around the strategic and operational priorities for each partnership. Members will include:

- Representatives from the Collaborative Partner
 - Vice Chancellor / Rector (or equivalent).
 - Dean (or equivalent).
 - Programme Leaders.
 - Any other staff deemed relevant as suggested by the outcomes of Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 1).
- Representatives from the Collaborations Department.
- The Link Tutor(s).

5.7.2 This meeting will cover the same topics as the Part 1 meeting but will be a more in-depth review of the Collaborative Partnership including feedback from Buckingham at an institutional level.

5.7.3 In addition to reviewing the operational and quality processes, the meetings with both the Faculty and the partner will discuss future developmental activities such as new provision and wider activities to include staff and student visits and exchanges and research potential.

5.8 Outcomes

5.8.1 Following the Annual Partnership Review Meeting Part 2 outcomes will be agreed with the Collaborative Partner, collated into 5.12 Quality Improvement Plan Collaborations with the RADP updated which is then shared with the Faculty and reported to Senate. Timeframes for actions will be agreed upon and reviewed where appropriate. Where appropriate the contingency plan will also be updated.

5.8.2 Collaborative partners should endeavour to share the outcomes of the annual review process with students where appropriate, especially where it concerns changes to programmes/modules.