

Requirements for joint, double and dual doctoral award collaborations

1. Governance

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the University to ensure that there are no legal or regulatory requirements in the country in which they are operating which may impede the award of a doctorate degree to doctoral candidates.
- 1.2 The University is ultimately responsible for the standards and quality of the qualifications it awards, irrespective of who delivers it or where it is delivered.
- 1.3 Quality assurance arrangements made between the degree awarding bodies must protect those degree awarding bodies' academic standards. The standards and requirements for assuring quality and standards may exceed those usually required but may not be less.
- 1.4 External examining arrangements need to be agreed to satisfy UK requirements and the requirements of other partners involved. Where possible the University's normal external examining arrangements should apply. It may be feasible for joint or dual appointments to be made.
- 1.5 This category of collaborations does not cover arrangements where there is joint supervision of a doctoral candidate that does not lead to a joint, double or dual award.
- 1.6 The two institutions will need to establish mechanisms for maintaining joint oversight of the joint degree course, including any joint governance committees or boards.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 The defining feature of a doctoral joint, double or dual degree is that it is a distinctive educational programme that none of the partners could offer, in that form, independently of others.
- 2.2 Collaborative Doctoral Programmes (CDP) are joint, double or dual awards whereby two higher education institutions collaborate in the delivery of a single jointly delivered research degree programme. They can be individual or institutional.
- 2.3 Joint, double and dual doctoral collaborations can operate at the level of:

- a. the University;
 - b. a programme (subject, discipline, research area);
 - c. a small number of candidates and supervisory teams;
 - d. an individual candidate with a single supervisory team.
- 2.4 Joint, double and dual doctoral collaborations are usually constituted through a cotutelle agreement.
- 2.5 The award for a joint doctorate is made jointly by both partners.
- 2.6 For double and dual doctorates separate awards are made by each partner. Double or dual awards are a partnership arrangement whereby two or more awarding bodies collaborate in the delivery of a single jointly delivered programme (or programmes) leading to separate awards (and separate certification) being granted by both, or all, of them.
- 2.7 Joint, double and dual degrees usually include mobility between the two institutions, and each partner delivers a substantial proportion of the programme.

3. Business evaluation and due diligence

- 3.1 In order to deliver a joint, double or dual PhD, and prior to academic approval, a business case must be approved, and due diligence undertaken on the partner institution. This process needs only to be completed once for each partner institution.
- 3.2 The Joint, Double and Dual Doctorate Business Approval form needs to be completed and approvals sought from the relevant academic School, NTU Doctoral School, NTU Global and University Internationalisation Committee.
- 3.3 For new partners, due diligence and partner approval is sought from NTU Global as part of the specified process.

4. Operational principles

- 4.1 The programme of research is jointly managed on a day-to-day basis by both partners in accordance with the approved Collaborative Operational Document.
- 4.2 A doctoral joint, double or dual degree course is jointly designed by both partners and is a joint enterprise from the earliest stages.
- 4.3 All partners in a doctoral joint, double or dual degree arrangement must provide substantial contributions to the creation, management and decision making.
- 4.4 Key characteristics are as follows:
- a. Each partner is responsible for the content, delivery, quality and standards of its own provision and makes its own award, unless specified as a joint award;
 - b. Doctoral candidates on a collaborative programme must be registered at each participating institution for the duration of the jointly delivered programme.
- 4.5 Doctoral candidates are registered on a full-time basis at both partner institutions but will have a designated 'home institution' which represents the lead administrative partner.

- 4.6 Fees are agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.7 Each institution provides a distinctive research environment.
- 4.8 The lead administrative partner issues the doctoral certificate for joint awards. The design of the certificate is agreed by both partners in advance of the award being made.
- 4.9 For double and dual doctoral degree awards, both partners issue a certificate. The NTU certificate for both dual and double awards must refer to the fact that the doctoral degree has been studied as part of a collaboration.

5. Quality management

- 5.1 Each partner is normally responsible for the assessment of the parts of the programme that it delivers. Mechanisms may be put in place for joint moderation of assessment across institutions.
- 5.2 All partners agree a common set of assessment regulations. Bespoke agreements may be designed and approved as part of the academic approval process, ensuring that the academic standards of each of the degree-awarding bodies are satisfied.
- 5.3 Academic appeals, irregularities, extenuating circumstances and complaints are either managed jointly by both partners using a set of pre-agreed processes or are managed separately by the institution at which the doctoral candidate is studying at the time.

6. Transfer from a single to a joint, double or dual doctoral award

- 6.1 An NTU doctoral candidate may transfer from a single University awarded doctorate to a joint, double or dual doctoral arrangement as specified in the collaborative operational document.
- 6.2 Transfers to a joint, double or dual doctoral award are approved by the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).

7. Minimum expectations for joint, double and dual doctoral awards

- 7.1 Ideally, a doctoral candidate spends an equal amount of time at each partner. However, as a minimum a full-time doctoral candidate must normally spend at least 12 months at NTU, either as a single block or as multiple blocks across the programme of research.
- 7.2 The thesis must be written in English. The length of the thesis is agreed in advance in the Collaborative Operational Document and meets or exceeds the normal requirements of each partner.
- 7.3 The viva voce examination must be conducted in English. The examination may be conducted at the partner institution but there must be a member of NTU staff as a member of the examination team, either in-person or virtually.

- 7.4 The supervisory team includes a Director of Studies (or equivalent) from each institution. The supervisory team must meet or exceed the NTU minimum requirements for supervision as set out in Quality Handbook (QH) Section 11.
- 7.5 The frequency of supervisory meetings is determined jointly and is detailed in the Collaborative Operational Document and doctoral candidate's cotutelle agreement. It must meet or exceed the NTU minimum requirements. Hours of supervision are split equally between the partners and may reflect the location of the doctoral candidate and pattern of delivery. At least one joint full supervisory meeting should be held in each year of registration, with supervisors joining by electronic means as appropriate.
- 7.6 The doctoral candidate receives research training from both institutions. The research training to be provided by each institution is agreed in advance to coincide with time spent at each institution and is detailed in the doctoral candidate's cotutelle agreement. There should be no significant overlap in the research training undertaken at each institution.

8. Academic approval

- 8.1 Academic approval of joint, double and dual doctoral degrees is undertaken by URDC. This includes the approval of the collaboration and the principles by which it will operate and the approval of arrangements for each individual doctoral candidate within the collaboration.
- 8.2 The partner may also have their own approval requirements, or a joint approval event may be held.

9. Documentation requirements for academic approval

- 9.1 **Collaborative Operational Document:** this document is prepared jointly by the NTU academic School and the partner. It sets out a shared understanding of how the collaboration will operate, based on the minimum requirements set out in section 7 above. This document forms the basis of the overarching legal agreement with the partner.
- 9.2 **Individual doctoral candidate cotutelle:** this document sets out an individual doctoral candidate's programme of research and the specific regulations that apply to that doctoral candidate. It is designed in collaboration with the partner and is completed for each doctoral candidate. Once approved, the cotutelle is signed by the doctoral candidate, NTU and the partner and is the legal agreement for that individual doctoral candidate.

10. Post academic approval

- 10.1 The Collaborative Operational Document forms the basis of a legal collaborative agreement between NTU and the partner institution.
- 10.2 Support for drafting the collaboration agreement is provided by NTU Global and the NTU Doctoral School.

- 10.3 The cotutelle agreement **must be** signed by the University, the partner and the doctoral candidate in advance of the doctoral candidate enrolling on the joint, double or dual doctoral award.
- 10.4 The NTU Doctoral School is responsible for registering doctoral candidates onto Banner as NTU doctoral candidates.
- 10.5 As the Home Institution, the NTU Director of Studies is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the collaboration.

11. Monitoring and review

- 11.1 Individual doctoral candidate progress is monitored in line with the milestones agreed in the Collaborative Operational Document and the individual doctoral candidate cotutelle.
- 11.2 The collaboration as a whole is reported upon in the SRDC and URDC annual report, as appropriate.
- 11.3 The collaboration as a whole is approved for five years and is subject to periodic collaborative review before approval is renewed by URDC.
- 11.4 Following satisfactory periodic collaborative review, the collaboration is re-approved for five years.

Policy owner
CADQ / NTU Doctoral School

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