

Section 10



Nottingham Trent
University

Quality Handbook

Part C: Assuring and Enhancing Quality

Section 10: Working With Others - Requirements

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1. Contextual Statement

The University retains ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities of all awards made in its name.

- 1.1 Section 10 of the Quality Handbook (QH) covers all the University's awards offered through arrangements with others.
- 1.2 Section 10 is divided into five sub-sections, covering a broad range of types of provision delivered with others. These sub-sections are as follows:
 - a. [Section 10A](#): Partnerships
 - b. [Section 10B](#): Academic Partnerships
 - c. [Section 10C](#): Micro-credentials
 - d. [Section 10D](#): Placements
 - e. [Section 10E](#): Apprenticeships

2. Categories of Working with Others

All arrangements delivered with others are specified according to a set of University defined categories. Courses which are delivered with others and lead to academic credit awarded by the University are referred to as 'academic partnerships'.

- 2.1 The University's definition of collaborations and partnerships is based on that used by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and is:
 - a. Educational provision leading to a University award, or to specific credit towards a University award, delivered and / or supported and / or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation.
- 2.2 There are five categories of partnership as follows:
 - a. Distance Delivery
 - b. Articulation
 - c. Foundation Degree Progression
 - d. Nottingham Trent International College Progression
 - e. Delivery under Pearson licence (Higher National Qualifications)
- 2.3 There are five categories of School-based collaborative provision as follows:
 - a. Franchise
 - b. Joint delivery

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- c. Joint / double degree
 - d. Dual degree
 - e. Joint / double / dual award doctoral collaborations
- 2.4 Validation service, placements, online learning delivered with external partners, School Centred Initial Teacher Training, and higher education apprenticeships are not split into separate categories, but instead cover specific types of provision delivered with others. Higher education apprenticeships may be delivered as part of a school-based collaboration or include sub-contracting arrangements.
- 2.5 Collaborative relationships between NTU and external partners for the delivery of online learning is governed by a Collaborative Operational Document and Legal Agreement, which can enable the delivery of fully online learning leading to NTU awards. NTU is responsible for the design, delivery and assessment of all courses; external partners provide the online platform and associated support as agreed.

3. Strategy

Provision delivered with others aligns to the University's overarching strategy.

- 3.1 The strategy for the development of provision delivered with others is aligned to the following:
- a. The University Strategic Plan;
 - b. The University's international strategy;
 - c. Steering Group outcomes (where applicable).
- 3.2 Online learning courses delivered in partnership with Wiley, and higher education apprenticeships, broadly align to the policies set out in University's Quality Handbook (subject to the exceptions as outlined in this QH Section).

4. Governance

The Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) maintains overall academic oversight of provision delivered with others, on behalf of Academic Board. Oversight is delegated from ASQC to relevant sub-committees.

The University Research Committee (URC) maintains overall academic oversight of research degree provision delivered with others. Oversight is delegated from URC to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).

- 4.1 Oversight of partnerships and School-based collaborative provision is delegated to the Academic Partnerships Sub-Committee (AcaPSC) and to School Academic

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Standards and Quality Committees (SASQCs). AcaPSC does not have oversight of all types of partnership arrangements; only articulation and distance delivery arrangements fall within the remit of AcaPSC. Oversight of all other types of partnership is the responsibility of SASQCs.

- 4.2 Oversight of Nottingham Trent International College (NTIC) Progression is delegated to SASQCs along with the Joint Academic Advisory Board (JAAB).
- 4.3 Oversight of Higher Nationals delivered under licence with Pearson is delegated to the [AcaPSC](#).
- 4.4 Oversight of validation service collaborative provision is delegated to AcaPSC.
- 4.5 Oversight of online learning delivered by [external partners](#) is delegated both to relevant SASQCs and to the Cross-School Standards and Quality Sub-Committee (X-SASQC). X-SASQC retains oversight of the provision as a whole, whilst SASQCs retain responsibility for oversight of the individual courses.
- 4.6 Oversight of higher education apprenticeships is delegated to the Apprenticeship Portfolio Sub-Committee (ApSC) and to SASQCs. School oversight may be delegated to the School Apprenticeships Sub-Committees on behalf of SASQCs.
- 4.7 The Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) contribute to academic oversight of provision delivered with others, on behalf of ASQC.

Further information

- The University governance structure and terms of reference for each committee are set out in [QH Section 1](#) and its supplements.

5. Register of Collaborations and Partnerships

A record of all the University's collaborations and partnerships, including validation service, is maintained on a central register.

- 5.1 The register is maintained by CADQ on behalf of ASQC for relevant partnerships, School-based collaborative provision and validation service provision. It is maintained by ApSC for sub-contracted degree apprenticeships.
- 5.2 Ongoing oversight of the accuracy of the register is undertaken by AcaPSC and ApSC.
- 5.3 SASQCs contribute to the update and accuracy of the register through formal communications with CADQ and the associated sub-committees.
- 5.4 [AcaPSC](#) maintains oversight of Higher National Qualifications.
- 5.5 Courses delivered in partnership with external educational partners, placements, and none sub-contracted higher education apprenticeships are not included in the collaborative register. Separate records of these arrangements are maintained by the appropriate departments.

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5.6 The International Development Office (IDO) has responsibility for the management of NTIC's progression routes. The routes are recorded on a separate register with oversight maintained by JAAB.

6. Business Evaluation and Due Diligence

All provision delivered with others, and provision that is due for Periodic Review, is subject to proportionate business evaluation and due diligence processes.

- 6.1 Business evaluation and due diligence is completed, and approval given to proceed before academic approval or Periodic Review takes place.
- 6.2 Business evaluation for UK collaborations and partnerships, including validation service arrangements is the responsibility of the relevant School(s), in partnership with CADQ and the Director of the Mansfield Hub and UK College and Civic Partnerships (where applicable).
- 6.3 Business evaluation for international collaborations and partnerships, including validation service is the joint responsibility of NTU Global and the relevant School(s).
- 6.4 Business evaluation and due diligence for UK collaborations and partnerships is considered by, and the final outcome decided upon by, the UK Collaborations Business Evaluation Group (UKBEG) after approval has been given by the School.
- 6.5 Business evaluation, due diligence and the financial evaluation of all international collaborations and partnerships is undertaken through NTU Global, working closely with the Schools involved. Clear guidelines are in place for the approval of individual proposals.
- 6.6 The University Online Learning Steering Group makes decisions about new online learning provision to be delivered by external partners.
- 6.7 Higher education apprenticeships are subject to the University's standard business evaluation processes. Support is available from the Apprenticeships Team.
- 6.8 Research degree collaborations are subject to bespoke business planning that is proportionate to the type of arrangement. Course design support is available from CADQ's Collaborations and Partnerships Team.

Further information

- Guidance on due diligence will be provided by the International Finance Business Partner.
- Guidance on business evaluation for collaborations and partnerships can be obtained from [CADQ](#) and [NTU Global](#).
- Information about online learning with external partners can be obtained from the [Flexible Learning Manager](#).

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7. Serial Franchising or Sub-Contracting

Serial franchising or sub-contracting is not permitted.

- 7.1 The University does not permit any partner to approve another institution or body to deliver or assess its University approved provision without express written permission.
- 7.2 This requirement is set out in the written legal agreement between the University and the partner.

8. Legal Agreements

Provision delivered with others is subject to a proportionate agreement between the partner institution and the University.

Agreements are signed after academic approval has taken place and before the arrangement commences.

- 8.1 Institutional agreements for partnerships and collaborations are drawn up by the School using a standard template, in liaison with CADQ / NTU Global and Legal Services.
- 8.2 Institutional agreements for UK validation service arrangements with Further Education Colleges are drawn up by CADQ in liaison with the College, and Legal Services.
- 8.3 Online learning in collaboration with external partners is subject to a signed legal agreement between the two institutions.
- 8.4 In the case of joint PhD degrees, an individual co-tutelle agreement is signed by both institutions and the student.
- 8.5 Agreements should have a defined lifespan depending upon the type of arrangement.
- 8.6 Agreements must not be signed until after academic approval is complete; however, they should be negotiated beforehand to ensure that commencement of the arrangement is not delayed.
- 8.7 No collaboration or partnership should commence until an agreement has been signed.
- 8.8 Collaborative agreements are signed by the University approved signatories as set out in the University's Scheme of Delegation, with the exception of agreements for Validation Service provision which must be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Apprenticeship training plans are signed by the [Degree Apprentice Manager](#), the apprentice and the employer.

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9. Risk Management

Academic risks associated with collaborative provision are identified, monitored and managed on an ongoing basis. Academic Board maintains overall oversight of academic risks associated with collaborative provision. Oversight is delegated from Academic Board to relevant ASQC sub-committees.

- 9.1 Academic risks associated with collaborative provision are recorded on the Collaborative risk register which is actively managed by CADQ and overseen by the relevant sub-committees.
- 9.2 The risk register is a record of individual academic risks associated with individual partnerships that have an overall risk score of 8 or more. It is not a record of all risks associated with individual collaborations and partnerships.

10. Risk Assessment

All School-based collaborative provision and Validation Service collaborative provision must have a risk assessment in place and this risk assessment must remain up to date.

- 10.1 Academic risk assessments for collaborative provision are drawn up by CADQ as part of the approval process for a new partnership. For School-Based collaborative provision, this is done in liaison with the School.
- 10.2 Risk assessments should be reviewed annually as part of standard monitoring processes.
- 10.3 Individual risks with a score of 8 or more must be escalated to the Collaborative Risk Register.
- 10.4 Where risk assessment identifies significant risks with a partnership, a mitigation plan is produced and a sub-group of AcaPSC established to monitor and manage the risks.

11. Withdrawal and Teach-Out

When a collaboration or partnership is being withdrawn from, or terminated, appropriate teach-out processes are put into place to ensure that the interests of the students are protected.

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- 11.1 Conditions for withdrawal from a collaboration or partnership (by either partner) and the negotiated exit strategy, are set out in the Legal Agreement between NTU and the partner. This includes where courses are no longer meeting the University's requirements for the quality and standards of its awards.
- 11.2 School-based collaborations follow the collaborative provision withdrawal and teach out processes, which are aligned to the University's withdrawal and teach-out processes for its own provision, as set out in [QHS CP2](#).
- 11.3 Validation Service collaborative provision follows the Validation Service withdrawal and teach-out processes, which are aligned to the University's withdrawal and teach-out processes for its own provision, as set out in [QHS CP7](#).
- 11.4 Partnerships, courses delivered with external partners, placements, and higher education apprenticeships are subject to the university's standard withdrawal and teach-out processes as defined in [QHS 5G](#).
- 11.5 Where a University course is being withdrawn, the relevant SASQC should consider the impact of withdrawal on any collaboration, partnership or apprenticeship arrangement.

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Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	New section Changes to oversight of Collaborative Register
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	Addition of higher education apprenticeships Title change to 10D: placements
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	Further embedding of higher education apprenticeships throughout
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	CPSC oversight of sub-contracted degree apprenticeship provision added
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	Updates to reflect new international business evaluation process
Sept 2021	07.09.21	01.10.21	Updated to include reference to risk management and risk assessment processes
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
March 2024	20.03.24	27.03.2024	Updates to reflect changes in governance arrangements
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.2024	Delivery under Pearson licence added. SCITT removed as a partnership and referenced as SBCP.
Sept 2025	25.09.25	01.10.25	None