



Academic Quality Services (AQS)

A guide to Developing Multiple Awards

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This guide is intended to support staff involved in developing multiple awards, including dual and joint, with degree-awarding partner institutions

For forms, templates, and further guidance please visit dmu.ac.uk/aqs

where you will find a wealth of information on academic quality management at DMU as well as a series of [quick start guides](#) with reference to the main QA processes. You can also access all of our [guidance and forms](#).

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Introduction

This guidance has been written to support the development of proposal for multiple awards and is complementary to the existing AQS [Guide to managing collaborative provision](#). Although the UK HE Sector is being introduced to the new regulatory framework for English HE by the Office for Students (OfS) and the updated Quality Code is due for publication imminently, it is not anticipated that this will result in major changes to the current processes for collaborative provision, including dual and joint awards, and the existing Guidance is considered valid. The online version of this Guidance includes live links to all references.

Reference points

The Guidance draws on

1. the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education: [Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others](#) - also referred to as Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code
2. the [Characteristics Statement UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner \(October 2015\)](#) – also referred to in this Guidance as “The QAA Characteristics Statement”
3. DMU’s [Guide to managing collaborative provision](#)
4. UK HE sector-led examples

This Guidance will reproduce examples taken from these reference points as ways by which proposals for new dual and joint award partnerships and discussions between partners can take place. AQS will support these discussions. This Guidance is not intended to cover all possible ways in which qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner may be offered as they are by nature atypical. Advice should be sought at the earliest possible opportunity from Academic Quality Services (AQS), to ensure that the proposal is in line with national and University expectations.

Definition and terminology

The DMU definition of collaborative provision is based on that used by the QAA and has been appropriated for multiple awards as follows:

Learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations that are legally empowered to award higher education qualifications.

There are fifteen models of collaborative activity within the University’s current framework for collaborative provision (CP), categorised into three elements according to activity type and risk.

Academic Partnerships - Activities which involve partner institutions delivering or supporting an element of, or an entire DMU programme. In the case of dual and joint awards, the award is the

outcome of a distinctive educational programme that none of the partners could offer, in that form, independently of the other partner, and which is enhanced by the contribution of both partners.

Recruitment Partnerships - Relationships which are ostensibly established in order to recruit students to follow DMU programmes at the University, whether through standard or advanced entry.

Student Mobility - Reciprocal and non-reciprocal arrangements which allow DMU students to undertake part of their programme of study at a partner institution with the credits gained whilst studying at the partner institution contributing to their DMU award. A definitive list of the taxonomy of CP models can be found on the AQS website ([DMU definition and models of activity](#)).

The Dual and Joint award models fall within **Academic Partnerships** at DMU and follow the definition of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education: [Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others](#) and [The QAA Characteristic Statement](#). Please note that B10 will be superseded by the [revised UK Quality Code](#) in November 2018, although it is not anticipated that it will lead to changes in the points and the framework detailed in this document.

Dual award: Arrangements where two or more awarding bodies together provide a single jointly delivered programme (or programmes) leading to separate awards (and separate certification) being granted by both, or all, of them.

Joint award is an arrangement under which two or more awarding institutions together provide programmes leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants.

A jointly delivered programme is defined by the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education: [Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others](#) as:

A programme delivered or provided jointly by two or more organisations, irrespective of the award (whether single, joint, dual/double or multiple). It refers to the education provided rather than the nature of the award.

[The QAA Characteristic Statement](#) explains that

The term 'degree-awarding body' refers both to UK degree-awarding bodies (including all UK universities) and also to international bodies empowered to award higher education qualifications.

In this Guidance “degree-awarding body” will be referred to as the “degree-awarding partner (s)”.

Consumer rights legislation

The University is subject to consumer rights legislation in relation to the content and accuracy of information we provide to applicants and students about their programme, including information about programme content and structure, tuition fees and other costs. This guidance document also relates to module content which may impact on information to applicants and students and includes advice about making such information easily accessible and transparent. Please consider seeking early advice from Legal Services, Academic Quality Services and refer to the Competition and Markets Authority guidance to HE

providers on consumer rights legislation (March 2015) for more information if necessary at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providersand-students>

Additionally, Part C of the UK Quality Code: [Information about Higher Education Provision](#) addresses the responsibility bestowed on UK higher education providers to produce appropriate information, focused on their intended audiences, about the higher education learning opportunities they offer. The Expectations within this part of the Code reflect the General Principles that apply to giving information about higher education provision and include ensuring that information is timely, current, transparent, and focused on the needs of the intended audiences; that HE providers are responsible and accountable for the information they produce about the learning opportunities they offer; and that the information is accessible to diverse audience, available and retrievable.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

DMU academic quality processes (such as validation, curriculum modifications, periodic review, annual monitoring, external examining, collaborative review) ensure that the University's approach to quality management, articulated through the University's [Academic Quality Policy](#), is embedded with the focus on enhancing the learning opportunities made available to all students and assuring quality and standards.

Intrinsic to DMU's academic quality processes is Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL is an educational framework that guides the design of learning, specifically around curriculum delivery, materials, assessments, policy and practice. The DMU UDL framework is based on a rigorous, research based foundation; it provides a focussed and student-centred basis for understanding and applying inclusivity within teaching practice. A universal curriculum refers to planning programmes that are barrier-free wherever feasible. If programme content is well designed, delivered and assessed so that students with learning differences and physical disabilities are able to gain access, it will enable them to receive an equivalent learning experience to their peers.

DMU's approach to teaching, learning, assessment and student support should be capable of anticipating, and adapting to, the differentiated student needs. These can be known and clear, as in the case of many students with disabilities, or subtle and intrinsic, arising from cultural or racial identity, self expectation, learning 'styles' or other psychological attributes. The value of applying UDL is that if a DMU programme of study is made more accessible and inclusive; it benefits those student identified above but also all other students too.

UDL aims to enhance the student experience and as part of the programme development of a dual or joint award it is anticipated that UDL will form part of the jointly conceived curriculum.

Further information on UDL can be found via Blackboard and at: <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/udl/universal-design-for-learning.aspx>

Section 1: Types, examples and basis for arrangements of dual or **joint awards**

The key characteristics of a dual or joint award derive from the different types of qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner and also, the arrangements to set and maintain academic standards of qualifications and by extension the approaches to quality assurance.

The UK Quality Code and Characteristics Statement documents provide the basis from which the bespoke and detailed discussions between partners should take place as early as possible once initial expressions of interest develop and proposals are being prepared for endorsement/ approval. Once approval in principle is granted, the discussions must include an understanding on related quality assurance processes and the final approval for the joint enterprise must evidence the agreement on their implementation. This is important in order to safeguard academic standards of the qualification.

1.1 Types of qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner

There is a substantial range of types of collaborative partnership arrangements. As a first step it is important to distinguish Dual and Joint awards from the more established and prevalent model of faculty owned or Validation Service provision at DMU or articulation/ progression agreements.

The [QAA Characteristics Statement](#) explains that the significant defining feature of dual or joint awards is that 'qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner are the outcome of a distinctive educational programme that none of the partners could offer, in that form, independently of the others, and which is enhanced by the contribution of all partners involved, including substantial contributions from each participating partner in the creation, management and decision-making related to the programme and award.'

1.1.1 *Multiple award vs. faculty owned, Validation Service provision and Progression, Articulation agreements*

Some examples are provided below:

- The basic distinction is that in the case of multiple awards the partner institution must be empowered by the jurisdiction of that country (in the case of international partners) to award an award – i.e. have legally bestowed Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs).
- In the case of faculty owned and Validation Service arrangements, it is the degree-awarding partner (i.e. DMU) that authorises the partner institution to deliver one of its own validated programmes, whereas in a dual award it is a **joint enterprise and partnership** leading to separate awards.
- In the case of faculty owned, Validation Service arrangements the partner institution delivers DMU's programme(s) in accordance with the University's academic regulations, whereas in the case of a dual or joint award the academic regulations of each degree-awarding partner apply or there may be bespoke regulations.
- In the case of faculty owned and Validation Service arrangements, only the degree-awarding partner's processes and procedures (i.e. DMU's) apply for the design and development of a programme while the ultimate decision on student achievement and the award of the qualification rest solely with the degree-awarding partner. In the case of a dual or joint award, aspects of the programme management and oversight, and ultimate decision-making on student achievement is carried out jointly by both degree-awarding partners.
- In the case of progression agreements the partner's syllabus is recognised as equivalent to part of the DMU programme and students gain entry to DMU with advanced standing.

For articulation agreements DMU approves all, or part of, an external award from another institution as providing specific credits towards a specified DMU programme. Guaranteed entry

to DMU with advanced standing is granted to applicants who demonstrate appropriate successful achievement on the external programme.

In the case of either progression or articulation agreements the degree-awarding partner recognises learning that is undertaken at the partner institution as contributing to its own qualification. However, in a dual or joint award the programme is conceived as a joint enterprise involving more than one degree-awarding body.

The QAA Characteristics Statement categorises the different arrangements that lead to the award of a qualification involving more than one degree-awarding partner, into two headings: 'Co-dependent, mutually contingent qualifications' and 'Integrated but independent qualifications' and provides examples. This Guidance is not intended to cover all possible ways in which qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner may be offered as they are by nature atypical.

1.1.2 Types of qualifications

1.1.2.1 Co-dependent, mutually contingent qualifications

Essentially, arrangements of this type necessitate that in order to successfully complete the programme students must fulfil the requirements of all degree-awarding bodies involved. Where students receive more than one qualification on completion, the awards are fundamentally linked: a student cannot meet the requirements to receive one award and its associated certificate without the other. Commonly, receipt of the final award(s) is dependent on students achieving a single, shared set of criteria (which may be learning outcomes or other requirements).

1.1.2.2 Integrated but independent qualifications

Arrangements of this type involve more than one degree-awarding partner working together to offer a jointly conceived programme but the student does not need to satisfy the requirements of all the partners to receive an award. In this case, the programmes are designed to enable students to achieve more than one distinct set of criteria (learning outcomes or other requirements), although in some arrangements the different sets may overlap.

The [QAA Characteristics Statement](#) includes examples that may help the reader understand the differences between the different types.

1.2 Basis for arrangements: Responsibility for academic standards

It is important to note that, as Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code prescribes,

'The fundamental principle underpinning all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others is that the degree-awarding body has ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, regardless of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them.'

The principal responsibility of the degree-awarding body is for the academic standards of any awards granted in its name (whether these are in the form of academic credit or qualifications), as well as for the accuracy of any formal transcript or record of achievement confirming these. [...]

The collective responsibility for joint or multiple awards (and the need to accept the academic standards of the other bodies) does not remove the responsibility of the individual degree-awarding body to ensure that its own academic standards are safeguarded.'

([UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others](#))

Please note that B10 will be superseded by the [revised UK Quality Code](#) in November 2018, although it is not anticipated that it will lead to changes in the points and the framework detailed in this document.

Moreover, the UK Quality Code

'precludes situations where non UK awarding bodies offer fees for their students to receive a UK degree alongside their own qualification, where the UK degree-awarding body has had negligible input to the design of the programme and little control over its delivery. In these cases, the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities that have led to the UK qualification may not be adequately secured, posing a high risk to the reputation of UK higher education.'

The guiding principle is that a qualification involving more than one degree awarding body is underpinned by a genuinely joint enterprise and partnership between the degree-awarding bodies involved.'

(QAA [Characteristics Statement UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner \(October 2015\)](#))

1.2.1 Approaches to quality assurance

The De Montfort University [Academic Quality Policy](#) is set to promote enhancement, promulgate good practice, assure the quality of learning opportunities and the standards of DMU programmes and awards, and provide evidence of quality to stakeholders. This Policy relates to all DMU students, undergraduate, postgraduate and research, wherever they are located.

It is fundamental to a dual award that the academic standards of that award as a whole are maintained and that the quality of the learning opportunities is appropriate. Compliance with the UK HE Regulatory Framework and the UK Quality Code means that DMU has effective arrangements in place to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them. Intrinsic to this is the [academic standards definition](#).

Normal Quality Assurance processes for collaborative provision will also apply to Multiple Award arrangements:

- Annual Quality Monitoring
- Programme validations and curriculum changes
- Periodic Reviews
- Collaborative Reviews

Responsibilities for monitoring and oversight of the partnership and programme (quality assurance and enhancement processes, experience of students, delivery of taught provision, and the administrative and operational aspects of programme management) should be discussed, agreed and shared equally among partners and articulated within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) as soon as possible after initial approval by DMU Executive Board. Staff responsible for these processes should also be identified at the partner institution and listed in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) – to be updated or confirmed annually as part of an Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) calendar.

Quality monitoring activity will be on an annual basis. The AQS [Annual Quality Monitoring \(AQM\) calendar for collaborative provision](#) used for faculty owned and Validation Service provision can be applied or appropriated as it lists the Quality Assurance processes that dual or joint awards will be subject to.

A helpful reference for the discussion is **Appendix A** in this Guidance that lists approaches to quality assurance determined by whether the qualifications are co-dependent and mutually contingent, or integrated but independent (source: [QAA Characteristics Statement](#)).

Section 2: Principles underlying multiple awards

2.1 Sector led framework to develop and operate dual or joint awards

- 2.1.1 The partner institution must be legally empowered to award a dual or joint degree and in the case of international partners, compliant with the laws of that country.

Colleagues leading a proposal for a dual or joint award with a non-UK degree-awarding partner must fully consider at the early stages of the discussions, the legal and regulatory frameworks of the country in which they wish to operate with, and of the national or regional qualifications frameworks or requirements. This is to avoid scenarios where authorities in those jurisdictions enforce measures to restrict arrangements that contravene their regulations, leading to students being ineligible for a dual award.

- 2.1.2 The dual or joint award arrangements entered into by DMU should fit with the University's Strategic Framework and International Strategy.

- 2.1.3 The partner(s) must be at least of equal status and enhance the reputation of the University. The arrangement must be fully compliant with DMU's Governance arrangements.

- 2.1.4 Partnership arrangements should be based on shared academic interests and complementary expertise and be organised between specific academic units in both institutions.

- 2.1.5 Proposals must undergo the appropriate legal, financial and academic Due Diligence processes and each partner will need to satisfy their own Due Diligence requirements. These will need to be appropriate, proportionate and relevant in nature and intensity and must provide assurances that:

- The academic standing of the partner is satisfactory.
- Teaching staff are academically qualified to deliver those parts of the programme for which they are responsible.
Where relevant, for example in cases where the institution wants to develop in new areas and teaching staff are not yet in place, both institutions can discuss the possibility of developing a reasonable resource plan for recruiting suitable teaching staff once programmes are approved.
- Appropriate resources are in place. Where applicable, both partners can discuss a plan to acquire relevant resources where these are not yet in place. The Learning resources should also be communicated clearly to students.

See paragraph **2.2.1 References, templates, helpful guides** in this Guidance for more information. Where proposals involve an existing partner who is already delivering programmes under the **Academic Partnerships** model, Due Diligence will be appropriated to suit the particular requirements of a dual or joint award (e.g. 2.1.1 above).

- 2.1.6 The current [Process for approving new partnership proposals](#) for other partnership arrangements can be appropriated to suit the needs of a dual or joint award proposal but the DMU PVC Academic and PVC International should always be approached for advice and a recommendation to proceed to full due diligence and endorse timescales. It is also expected that the University will consider the following documents:

2.1.6.1. Site Visit report

2.1.6.2. Proposed Programme Market Analysis Form

2.1.6.3. Legal and Financial due diligence

2.1.6.4. Teaching staff CVs: Normal process dictates that all partner teaching staff must be endorsed/ approved by DMU before teaching on a DMU programme commences. For dual or joint awards a bespoke arrangement should be agreed with the Head of AQS but it is expected that DMU will have the opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of teaching staff at the partner institution and expect a similar request from the partner. Where teaching staff are not yet recruited, partners should agree on a staff matrix or resource plan as mitigation and ensure that this arrangements is clearly communicated to the Approval and Validation Panels(s).

2.1.6.5. Faculty Evaluation of Proposal (FEP)

2.1.6.6. New Programme Planning form

2.1.6.7. Core Approval Document (CAD)

2.1.6.8. Student handbook(s) – to be presented to the Approval Panel for consideration

2.1.6.9. Service Level Agreement (SLA) – to be presented to the Approval Panel for consideration

- 2.1.7 The arrangement made between the degree-awarding partners involved must protect those partners' academic standards. The award proposed should be benchmarked and referenced against the FHEQ, the HE credit framework, the University's credit framework and relevant subject benchmark statements.

- 2.1.8 The University will ensure that the total number of credits for an award meets the normal requirements for that type of award. Some dual awards may need to have more credits than the University normally requires in order to meet the partner's requirements.

*E.g., if the proposal is for an MA and the normal requirement for that degree at DMU is 180 credits and the partner's normal requirement for that type of degree is 120 credits then DMU would expect the award to be 180 credits. If the proposal is for a BA and the normal requirement for that degree at DMU is 360 credits and the partner's normal requirement for that type of degree is 480 credits then the partner may require the award to be 480 credits. This will need to be made clear to the Approval Panel (see paragraph 2.3 **The Approval event** in this Guidance) and communicated fully to applicants and students.*

It is likely that there will be different credit systems between DMU and international institutions. A mapping process to ensure equity will need to be identified in the early stages of the discussion, with input and approval from AQS.

As per the De Montfort University's Academic regulations ([Word](#) | [PDF](#)) when students studying DMU programmes have accumulated sufficient credits they become eligible to be given an award of the university. Sometimes a student is unable to achieve their intended award due to running out or reassessment opportunities or reaching the maximum period of registration for the programme. In such cases the university will make an exit award, if possible, based on the credits the student has achieved. This would not normally be dependent on whether the partner institution follows a similar awards system and should form part of the early discussions at the proposal stage – see paragraph 2.2 **Areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner.**

- 2.1.9 Any requirements related to Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) will need to be taken into account and reviewed regularly.
- 2.1.10 Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner should be clearly set out in the contract and the Service Level Agreement (SLA).
- 2.1.11 Arrangements should be put in place as early as possible in the development of the proposal to ensure that students are able to complete their programme of study and be granted the relevant awards in the event that one or other of the partners withdraws from the arrangement
- 2.1.12 The proposal should contain a statement indicating the type and level(s) of the awards that would be offered to registering students once they have completed the programme.
- 2.1.13 DMU will ensure that the threshold standards for their degree are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework.
- 2.1.14 Consideration should be given to the award(s) conferred in the event that a student has not successfully completed all elements of their programme (to safeguard the academic standards of the award made by DMU).
- 2.1.15 Certificates and records of achievement represent the main sources of verification of the award of credit or qualifications. In the interest of transparency therefore, records of study for dual awards should
 - a) be issued at the point when the student has fully completed their programme of study,
 - b) clarify whether the programme leads to a dual award and each partner's involvement in the delivery, and
 - c) include the location of delivery and language of instruction.

2.2 Areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner

Because of the natural complexities of developing dual awards it is expected that the discussions with a (potential) partner will take time. Where the event involves a new partnership proposal it is strongly advised that both partners allow at least 4-6 months before an Approval event takes place in order to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders have been involved in the discussions and that the details of the arrangements have been ratified by the appropriate authorities at both institutions before students commence their studies.

No two arrangements will be the same and each arrangement needs to be considered in the context of the requirements of both / all parties. Nevertheless, the following areas should form the agenda (in any order but all points should be covered. Additional areas may also require consideration) for discussions and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partner institutions:

- a) Administrative arrangements for each partner
- b) Start and end dates for the programme and Collaborative Reviews
- c) Governance (see paragraph **3.1 Governance** in this Guidance) including how communication between the partner institutions will work

- d) Public information: marketing, publicity, format of programme documentation, use of logos, registered images etc. and arrangements for checking and approving all information to students.

*The consumer rights legislation and Part C of the UK Quality Code referenced in the **Introduction**, that UK Universities are subject to in relation to the content and accuracy of information provided to applicants and students about their programme, including information about programme content and structure, is relevant here and colleagues are strongly advised to consider this in their discussions with partners.*

- e) Recruitment
- f) Financial matters and liability insurance arrangements
- g) Admissions process (es) and entry requirements
- h) Registration, enrolment, attendance and immigration matters
- i) Student records, including progression decision, module results and awards
- j) Marking, moderation and feedback
- k) Possibility of students being able to transfer between institutions
- l) External examining: an External Examiner will need to be appointed by DMU to the programme leading to the DMU award or a joint appointment by both partners can be agreed where an External Examiner is also required by the partner institution. In either case, the response to the External Examiner(s) report should be a joint effort by both partners. The External Examiner could potentially be an existing DMU appointment after discussion with, and agreement of the partner institution.
- m) Data management and protection matters (the General Data Protection Regulation)
- n) Programme management, including curriculum modifications and the role of the Consumer rights legislation and Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision, in the UK Quality Code (see “**Introduction**” in this Guidance)
- o) Student support, including personal tutor arrangements, induction events, careers, pastoral care and counselling, and access to DMU resources, for example library resources
- p) Student Voice matters
- q) Teaching arrangements
- r) Staff Recruitment and Development
- s) Link Tutor appointments: see DMU’s [Collaborative link tutor role profile](#) and [Collaborative link tutor handbook](#)
- t) Academic regulations matters and arrangement for the award. Possible scenarios include:
 - i. *If a lead Institution is identified, it may be agreed to adopt the regulations of that institution, with adaptations where necessary.*
 - ii. *Each partner institution applies their own regulations for their part of the award.*
 - iii. *Bespoke regulations are developed for the whole degree.*

In each of these scenarios, the decision and arrangements should be discussed as soon as possible and involve the faculty Associate Professors (Quality) at a minimum. In the case of a)

and c) the regulations must be agreed before the Approval event. In all cases, the arrangements must include input from the AQS Senior Officer Taught Programmes, approved by the Head of AQS and endorsed by the relevant DMU Committee.

- u) Award requirements
- v) Constitution and Terms of Reference of Assessment Boards (and pre-boards)
- w) Format and content of certificates and transcripts
- x) Graduation ceremony matters
- y) Student conduct matters, including academic offences, academic appeals, student conduct, student complaints and deferral of exams (ensuring that procedures are transparent). Any agreed procedures must be comparable to those applied at DMU and agreed with DMU's Student Appeals and Conduct Officer.
- z) Quality assurance and programme management processes

Other topics as they emerge during the discussion, for example local contextualisation of the programme.

2.2.1 References, templates, helpful guides

The [Service level agreement template](#) can be used and appropriated for these discussions as can other forms under "Approval" within the AQS [Guidance and Forms webpage](#), for example "[Teaching teams in partner institutions – guidance on DMU expectations](#)", the Faculty Evaluation of Proposal (FEP), "[International legal due diligence questionnaire](#)", the "[Core Approval Document \(CAD\)](#)" to name a few.

Also, the AQS Curriculum modification [guide](#), the Academic regulations – ([Word](#) | [PDF](#)), the [Curriculum structure and regulations – quick start guide](#), the DMU [Personal Tutor Scheme](#), DMU [Assessment and Feedback Policy](#), the [Guide to external examining at DMU](#) and the [General regulations and procedures affecting students](#) will also be helpful.

It is important that **AQS**, the **DMU Student Appeals and Conduct Officer** (within the Registry Services (RS) Directorate) and the **Associate Professors (Quality)** should be included in the discussions in an advisory capacity and to approve QA and student conduct processes.

Additionally, advice and endorsement should also be sought by others such as: DMU's [Academic Services](#) with in RS (admissions, enrolment, exams scheduling and management, certificates, graduations), DMU's [Legal Services](#), [Information Technology and Media Services \(ITMS\)](#) and the [Library and Learning Services](#).

2.3 The Approval event

No two arrangements are likely to be the same for dual or joint awards and each arrangement needs to be considered in the context of the requirements of both / all parties. However, a formal Approval event will take place and a formal report produced at the end of it for presentation at the respective degree-awarding partner's institution.

The partner and/ or programme approval event should take place as a joint event. The location will be agreed between partners but it should be face-to-face to afford fruitful discussions, tour of facilities and

accommodate the timescale of the event. Each location of delivery must have been visited in advance by relevant colleagues and the appropriate report completed for the consideration of the Approval Panel. The DMU [Programme site/campus of delivery visit resource checklist](#) is an appropriate report to complete.

Both partners must agree in writing, the documentation requirements that each partner requires upon which a decision will be made, the process to be followed for partner and programme approval and the final Approval Panel membership representing each partner (see paragraph **2.3.2 Approval Panel members** for DMU in this Guidance). It should be made clear that a joint process for programme approval must meet the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code, at a minimum.

The event should be a conversation between degree-awarding partners as equals. The documentation presented to the Approval Panel at each side of the discussion table will be agreed and determined beforehand at earlier discussions between leaders of the proposal (see paragraphs **2.1 Sector led framework to develop and operate dual or joint awards** and **2.2 Areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner** in this Guidance) with significant input and final agreement with the DMU Department of Academic Quality (AQS).

In all cases there should be a pre-event meeting at least two weeks in advance in order to fully prepare for the event. After the event there will be formal notification of the outcome (to include conditions, recommendations, RTCs), circulation of final report and a six month follow up meeting with selected members of the faculty and/ or partner institution.

This part of the process (pre and post event meetings) will mirror the normal partner approval process described in the [Guide to managing collaborative provision](#) (Section 1).

Following the event the Partner Institution Collaborative Agreement should be signed as soon as possible after approval is given and in all cases prior to teaching commencing. This will appear as a standard condition. The contract will be subject to a Collaborative Review event, normally after the first 3 years following the initial Approval event. Following the first Collaborative Review, further reviews will normally take place at 5-yearly intervals.

In the case of a new programme for existing partners a programme composition, which forms a Schedule of the Collaborative Agreement (the contract) will be added to the contract.

2.3.1 Documentation for the Approval event

As previously stated, no two arrangements will be the same and each arrangement needs to be considered in the context of the requirements of both / all parties. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the documentation will be based on the existing [Core Approval Document \(CAD\)](#) and the [Service level agreement template](#) and capture the conversation agenda described in paragraph **2.2 Areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner** in this Guidance. The exact table of contents and format of the document(s) to be submitted to the Approval Panel should be agreed with AQS - with input from the Associate Professors (Quality). The [Programme site/campus of delivery visit resource checklist](#) for the partner institution should also be included – especially if the Approval event takes place at DMU and not the partner institution.

In all cases a Student Handbook should be produced and the [Student handbook guide](#) can be used to aid the design.

Documentation for DMU should reach the Servicing Officer 4 calendar weeks before the date of the event.

2.3.2 Approval Panel members

It is anticipated that there will be an Approval Panel for the formal Approval event from both partners.

The DMU Approval Panel will comprise:

- **Chair** (member of Executive Board or senior academic outside of the proposing faculty)
- **Academic Quality Services (AQS) Representative** (consult with the Partnerships Manager (Quality) or Head of AQS in the first instance)
- **Servicing Officer** from the faculty, EP or GPU
- **Academic representative from outside the owning faculty** (Internal Panel Member – IPM)
- **Academic representative** with appropriate subject expertise, nominated by the owning faculty
- **External Panel Member (EPM)***
- **Student** or De Montfort Student Union (DSU) representative
- **Library and Learning Services representative** - to provide comments on the “Library and Learning Services requirements for new programme(s)” form and attend the pre-event meeting. It may not be necessary to attend the event.

* The External Panel Member (EPM) should have expertise in the subject area of the programme(s) proposed. However, as the role of the EPM will include consideration of the collaborative arrangements as a whole he/she should also have knowledge and experience of collaborative activities. External Panel Members are subject to an approval process, as described in the [External panel member nomination form](#) for collaborative provision.

Section 3: Governance

3.1 Governance Joint Academic Committee (JAC)/ Joint Management Board (JMB)/ Joint academic Board (JAB)

Sector-led good practice promotes the establishment of a Joint Academic Committee (JAC)/ Joint Management Board (JMB)/ Joint Academic Board (JAB) in order to monitor and review the dual or joint award arrangement at timely intervals. This body should have a reporting channel to the corresponding Faculty Academic Committee (FAC) at DMU and/ or equivalent at the partner institution and also to the DMU University Collaborative Provision Committee (UCPC) and/ or equivalent at the partner institution.

The Constitution and Terms of Reference should be discussed and agreed as soon as possible in the proposal discussions. The equivalent role of the DMU faculty Development and Review Committee (DARC) DMU's Programme Management Boards (PMBs) and/ or Faculty Academic Committees (FACs) should also form part of these discussions as this Joint Committee or Board may acquire devolved responsibility for operational aspects such as curriculum modifications, approval of new teaching staff CVs and programme compositions for example, as well as:

- Development, planning, design and implementation of the academic subject.
- Learning, teaching and assessment strategies.
- Quality assurance/assessment processes.
- Management and reporting on relationship with external examiners and students. The conclusions of this part of the proposal discussions should be endorsed by AQS prior to being presented to the Approval Panel for consideration.

3.2 Academic and partnership oversight

Sector-led practice promotes the appointment of dedicated members of staff to manage the relationship. At DMU this would normally be the Link Tutor from the faculty (ies) and an Account Manager from professional services staff in order to ensure collective oversight of the provision. Alternative formats could be considered by both parties at the early stages of the proposal to highlight the obligations from both institutions. For example, a Programme Manager from both partners could be appointed to have academic oversight of the provision to complement an Account/ Partnership Manager from both institutions to manage the relationship.

They would report to the partnership's JAC/ JMB/ JAB (see 3.1.1) but also to the DMU University Collaborative Provision Committee (UCPC) and equivalent Committee at the partner institution. The details of the frequency and the format of this reporting should be part of the discussions as described in paragraph **2.2 Areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner** in this Guidance and can be modelled on existing practices for Programme Management Boards (PMBs) at DMU. It is expected that both roles will comply with DMU QA processes for the provision leading to a DMU degree, including programme management, relationship management and governance, QA monitoring and support, accuracy of public information.

The Programme Manager role for a specific award can be based or modelled on the Link Tutor role for other DMU faculty owned partnership arrangements as described in the existing [Collaborative link tutor handbook](#) or appropriated to match the dual award's specific requirements. The final, agreed design of the role should be confirmed in the [Core Approval Document \(CAD\)](#) in time for the Approval event.

Section 4: Supporting the development: References and colleagues

Existing DMU Guidance and resources should be used when developing a proposal for a dual or joint award and relevant stakeholders must be included in the discussions as early on as possible. As stated in Section 2 in this Guidance, because of the natural complexities of developing multiple awards it is expected that the discussions with a (potential) partner will take time. Where the event involves a new partnership proposal it is strongly advised that both partners allow at least 4-6 months before an Approval event takes place, in order to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders have been involved in the discussions and that the details of the arrangements have been ratified by the appropriate authorities at both institutions before students commence their studies.

4.1 References

All DMU AQS guidance and forms can be found on the AQS [Guidance and Forms webpage](#):

<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/quality-management-and-policy/daq/supportcontacts-resources/guidance-forms-homepage.aspx>

Introduction
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others
“The QAA Characteristics Statement”: Characteristics Statement UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner (October 2015)
DMU’s Guide to managing collaborative provision
Consumer Rights Legislation: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-lawadvice-for-providers-and-students
DMU’s Universal Design for Learning (UDL): http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmu-students/udl/universal-design-forlearning.aspx
DMU’s Academic Quality Policy
Types, examples and basis for arrangements of dual awards, including responsibility for academic standards
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others
“The QAA Characteristics Statement”: Characteristics Statement UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding partner (October 2015)
DMU’s Academic Quality Policy

DMU's academic standards definition
Principles underlying dual awards, including areas for discussion and agreement with prospective degree-awarding partners: Roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner and Quality Assurance
AQS Guidance and Forms webpage
DMU Guide to managing collaborative provision
The Faculty Evaluation of Proposal (FEP) to be used as template for internal faculty discussions
DMU Service level agreement template to be appropriated
DMU Teaching teams in partner institutions – guidance on DMU expectations
International legal due diligence questionnaire
Programme site/campus of delivery visit resource checklist
Guide to validation new programme planning form
Core Approval Document (CAD)
Student handbook guide
AQS Curriculum structure and regulations – quick start guide and Curriculum modification guide
DMU Academic regulations – (Word PDF)
DMU Assessment and Feedback Policy
Guide to external examining at DMU
DMU General regulations and procedures affecting students
DMU Personal Tutor Scheme
DMU's Collaborative link tutor role profile and Collaborative link tutor handbook
The AQS Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) calendar for collaborative provision

4.2 Colleagues

Proposals will be developed by faculties and endorsed by University Executive Board. It is anticipated that faculty academic leads, faculty Deans, the faculty Associate Deans (International)

and Associated Deans (Academic) will be involved in the discussions at a minimum, as well as other senior faculty administrative staff and relevant professional services (e.g. within SIPs).

As previously stated in this Guidance, no two arrangements are likely to be the same for dual or joint awards and each arrangement needs to be considered in the context of the requirements of both / all parties. Multiple awards are by nature atypical and the following stakeholders should also be included in relevant and appropriate discussions as early as possible:

- AQS: advice should be sought at the earliest possible opportunity from Academic Quality Services (AQS), to ensure that the proposal is in line with national and University expectations. This includes considerations regarding the academic regulations.
- The faculty Associate Professors (Quality)
- The [Academic Support Office](#) (within Registry Services (RS) Directorate) and in particular the DMU Student Appeals and Conduct Officer
- [Library and Learning Services](#)
- [Academic Services](#) (within Registry Services (RS) Directorate), to advise on admissions, enrolment, exams scheduling and management, certificates, graduations and overall management of the student and curriculum record.
- [Legal Services](#)
- [Information Technology and Media Services \(ITMS\)](#) (to advise on the VLE but also on matters pertaining to the General Data Protection Regulation)

Appendix A:

Two possible approaches to aspects of quality assurance of qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body, referenced to the relevant Expectation in the Quality Code, Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards.

This table is taken from the [“The QAA Characteristics Statement”](#).

‘The two columns are intended to illustrate distinctly contrasting approaches at opposite ends of the spectrum, and between them lies a range of possibilities that may be employed in any specific circumstance. The appropriateness of any particular approach depends in particular on whether the qualifications are co-dependent and mutually contingent, or integrated but independent’

as explained in paragraphs 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 in this guidance.

	Co-dependent and mutually contingent qualifications	Integrated but independent qualifications
Academic oversight (Expectation A2.1)	<p>The qualification is jointly overseen. This is typically achieved by a joint board or consortium, which is established to be accountable to the highest academic authority in the respective degree-awarding bodies. The respective highest academic authority may delegate decision-making to the joint body on a range of matters, including approval of and changes to the programme, assessment strategies, appointment of examiners (including external examiners) and changes to regulations.</p> <p>The governance arrangements are approved by the degreeawarding bodies, as are a range of policies and procedures specific to the award of the qualification (or an agreement is made to adopt the policies and procedures of one of the partners).</p>	<p>Each degree-awarding body oversees its own qualification, using its own policies and procedures.</p> <p>There may be a consortium or joint programme management board to enable joint decisionmaking about, and management of, the programme on a range of matters. However, this would make recommendations through the normal academic decisionmaking structures of each of the respective awarding bodies, rather than having delegated authority to make decisions on their behalf.</p>

	Day-to-day programme management is usually undertaken jointly, with all	
	participating partners represented on a programme team.	

<p>Academic regulations (Expectation A2.1)</p>	<p>The participating degree-awarding bodies jointly determine which academic regulations govern the award of the qualification(s). Bespoke regulations may be agreed and approved by all the partners, ensuring that the academic standards of each of the degree-awarding bodies involved are satisfied. In some cases, these may be exceeded to take account of a particular partner's requirements but under no circumstances are they compromised.</p>	<p>As individual and separate qualifications are awarded, the academic regulations of each of the degree-awarding bodies apply to the sections of the programme they deliver. The academic standards of each of the degree-awarding bodies involved have to be satisfied. In some cases, these may be exceeded to take account of a particular partner's requirements but in no circumstances are they compromised.</p>
<p>Programme approval (Expectation A3.1)</p>	<p>The programme is jointly approved, through an approval process involving representation from all the degree-awarding bodies involved. Detailed approval of modules or components is also undertaken jointly.</p>	<p>The programme is approved through each degree-awarding body's usual channels for programme approval. UK degree-awarding bodies may accept the detailed approval processes undertaken at module level by their partners for the modules or components that those partners are delivering. UK degree-awarding bodies retain responsibility for making an assessment as to whether the proposed programme as an entity (and its assessment strategy) delivers and tests programme outcomes at the appropriate level for the award, and maintains its own academic standards as a degree-awarding body.</p>

Assessment (Expectation A3.2)	<p>Each participating degree-awarding body is normally responsible for the assessment of the components of the programme that it delivers. A holistic view of the assessment strategy is taken by the joint authority that oversees the programme. In particular, a decision is made about whether a single marking scheme will be adopted or whether components of assessed work will be marked in accordance with the local regimes and then rescaled to a single scheme.</p> <p>All partners agree a common set of assessment regulations.</p>	<p>Each degree-awarding body is normally responsible for the assessment of the components of the programme that it delivers. Each degree-awarding body is responsible for the overall assessment strategy leading to its qualification. The programme is subject to that degree-awarding body's assessment regulations for the respective qualifications. Marks are then imported from the other partner (as appropriate) by each degree-awarding body for the qualification it awards. A decision is made about whether a single marking scheme is to be adopted by all participants in the jointly delivered programme or whether components of assessment will be marked in accordance with the local regimes and then rescaled to the scheme of each individual degree-awarding body.</p>
Examination board (Expectation A3.2)	<p>A joint, usually bespoke, examination board (or equivalent) is established to oversee progression through the programme and the award of a qualification.</p>	<p>Assessment decisions are taken by an examination board, which conforms to the requirements of the degree-awarding body involved. A joint board, additional and subsidiary to those already existing in each degree-awarding body, may be established to oversee the confirmation of marks for individual components and determine progression through the jointly conceived programme. The joint board reports to the relevant</p>

		structures in the individual degree-awarding bodies.
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External examining (Expectation A3.4)	UK degree-awarding bodies consider what external examining arrangements are appropriate to satisfy the requirements of all the partners involved. Joint or dual appointments may be feasible.	The UK degree-awarding body's usual external examining arrangements apply to modules that the degree-awarding body delivers and also with respect to the award of the qualification.
Monitoring and review (Expectation A3. 3)	A collective decision is made about the monitoring and review procedures to be adopted, which satisfies the principles of each of the degree-awarding bodies involved.	The usual monitoring and review procedures of each of the partners apply to the component of the programme that they respectively deliver, and the outputs are shared with the other partners. Reports are submitted through each degreeawarding body's own quality assurance framework. A process for periodic review is decided collectively and the outcome reported through each degreeawarding body's own quality assurance framework.

<p>Certification and transcripts (Expectation A2.2)</p>	<p>On successful completion of the programme, a student receives either of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> a single certificate or equivalent document, which lists the title of the qualification as recognised in all of the legal frameworks in which the participating degree-awarding bodies are based, to aid qualification recognition <input type="checkbox"/> a certificate from each of the degree-awarding bodies involved - the certificate and/or transcript or record of achievement, or Diploma Supplement, of at least the UK degree-awarding body or bodies refer to the existence of the other(s) and makes clear that they refer to the completion of a single, jointly conceived, programme of study and assessed learning leads to more than one separate qualification.</p>	<p>Students who successfully achieve each set of criteria (learning outcomes or other requirements) receive separate institutional or national certificates, one for each of the separate qualifications being granted by each of the degreeawarding bodies involved.</p>
	<p>Where legally permissible, the same reference is included on the documents issued by the other degree-awarding body or bodies.</p> <p>Where a single certificate is awarded, each degree-awarding body has in place systems and processes that enable it to jointly produce award certificates without risking their control of their crests, logos, watermarks, holographs and authorising signatures.</p>	

Appendix B:

Overview of QAA Characteristics Statement Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body

Joint Degrees	Multiple (or Double) Degrees	Dual Degrees (Co-dependant, mutually contingent)	Dual Degrees (Integrated but independent) Student does not need to satisfy requirements of all partners to receive an award.
All partners involved broadly in equal proportions in programme design, development, delivery, assessment, management and decision making		Design and development, aspects of its management and oversight and decision-making on student achievement undertaken <u>jointly</u> by both degree awarding bodies;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Design joint curriculum (can be at different levels) where overall study period and volume of learning is longer than for either of each degree-awarding bodies individual award but typically shorter than offered consecutively as deemed overlapping curricula. Although single package of learning each institution is responsible for its own award ii. Two programmes of study lock together with overlapping curricula. Can be constructed from existing programmes but conceived as single package. iii. Student may gain one award but not that of non-UK awarding body due to any additional requirements not fulfilled (Typically small proportion of non-academic volume of learning)
May spend time studying at each of the partners		Delivery can involve one partner more than the other and student mobility not a pre-requisite;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Consecutive separate teaching blocks at each partner in turn with substantial proportion of programme delivered at the level of the qualification awarded; ii. Completed consecutively without need for initial joint element.

Single certificate	Two certificates and transcripts/ records of achievement reference from each awarding body. Each must make reference to the existence of the other and explicitly state single, jointly conceived programme	Certification can be either model for joint/ multiple (double) awards	<p>Two certificates and transcripts/ records of achievement reference from each awarding body. Each must make reference to the existence of the other and explicitly state single, jointly conceived programme</p> <p>If students only meet requirements of one degree-awarding body, only receive a single award and may not receive second award (particularly if two awards are at different levels or additional local requirements not fulfilled)</p>
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