## Development and Approval of Progression Accords

### Notes of Guidance

1. **Introduction**

Under a progression accord the University of Leicester (UoL) establishes a relationship with another Education Institution whereby upon completion of certain academic requirements, students studying at the partner institution will be recognised as having achieved the appropriate level for entry to UoL. Students on progression accords enter at the start of the UoL programme. To see examples of partnerships of this model please look at the [Collaborative Register](https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/documents/register-of-collaborative-partnerships) which can be found on the Quality Office webpages. For arrangements where students enter into a later stage of a programme (i.e. year 2 of UG) please see guidance on articulation agreements. UoL has approximately 27 such agreements currently in place.

The full definition of a Progression Accord is in the University’s Code of Practice on Managing Higher Education Provision with Others is as follows:

| **Progression Accord** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Definition** | **Details** | **Risk level** |
| An arrangement whereby the University recognises all or part of another institution’s programme as an appropriate entry qualification. | Subject to successful completion of the partner’s programme, students may apply to the designated University programme. Students will still undergo standard admissions processes.  Typically set up for international programmes for recruitment purposes. The University must assure itself that the programme meets its expectations in terms of the standard of entry for its degree programmes. | Low |

Progression accords are a means of recognising a partner’s programme as an appropriate level for entry onto specified UoL programmes. This type of partnership is an effective means to engage with an institution and to develop a smooth transition for students into higher education at UoL. Progression accords can also exist at taught postgraduate level, whereby completion of an undergraduate programme at a partner institution allows students to achieve entry to a UoL master’s programme.

Progression accords are low risk as the credits students undertake at partner institutions do not contribute towards the classification of the UoL award. Students who join the University through progression accords are UoL students from the point at which they register at the University and are subject to all UoL rules and regulations.

1. **Principles**

The national framework for the approval and management of collaborative links is provided by [Chapter B10 of the Quality Assurance Agency’s Quality Code](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Pages/Quality-Code-Chapter-B10.aspx#.VsQ7v6NFCUk). The University’s framework for the development and approval of progression accords is set out in two Codes of Practice (COPs), namely the [COP on Managing Higher Education Provision with Others](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/documents/managing-he-provision-with-others) and the [COP on Programme Development, Approval and Modification](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/documents/programmeapproval.pdf). The marketing and other publication of such arrangements are governed by [Consumer Rights Legislation](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/courses/curriculum-change-process-for-2016-17/documents/CMA_InitialGuidanceforDepartments_201510.docx).

On the basis of the above documentation the following key principles should inform the development of any progression accord.

* A progression accord should only be sought where both the partner and the proposed model of collaboration are aligned with wider University and College strategic priorities.
* UoL is responsible for ensuring that anyone who enters the University through a progression accord has met the entry requirements, and that such students will not be at any disadvantage when compared to other students on the programme.
* Under the Code of Practice on Programme Development and Approval no University programme, including progression accords, can be publicised or marketed until the full approval process is complete. This policy is informed by the University’s obligations under Consumer Rights legislation and extends to anyone who markets on behalf of the University. It must be clear from the outset of any development that no marketing may take place relating to the progression accord by either party until full approval has been given.

1. **Permitted Models of Progression Accord**

The UoL programme is a discreet period of study, governed entirely by UoL regulations and leading to a UoL award only.

Progression accord agreements in the above model are not a means of guaranteeing entry onto a UoL programme, they are recognition that the programme at the partner is of a suitable level to satisfy the entry requirements for specified UoL programmes. Students coming to UoL from institutions with progression accords will still be required to apply and go through the standard UoL admissions procedures for all students.

Post graduate progression accords are sometimes referred to as Dual Masters. This refers to students who complete a master’s degree at another institution and then come to UoL to complete another master’s degree at the same level. Despite both masters’ degrees being the same level, this comes under QAA categorisation as a progression accord model of collaboration, as the dual masters does not fit with the QAA definition of dual.

Inaccurate description of the nature of the relationship and the resulting outcomes could potentially leave the University vulnerable to challenge under Consumer Rights Legislation.

1. **Identification of appropriate partners for progression accords**

The following factors should all be taken into account when evaluating potential partners:

* Alignment with the University Strategy and International Strategy
* The overall academic standing and reputation of the partner
* Whether the partner is one with which the University can legally contract
* The partner’s financial stability and its ability to provide appropriately qualified and experienced staff and other resources to ensure students are ready to commence study at UoL
* The robustness of the partner’s quality assurance and enhancement processes
* Whether the partner has experience of delivering programmes at the relevant level or can demonstrate potential to do so
* Whether the partner is able to demonstrate a knowledge, understanding and commitment to the requirement of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education
* Whether the partner has an appropriate infrastructure to support students

In addition where proposed partners are located overseas:

* That the prospective partner has an understanding of current practices in UK HE
* That the prospective partner can address differences in expectations and cultures between higher education systems to ensure that the requirements of the arrangement can be fulfilled
* That students will either be taught in English or will have the opportunity to meet the University’s English Language Entry requirements ahead of progression to UoL.

The College International Directors are able to provide detailed contextual advice regarding where individual proposals may or may not align with College or institutional strategic priorities.

The Future Students Office is able to provide expert advice on the University’s International Strategy, the University’s existing network of partnerships, the educational context of target countries and the profile of potential partner institutions.

The Quality Office manages the approval process for new collaborative arrangements, and advises on the process, timescale and documentation required for approval of a new partnership.

1. **Approval Process Summary**

There is a three stage process for the approval of any collaborative arrangement. The specific steps and approving bodies for new Progression Accords are set out below.

As noted above, no new progression opportunity can be advertised to students either by the University or by any partner on behalf of the University, until the approval process is completed in full. Sufficient time should therefore be allowed in the development process to complete approval and market the programme to prospective students.

**5.1 Approval Routes for Progression Accords:**

| **Approval Stage** | **Documentation Required** | **Normal timescale** | **Minimum timescale** | **Approving Body** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Risk Assessment\* | Complete Risk Assessment Template | 18 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | 12 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | Collaborative Partnerships Management Group |
| 1. Business Case\* | Business case form | 15 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | 9 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | College Business Group |
| 1. Academic Case | Documentation submitted in stages 1 and 2  Summary of Proposal  Curriculum and achievement mapping documentation  Relevant UoL programme entry requirements  Relevant partner syllabus documents  Draft Progression Accord contract | 12 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | 6 months before first intake to UoL from partner programme | Department Learning and Teaching Committee  Collaborative Partnerships Management Group |

\* Where required, steps 1 and 2 can be undertaken in parallel, however both must be completed before consideration of the academic case (step 3).

All forms required for approval can be found on the [Quality Office webpages](https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/managing-he/approval-of-collab-and-partner-agreements). Please note there is a separate business and academic case form for articulation and progression agreements.

1. **Guidance on the Approval Process**

**6.1 Step 1: Risk Assessment**

The first formal step of approval is the completion of a [risk assessment](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/documents/hewo-app-3). This is considered by the [Collaborative Partnerships Management Group](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/quality/codes/documents/hewo-app-13) (CPMG). The purpose of the document is to evaluate the appropriateness of the potential partner and the level of risk associated with the partnership. It is not intended to consider the detailed academic elements of the proposal. The document generates a risk score and identifies any mitigating factors which may be in place to manage the risk level. CPMG may either approve the proposal or refer it for further development.

A standard template will be completed by the Quality Office in conjunction with the Future Students Office where appropriate. Input from the proposing team will be sought in relation to specific aspects of the proposal. A visit to the partner is not a formal requirement at this stage, however is considered preferable. CPMG may require that a visit take place before final approval is granted for the proposal to move to the next stage of the process.

**6.2 Step 2: Business Case**

The authority for approving the business case for a new progression accord rests with the College in which the relevant UoL academic department is based. Where a progression accord spans more than one College, all of the Colleges involved must approve the business case.

The business case should address all of the following factors:

* Realistic projection of student numbers with sufficient supporting evidence
* Any fees payable to the partner
* Any fee discounts or other financial incentives for students to proceed through the link
* Costs associated with maintaining the relationship, such as visits to the partner or associated marketing costs

**6.3 Academic Case**

The academic case for a progression accord is considered by CPMG. The Group will consider the full documentation relating to the proposal. Consideration of the academic case will focus on assessing whether the partner’s programme is of an appropriate standard as an entry qualification onto one or more of the University’s programmes.

The following documentation is required for submission to the Collaborative Partnerships Management Group:

**6.3.1 Approval Form**

This form should be completed for all progression accord agreements. Section A is completed first to be submitted to the College Business Group for approval. Following that, Section B is completed to submit to Collaborative Partnerships Management Group for approval.

**6.3.2 UOL Programme documentation**

Programme specifications for all of the UoL programmes onto which a student can enter will be provided by the Quality Office.

**6.3.3** **Partner Programme documentation**

Summary of the partner programme syllabus.

**6.3.4 Mapping documentation**

Confirmation of mapping work undertaken and comments from the Learning and Teaching Director and Admissions tutor regarding appropriateness/equivalence of syllabus and confirming that students would be adequately equipped to begin their programme at UoL.

A sample mapping document has been provided as Appendix C.

**6.3.5 Draft Progression Accord Contract**

Both national and institutional policy requires that there is a legally binding contract in place between the two partners before any student can progress through the link. The Collaborative Partnerships Management Group requires evidence of this through the provision of a draft Progression Accord Contract. The Quality Office and the Future Students Office have developed a series of template contract documents which can be amended for individual proposals.

**6.3.6 Departmental Approval Form**

Following consideration at the Learning and Teaching Committee approval will need to be provided to form part of the academic case. This form requests consideration of the partner’s curriculum and the proposed progression criteria for entry to UoL. This form also gives departments the opportunity to set additional progression criteria.

1. **Contacts**

| **Contact** |  | **For:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Future Students Office | [Internationaloffice@le.ac.uk](mailto:Internationaloffice@le.ac.uk) | Advice on:  Existing University links  Status of proposed partners  Country or region specific context |
| College International Directors | Professor Mike Barer:  [mrb19@le.ac.uk](mailto:mrb19@le.ac.uk) | Advice on:  College specific international strategy alignment  Opportunity for collaboration within the College |
| Mr Ian Jarvis:  [imj1@le.ac.uk](mailto:imj1@le.ac.uk) |
| Professor Martin Halliwell: [mrh17@le.ac.uk](mailto:mrh17@le.ac.uk) |
| Quality Office | Andrew Petersen  [ap262@le.ac.uk](mailto:ap262@le.ac.uk) | Advice on:  Approval processes  Timescales for development  Documentation required |
| Lisa Griffiths  lg237@le.ac.uk |

Quality Office

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**STRUCTURE OF PARTNER PROGRAMME:**

*<Please complete/delete as appropriate>*

The partner programme must be completed in full and to the agreed specifications before a student can be considered for acceptance onto a UoL programme.

Detail on:

Number of credits studied per semester

Timing of modules

Entry requirements for specified UoL programmes

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

UoL requires students to have achieved an overall average of at least <percentage> during their <undergraduate/postgraduate> programme at <partner> in order to qualify for progression onto the specified <undergraduate/postgraduate> UoL programme.

Students are also required to meet the UoL English language requirements (currently <number> in IELTS or equivalent).

Detail on:

Specific level of achievement required in terms of overall average and specific module marks in order to meet entry requirements

English Language Requirements for entry (these will be the same as the standard requirements set out in Senate Regulation 1)

How students will reach these requirements if the partner’s programme is not taught in English

A full curriculum mapping demonstrating the coverage of UoL entry requirements by <partner> modules is overleaf.

**Conditions of entry to the UoL programme:**

**UoL Programme Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

| **Qualification Type** | **Grade** | **Additional Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A/AS-levels: |  |  |
| EPQ with A-levels |  |  |
| International Baccalaureate |  |  |
| Access to HE Diploma |  |  |
| BTEC Nationals |  |  |
| GCSE |  |  |

**Development of Progression Accord with <partner name>**

*<Please complete/delete as appropriate>*

**Departmental Approval Form**

The University is seeking to develop a progression accord agreement with <partner>. Under the arrangement students from the partner would, upon completion of the <programme name> be able to proceed into the <number> year of <undergraduate/postgraduate> degree programmes at UoL.

The Director of Learning and Teaching for the School/Department is requested to consider the supporting documentation provided regarding the partner’s curriculum and the proposed progression criteria for entry to UoL, and confirm whether these are appropriate for entry onto <undergraduate/postgraduate> programmes in that department.

Completed forms will become part of the academic case for the progression accord to be submitted to the College Academic Committee for consideration and final approval.

**Please confirm:**

**Name:**  Click here to enter text.

**Role (e.g. Director of Learning and Teaching):** Click here to enter text.

**School/Department:**  Click here to enter text.

**Please consider the following:**

1. **Is the curriculum at the partner institution appropriate to ensure that students would have covered the necessary material at an appropriate level to be able to undertake the <number> year of <undergraduate/postgraduate> programmes within your department?**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Are there any modules from the partner’s curriculum that you would wish to set as pre-requisite to allow students to progress to programmes within your department?**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Would your department wish to set any additional progression requirements, such as particular marks in particular modules or a higher average mark that proposed, in order to allow entry onto programmes? If so, please provide details and a rationale.**

Click here to enter text.

1. **Are there any other factors that you would like to draw to the attention of the College Academic Committee to inform the approval process? For example, whether entry would be limited to particular programmes. If so, please provide details and a rationale.**

Click here to enter text.

