

## Jointly Delivered Taught Programmes

### Introduction

The following guidance is provided to assist academic staff who wish to develop programmes which are jointly developed and/or delivered with an external partner. The policy draws on the [QAA Qualifications Involving More Than One Degree-Awarding Body Characteristics Statement](#)

In all cases, QMUL and another degree awarding body share their resources to jointly provide a programme of study. The programme can lead to the following types of award: Joint, Double or Dual Degrees.

Such arrangements will involve a significant collaboration effort with an external partner in developing and delivering a degree programme to the extent that it would not exist in the absence of that partnership. Each partner will bring its own unique perspectives and expertise to the programme which will lead to an enhanced learning experience overall. These programmes have significant benefits for students not least in terms of giving students an international experience that might not otherwise be available to them.

It is therefore important to ensure that the curriculum is well-designed, which means that its components should be properly integrated, and will not be based on taking parts of one institution's existing programme and bolting them onto another's. This requires aligning different regulations and requirements and negotiating the detailed arrangements with the partner. It is important that the programme offered is also viable hence the importance of gauging potential student interest before entering into detailed discussions.

The key difference between the three types of award is that a Joint Degree leads to one single award by both institutions, and Double or Dual Degrees would lead to separate awards, by each institution. Double Degrees are most often used where there are legal or regulatory reasons why a single award is not possible for one or both institutions.

Joint and double awards are dependent on the student successfully completing all parts of the programme, whereas dual degrees can lead to a student receiving an award from one but not all institutions if not all parts of the programme are completed successfully.

QMUL currently permits taught joint award arrangements with UK institutions and with EU institutions within the Erasmus+ framework only.

### 1. Joint Award

#### 1.1 Definition

A partnership arrangement whereby QMUL and one or more partner institutions together provide a programme that leads to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants.

**Current examples:** MA History of Political Thought and Intellectual History (joint award with UCL).

#### 1.2 Key points:

- Each partner must have the legal ability to award a joint degree.
- There is usually shared ownership of the curriculum and related IPR (Intellectual Property Rights).

- Students register with both/all institutions but one normally provides the lead for administrative purposes or students are free to select their designated home institution.
- Students have the right of access to learning resources at both/all institutions.
- The degree programme is subject to both/all institutions' quality assurance processes, although there may be a pooling/sharing of processes.
- Joint programme regulations are normally required.
- There is a joint committee, responsible for overseeing and reviewing arrangements and which reports into the relevant structure at both/all institutions.
- There is a joint examination board/process which reports into the relevant structure at both/all institutions.
- Arrangements (including the student lifecycle) should be fully specified in the MOA.

### **1.3 Criteria for establishing joint awards**

The following criteria will be considered when considering the strategic and business case for establishing joint awards:

- i. Proposals for joint awards will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The proposal must demonstrate clear benefits for both QMUL and for the students on the programme of study. The strategic case should explain the ways in which the programme of study will be enhanced through the collaboration, and what synergies will be realised through this model of delivery. The benefits of the proposal should be proportionate to the overheads associated with establishing and supporting the programmes.
- ii. The partner(s) should be of international standing at least equivalent to that of QMUL and the partnership should support QMUL's Strategy. Evaluation of the partnership will be part of the due diligence process and will take into account: peer review, national and international measures. The proposal will need to make clear the rationale for the joint model of delivery.
- iii. Partnership arrangements should be based on shared academic interests and complementary expertise. In the case of international collaborations, the programme should exploit academically the opportunity for students to enrich their learning experience across different cultures.
- iv. QMUL retains full responsibility for any award issued in its name and will maintain an overview of the academic standards for each element of the programme.
- v. The strategic case will need to set out the contribution made by each partner to the delivery and assessment of the programme. The extent of the contribution will be determined on a case by case basis.

### **1.4 Overview of the procedure**

Joint awards are subject to QMUL's approval process for collaborative provision, as follows:

1. Initial stage (provisional agreement to explore the partnership): this is made on the basis of a brief outline of the proposal to be sent to ARCS who will advise on issues that may need to be considered. Key points to consider at this stage:
  - Is the partner legally empowered to award a joint degree;

- Details of the partner and a statement to cover compatibility with QMUL, status and ranking;
  - What are the benefits of the programme, both to QMUL and prospective students;
  - Relationship to QMUL Strategy/Faculty plans;
  - Who will be the lead institution;
  - Proposed start time for the programme;
  - Contribution of the partners to the programme: for a joint award, the normal expectation is that there will be an equal academic contribution from each partner.
2. The proposal needs to be signed off by the Head of School/Institute and endorsed in principle by the Faculty Executive.
  3. **Strategic approval** of the partnership and of the proposal outline by **Partnerships Board (PB)**/Queen Mary Senior Executive (QMSE) (depending on the complexity of the proposal). This is done on the on the basis of a **Partnership Programme Proposal** form and a Due Diligence Process and risk assessment.
  4. Following PB strategic approval, the academic leads prepare a more detailed proposal and a business case and completes a **Part 1 Programme Proposal**. This will be discussed and approved by the relevant Teaching the Learning Committee. Part 1 documentation will then be submitted to ARCS and will follow the standard approval process. ARCS will indicate whether the programme can be advertised.
  5. Detailed academic approval by **Taught Programmes Board (TPB)** on the basis of a **Part 2 Programme Proposal** Form. It is expected that TPB papers would be accompanied by a draft MOA. Following TPB academic approval, the detailed Agreements or Contracts can be finalised and signed.

## 2. Double Award

### 2.1 Definition

QMUL and a partner institution collaborate to develop and deliver a single programme leading to separate awards from each institution. Arrangements involving more than two partners would lead to multiple awards in the same way. The awards are interdependent and it is not usually possible for a student to obtain an award from only one partner.

### 2.2 Key Points

- Double degrees differ from joint degrees mainly in that each institution issues its own award.
- Each partner delivers and assesses substantial elements of the programme;
- Students are registered at both institutions throughout their studies;
- Bespoke programme regulations are often required and are agreed by all partners;
- Each partner is responsible for the assessment of the components that it delivers;
- A decision is made about whether a single marking scheme is to be adopted by all partners or whether components will be marked in accordance with the local regulations and then rescaled to the scheme of each individual partner;

- Separate degree certificates are normally issued from each institution;
- The double award is normally dependent on the student completing each part of the programme successfully;
- The quality assurance processes to be followed are articulated in the Memorandum of Agreement;
- QMUL will consider any implications of double counting of academic credit towards a double award on a case-by-case basis.
- Where QMUL recognises modules from the partner's provision as contributing to its award, the maximum amount of credit that QMUL would recognise will normally be set at the limit for advanced standing for the respective award: LLM: 45 credits, MSc/MA/MRes/PGDip: 30 credits, PGCert: 15 credits, MSci/MEng: 240 credits.

### **2.3 Criteria for establishing double awards**

- i. The partner(s) must be of academic standing at least equivalent to QMUL and the partnership should deliver clear benefits to both QMUL and the students on the programme. Evaluation of the partner's/partners' standing will be part of the due diligence process and will take into account: peer review, national and international measures.
- ii. There must be a demonstrable need and rationale for the granting of multiple awards in order to facilitate the recognition of student achievement across different national jurisdictions.
- iii. Proposals for double awards must demonstrate the added value and strategic benefits of the partnership. These benefits must be proportionate to the overheads associated with establishing and supporting the programmes.
- iv. Students must be registered at both QMUL and the partner institution(s).
- v. All promotional materials, programme documents, and certificates and/or transcripts that are issued by QMUL and partner institution(s) must clarify in an agreed form of words that the programme leads to double or multiple awards.
- vi. QMUL's oversight of academic quality and standards on the programme must be in accordance with its normal regulations and policies. These will be stated in the detailed Memorandum of Agreement.

#### Academic regulations

QMUL academic regulations apply to the programme unless QMUL and the partner agree to adopt a special set of regulations for the programme.

### **2.4 Overview of the procedure**

Follows the same stages as for the taught joint programmes:

1. **Initial stage** (provisional agreement to explore the partnership): this is made on the basis of a brief outline of the proposal to be sent to ARCS who will advise on issues that may need to be considered. Key points to consider at this stage:
  - Is the partner legally empowered to award a joint degree;
  - Details of the partner and a statement to cover compatibility with QMUL, status and ranking;
  - What are the benefits of the programme, both to QMUL and prospective students;
  - Relationship to QMUL Strategy/Faculty plans;
  - Who will be the lead institution;

- Proposed start time for the programme;
  - Contribution of the partners to the programme: for a joint award, the normal expectation is that there will be an equal academic contribution from each partner.
2. Further to ARCS feedback on the proposal, this needs to be signed off by the Head of School/Institute and endorsed in principle by the Faculty Executive.
  3. **Strategic approval** of the partnership and of the proposal outline by **Partnerships Board (PB)**/Queen Mary Senior Executive (QMSE) (depending on the complexity of the proposal). This is done on the basis of a **Partnership Programme Proposal** form and a Due Diligence Process and risk assessment.
  4. Following PB strategic approval, the academic leads prepare a more detailed proposal and a business case and completes a **Part 1 Programme Proposal**. This will be discussed and approved by the relevant Teaching and Learning Committee. Part 1 documentation will then be submitted to ARCS and will follow the standard approval process. ARCS will indicate whether the programme can be advertised.
  5. Detailed academic approval by **Taught Programmes Board (TPB)** on the basis of a **Part 2 Programme Proposal** Form. It is expected that TPB papers would be accompanied by a draft MOA. Following TPB academic approval, the detailed Agreements or Contracts can be finalised and signed.

#### **Current examples:**

- Double LLM with Singapore University: students start first at the partner institution (Stage 1 of the programme) and continue at QMUL for Stage 2 of the programme. Both the SMU and QMUL part are worth 180 credits (this includes: 135 credits plus 45 credits accepted from the other). The normal duration of study for the entire programme is 15 months: six months in Singapore and nine months in London.
- Double LLM with Sorbonne Paris I: The duration of the programme is 18 months and is worth 301.5 credits. The QMUL recognises 22.5 credits which cover an internship with Paris 1. If the internship cannot take place, this can be substituted by a dissertation with the French institution.
- 'Joint' Programmes with BUPT although referred to as being joint programmes, the completion of the programme leads to two separate awards, awarded by each institution.
- Northwestern Polytechnical University, (NPU) within the JEI (Joint Education Institute): this arrangement leads to a double BEng.
- 'Joint' Programme with Nanchang: Biomedicine Sciences from QMUL and Clinical Medicine from NCU.

### **3. Dual Awards:** QMUL does not currently enter into dual award arrangements

#### **3.1 Definition**

Describes one programme of study which leads to two separate independent qualifications, one from each of the two partner institutions. These may be different levels, duration and

credit value. The programme of study is either collaboratively designed, delivered and/or assessed or consists of two awards which have been linked via collaborative activity. The awards are not interdependent, and it could be possible for a student to achieve an award from one but not both partner institutions.

**JOINT/ DOUBLE/DUAL AWARDS: KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>JOINT AWARDS</b>	<b>DOUBLE AWARDS</b>	<b>DUAL AWARDS</b>
<p>A single qualification is awarded in the joint names of all the degree awarding bodies concerned.</p> <p>Requires a pooling together of degree awarding powers and recognition under each Partner Country's legal jurisdiction.</p>	<p>An award is made by both partners on completion of the programme of study.</p> <p>The awards are interdependent and it is not possible for a student to obtain one partner's award but not the other.</p>	<p>Two separate qualifications are awarded by each degree awarding body, and offers flexibility to students of taking only one of the two qualifications.</p>
<p>The programme is jointly designed, delivered and assessed by QMUL and partner.</p>	<p>One programme of study leads to two linked qualifications of the same level, duration and credit level. The programme is either collaboratively designed, delivered and/or assessed or consists of two awards of the same level and value linked via collaborative activity.</p>	<p>One programme of study which leads to two separate independent qualifications which may have different levels, duration and credit value. The programme is either collaboratively designed, delivered and/or assessed or consists of two awards linked via collaborative activity.</p>
<p>Students must successfully complete all parts of the programme to receive the award. There is one degree certificate signed by all partners who may not issue individual awards.</p>	<p>Students must successfully complete all parts of the programme to receive the award. In this case each partner issues their own certificate, but no certificate may be issued unless all parts of the programme are completed successfully.</p>	<p>The student receives separate awards and certificates from each partner. Whilst the partners may choose to make all awards dependent on completing all elements of the programme, this is not obligatory. Partners retain the right to make their own awards and issue their own certificates independently.</p>
<p>Can involve one or more partners, but all partners must have the legal right to issue joint awards.</p>	<p>Can involve one or more partners with degree awarding powers, but is generally used where, for legal or regulatory reasons, a joint award is not a permissible option.</p>	<p>Can involve one or more partners working together of offer a jointly conceived programme, but these can be at different levels and with partners of different standings.</p>
<p>The partners come together to develop and deliver the curriculum which is shared jointly as well as developing joint programme regulations.</p>	<p>As for joint degrees, the partners come together to develop and deliver the curriculum jointly, agreeing bespoke programme regulations as needed.</p>	<p>The programme can include jointly conceived elements, or can consist of two or more blocks of curricula delivered separately or jointly by the partners. Each</p>

		partner retains control of its own programme regulations.
The programme is subject to the quality assurance of all partners, and there are also joint arrangements for oversight and review.	Each institution is responsible for the quality assurance of their own award, although any particular quality assurance aspects will be set out in the MOA.	Each partner retains control of its own quality assurance arrangements, although if desired by the partners, such arrangements can be shared.
Students have right of access to learning resources at all partner institutions, although one institution would normally act as the lead for administrative purposes.	Students have right of access to learning resources at all partner institutions, although one institution would normally act as the lead for administrative purposes.	Students would have rights of access to learning resources at the institution where they are studying, but may not have access to all institutions throughout their period of study.
Examinations are conducted through joint arrangements.	Examinations are conducted through joint arrangements.	Examinations may be conducted through joint arrangements or separately.
This model does not involve double counting of credit.	If properly integrated, this model should not involve double counting of credit. The programme should be structured to reflect the strengths of both partners, and should include a shared element that has been jointly developed e.g. joint teaching or dissertation.	Whilst such arrangements could be devised to avoid double counting, this is not usually possible if the programme is structured to be taken over a shorter period.
<p>Main risks include:</p> <p>Pooling degree awarding powers inherent in a Joint Degree is a high risk activity and should only be contemplated with partners of demonstrably equal standing.</p> <p>This is a particularly high risk activity outside the UK where the requirements of the education system in partner countries can have implications for managing academic standards and the quality of provision.</p>	<p>Main risks include:</p> <p>Regulatory issues: differences of approach between the two partners can lead to difficulty in the students completing both parts of the programme successfully.</p>	<p>Main risks include:</p> <p>Double counting: there are risks to academic standards where students obtain credits for both parts of the programme for the same amount of study undertaken.</p>