

QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK 2016**SECTION J: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION****Contents:**

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Introduction:

Scope

- J1: Whilst the University engages with a range of external partners and agencies (work placements, access and progression compacts with feeder institutions, student exchanges and study abroad units for example), **this section of the Handbook is concerned only with the collaborative delivery of studies which lead to University for the Creative Arts awards by approved external partner institutions.**

The purpose of the processes described herein is to ensure that the University enters into appropriate collaborations with partners and that, once approved, these partnerships operate effectively.

This section describes the University's processes for approving, annually monitoring and five yearly re-approving Institutional Collaborative Partners. Once an Institution has been approved as a partner and the Partnership Agreement has been signed, UCA and the newly approved partner proceed to staging validation events to consider validating appropriate courses for delivery at the partner institution (see section C on Validation).

Due diligence is within the remit of UCA's Leadership Team. Once Leadership Team has approved the request to proceed in principal, a Partnership proposal is submitted to the Employment & Finance Committee of the Board of Governors for approval before the University proceeds to the Institutional approval event. Institutional approval / re-approval will be undertaken by Academic Board. Institutional annual monitoring and Course level annual monitoring and periodic review will be overseen by the Academic Quality Committee.

Whilst this section outlines institutional Level procedures in some detail, paragraphs J33 – J40 discuss the operation of collaborative partnerships at course level and confirm that courses offered with collaborative partners are subject to the same quality assurance processes that govern the operation of UCA courses (the paragraphs refer the reader to appropriate sections of the QAH).

Principles

- J2: The University is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name: the University's principles are:
- (i) The academic standards of awards involving collaborative provision must be equivalent to those of comparable awards delivered at the University and must be appropriately aligned to UK referents (for example: Part A of the UK Quality Code, including Framework of Higher Education Qualifications and any Subject Benchmark statements)
 - (ii) The quality of student learning opportunities and experiences on collaborative programmes should enable students to achieve the appropriate academic standards for the specified learning aims
 - (iii) There must be systems in place to support the management and administration of the courses to be franchised or validated (including sound and effective quality assurance and academic liaison systems)

External Definitions of Partnership Models:**J3: QAA Definitions**

The University primarily uses the QAA definitions of partnership models to describe the different collaborative activities in operation with different partners. The QAA definitions below define, and are used in, the contract UCA has with the collaborative partner (the Partnership Agreement, template J8).

Franchised Provision

A franchised course is an existing (or sometimes, modified) UCA course which has been approved ('franchised') for delivery by an external partner.

Validated Provision

A validated course is a new course designed by the partner, using UCA protocols (and often in collaboration with UCA), which is then approved ('validated') by UCA as being of sufficient quality and standard to lead to a UCA award, for delivery by that partner.

Articulation Agreement

A formal agreement where UCA recognises the credit rating of a named qualification of another partner institution creating the opportunity to transfer credit and enable student entry from the named institution with advanced standing to a course, leading to a UCA award.

The University does not at present operate the following types of collaborative provision and does not anticipate entering into collaborative provision in this area in the foreseeable future.

Dual Award

A dual award is where separate awards are conferred by more than one institution upon a student upon completion of a single programme of study. The programme, devised by the partner to its own specifications, is validated by UCA as equivalent to a UCA award (thereby leading to two awards – a degree from the partner institution and a degree from UCA).

Joint Awards

In which a single award is conferred jointly by more than one institution upon a student upon completion of a single programme of study.

Contractual Relationships:

J4: The models below describe different contractual relationships between the University, the students registered for its awards and the partner. These relationships inform aspects of the Partnership Agreement between UCA and the partner institution, typically in the following ways:

The Partner holds full contractual responsibility for the Student

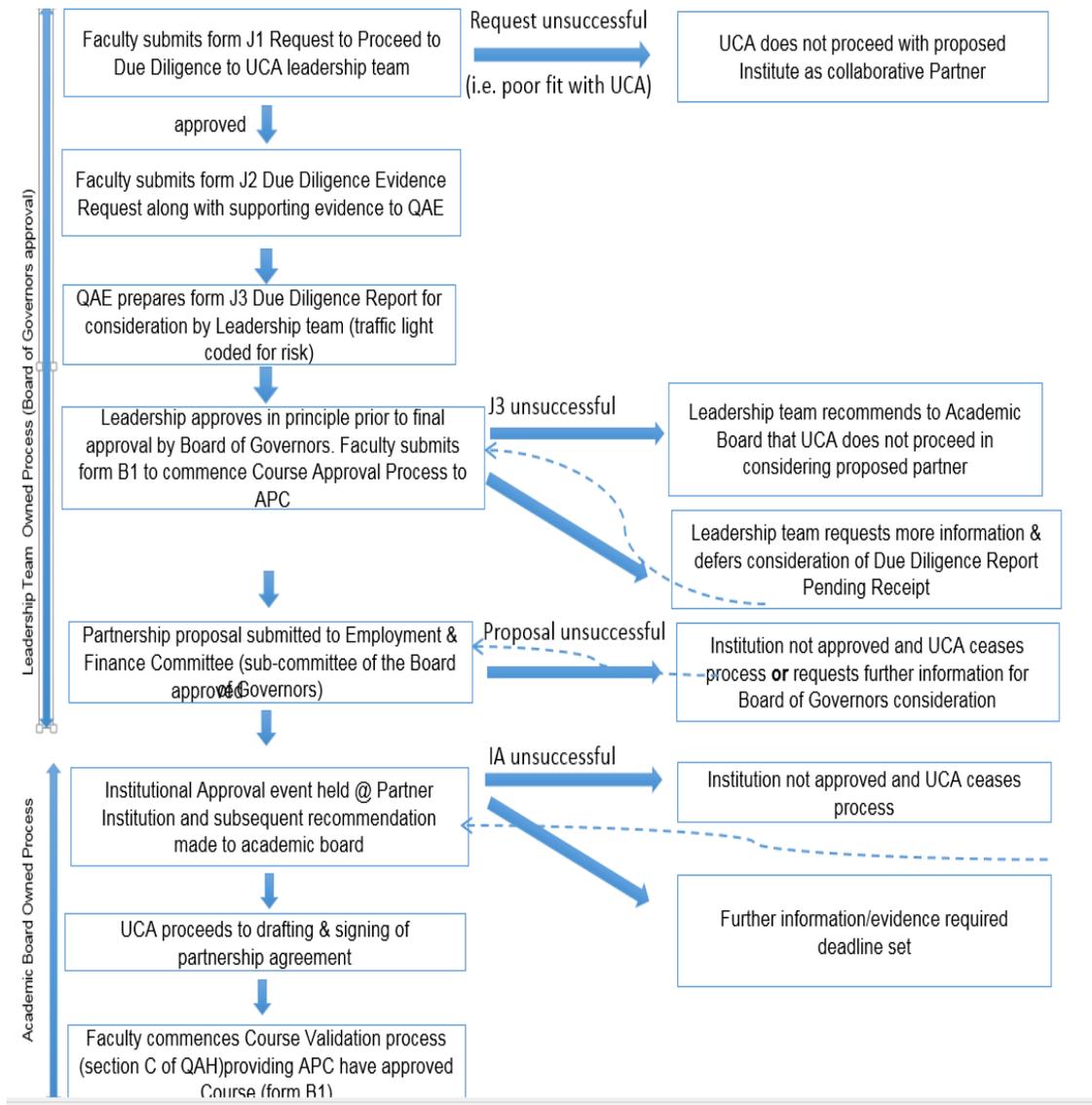
The student has a direct contract with the partner institution. The partner operates its own Student Terms and Conditions (approved by UCA at validation). It is responsible for delivery of the approved course(s), associated resources, student admissions, fee collection and statutory returns (as appropriate). UCA retains responsibility for monitoring the quality of the delivery and outcomes, the Boards of Examiners and certification. Students do not normally have access to UCA centralised resources and are not members of the UCA Students' Union. This model may be applied to either a validated or franchised provision (see QAA definitions above).

UCA holds full contractual responsibility for the Student but subcontracts delivery to a partner

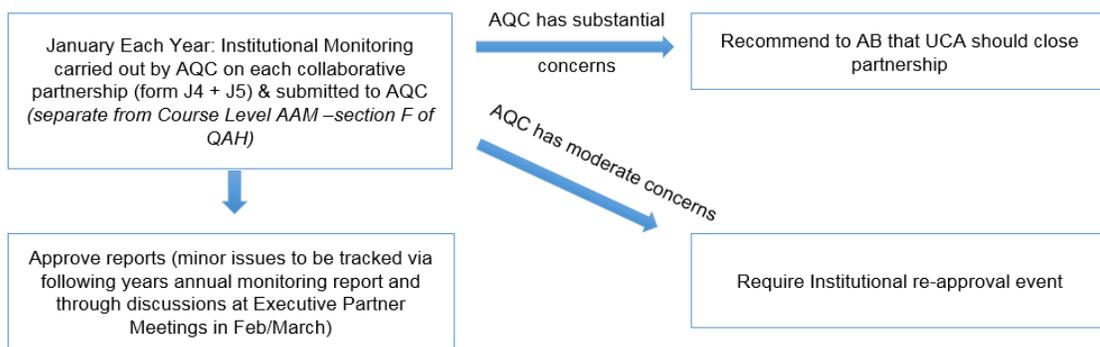
The student has a direct contract with UCA and is bound by UCA Terms and Conditions. The partner is responsible for delivery of the approved course(s) and associated specialist resources. UCA retains responsibility for the admissions process (in collaboration with the partner), fee collection and statutory returns (as appropriate) monitoring the quality of the delivery and outcomes, the Boards of Examiners and certification. Students will have access to centralised UCA resources and will be members of the UCA Students' Union. This model can only apply to franchised provision (see QAA definitions above).

Flowchart – Institutional Approval, Monitoring and Re-approval Process:

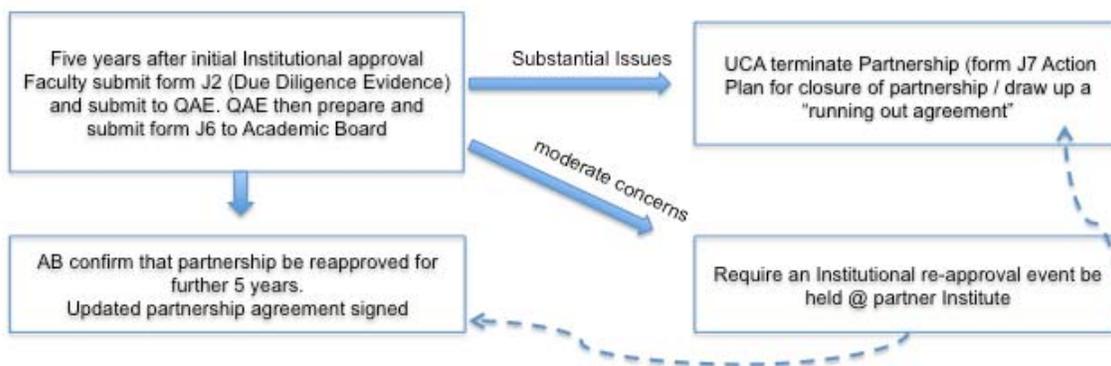
J6 Flowchart 1 – Institutional Approval



J7 Flowchart 2 – Institute level annual monitoring



J8 Flowchart 3 – Collaborative Partner Re-approval



INSTITUTE LEVEL**Institutional Approval Process:**Request to proceed to Due Diligence

- J9: When the Faculty (or any other department of UCA) initially becomes interested in, or commences discussions with, a potential new collaborative partner they must submit form J1 (Request to Proceed to Due Diligence form) to the Clerk of the UCA Leadership Team.
- J10: The Leadership Team will consider the request, in particular considering whether the partnership proposal is suitably aligned with UCA's vision and strategic plan: the benefits and strategic reasons for working with the proposed partner. The Leadership Team shall make a decision as to whether the proposal can proceed to the due diligence stage.

If the Leadership team feels there is not an appropriate fit and that the proposed collaboration would not enhance UCA's academic provision it shall confirm that UCA shall not proceed in discussions with the proposed institution with regards to collaborative provision.

Due Diligence

- J11: Once the Leadership Team has granted approval to proceed to the due diligence stage the Faculty should submit form J2 (Due Diligence Evidence Request form) and appropriate accompanying evidence to QAE.

[to note - the Faculty should also commence the Course Approval Process at this point. See paragraph J35 below and J41 Overview of Institute and Course level for details.]

- J12: Form J2 and accompanying evidence enable QAE to co-ordinate the completion of form J3 (Due Diligence Report). QAE should complete the Due Diligence Report within 4 working weeks of receiving form J2 and accompanying evidence from the Faculty.

QAE submit form J3 (Due Diligence Report) to the Leadership Team. Upon consideration of the Due Diligence Report the Leadership Team could:

- (i) Confirm UCA proceed to an Institutional Approval Event to be held at the Partner Institution (the Leadership Team would indicate areas arising from their consideration of the due diligence that required further exploration by the panel). See paragraphs J13 – J14
- (ii) Request more information be provided and defer consideration of the Due Diligence Report pending receipt (normally the Faculty will be given 4 working weeks to procure the required further information. If the information is not forthcoming within that timeframe the University may consider the process to be concluded)
- (iii) Make a recommendation to Academic Board that the University does not proceed in considering the proposed partner institution

- J13: The Leadership Team recommendation to Academic Board that the University proceed to an Institutional Approval event should indicate whether:
- (i) The proposed partner may proceed to Institutional Approval and subsequent Course Validation (may be held on same day by delegating authority to the Chair of the Institutional Approval event to confirm the outcome on behalf of Academic Board)
 - (ii) The proposed partner may proceed to Institutional Approval
- J14: If Academic Board accepts the Leadership Team recommendation that a partner may proceed to Institutional Approval and subsequent Course Validation then Academic Board will delegate authority to the Chair of the Institute Approval event for confirming outcomes on its behalf thereby enabling the Course Validation to take place as appropriate.

If Academic Board accepts the Leadership Team recommendation that a partner proceed to Institutional Approval only then Academic Board will retain the authority for confirming the outcomes from the Institutional Approval event.

- J15: Once Leadership Team and Academic Board has approved the request to proceed to an Institutional approval event with a new partner in principal, a Partnership proposal(form J11) is submitted to the Employment & Finance Committee of the Board of Governors for approval before the University proceeds to the Institutional approval event. The Partnership Proposal must include details of costings, expected expenditure and income for the proposed collaboration.

Institutional Approval Event

- J16: The Institutional Approval Event discusses the suitability of the proposed partner and explores further with senior staff from the proposed partner any issues arising from the due diligence report. The event will normally include a tour of central resources (Library, IT) and note accessibility of these resources to all students. The purpose of the visit is to assess the suitability of the proposed institution (not to consider individual courses) and negotiate terms of the Partnership Agreement.

The panel will note which credit framework the proposed institution intends to adopt: if the partner institution will be using UCA's CCF no approval is required; if the partner institution wishes to use its own framework then this will be considered in full at the first Course Validation for that partner institution and a condition of that first Course Validation must be that Course Approval is subject to Academic Board's approval of the framework.

Location – normally held at the Partner Institution

Panel membership - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development)
 Executive Dean of Faculty or nominee (sponsoring the collaboration)
 Head of QAE (or nominee)
 Academic staff member(s) responsible for initial development of link (Head of School)
 Head of LSS (as required)

Other senior staff (as appropriate to the collaborative partner in question)
QAE Clerk

Partner Staff - the Chief Executive and senior staff from the partner must be available to meet with the panel

J17: Following the visit a report will be written summarising the main findings, outcomes and recommendations. The panel may outline the following outcomes to Academic Board:

- (i) Institution approved for collaborative partnership
- (ii) Institution approved subject to conditions set by panel to be met in a specified timeframe
- (iii) Further information / evidence required (deadline will be set and panel will be required to reconvene).
- (iv) Institution not approved and UCA ceases process with proposed partner

J18: Once Academic Board has received the report and approved recommendations QAE should communicate outcome to the proposed partner institution. Once the terms of Institutional Approval have been met and confirmed, UCA and the partner institution can proceed to sign the Partnership Agreement.

J19: The Faculty will now be able to commence the validation process for courses to be run at the partner institution (see section C Validation-). The Institute Approval and Course Proposal approval must both be in place before the the validation event takes place.

The Faculty must confirm to QAE, for each course to be validated at the partner institution, which School will be the Link School (and hence which School will be responsible for overseeing production of documentation and approval of documentation prior to submission to QAE) and, prior to validation, have a nominated link tutor from that School for each proposed course.

Collaborative Partner Annual Institutional Monitoring Process:Collaborative Partner Institutional Annual Monitoring Report

J20: In January each year (after completion of the course annual academic monitoring process in December) QAE will complete form J4 Collaborative Partner Institutional Annual Monitoring Report for each of the University's collaborative partnerships. This process is separate and distinct from the course annual academic monitoring process (see section F Annual Academic Monitoring).

Overview Report on Collaborative Partners

J21: QAE also compiles form J5 Overview Report on Collaborative Partners for the academic year to accompany the individual Institutional Annual Monitoring Reports. The Overview report and Institutional Annual Monitoring Reports are then submitted to Academic Quality Committee for consideration. Form J5 contains the updated UCA Collaborative Provision register and AQC will annually approve the register for publication.

Following consideration of the overview report and individual reports AQC may:

- (i) Approve reports, noting any issues as appropriate that should be addressed and will be tracked through the following years Institutional Annual Monitoring and at the Executive Partner Meeting (EPM). QAE will write to the partner enclosing a copy of the report and drawing their attention to areas that require addressing. It will also form an agenda item at the Executive Partner Meeting (to be held in Feb/March each year)
- (ii) Require an Institute Re-approval Event if appropriate. QAE will contact the partner and make arrangements for the visit
- (iii) Recommend to Academic Board that the University should withdraw from the partnership

The Board of Governors annually receive an annual report of collaborative activity.

Collaborative Partner Institutional Re-approval Process:

J22: Each collaborative partnership will undergo Institutional Re-approval at least every five years (it is usual practice for the first Re-approval to occur 3 years after initial Institutional approval and for subsequent Re-approvals to occur every five years provided the partnership is operating effectively and there are no major changes to the constitution or operation of the partner institution). The Faculty and partner institution complete form J2 (Due Diligence Evidence Request) and provide accompanying evidence to QAE. The evidence collated then enables completion of form J6 Collaborative Partner Institutional Re-approval Report.

J23: QAE oversees the production of form J6 Collaborative Partner Institutional Re-approval Report for submission to Academic Board. The purpose of this report is to enable Academic Board to assess whether the general conditions for the partnership, at an institutional level, are still being met and to take note of any changes to circumstances of the partner in the last five years. The report will draw

upon the evidence provided in form J2 and in the individual Institutional Annual Monitoring Reports for the last five years. If there are any recurring or unresolved issues with the partnership QAE will highlight them in form J6.

J24: After consideration of the Re-approval Report Academic Board could:

- (i) Confirm that the Institute be re-approved for a further period (normally 5 years)
- (ii) Require an Institutional Re-approval Event be held at the Partner Institution (this would follow the same format as the Institutional Approval Event – see J13 – J15)
- (iii) Confirm that UCA close the partnership

J25: Once Institutional Re-approval has been confirmed QAE can proceed to oversee drafting of an updated Partnership Agreement for signing by the two parties.

Terminating a Collaborative Partnership:

J26: The decision by UCA to end a collaborative partnership can only be made by the Leadership Team. This may be in response to issues arising from the annual Institutional monitoring process, the Institutional re-approval process or from any other avenue (for example, contractual issues, quality failings or poor student experience or recruitment).

J27: Once the Leadership Team has confirmed that UCA wishes to end a collaborative partnership QAE will write to the partner notifying them of the decision and commencing the process for completion of form J7 Action Plan for closure of partnership (which details the arrangements for the termination of the partnership). UCA and the partner institution shall negotiate in good faith to agree a 'Running-out Agreement' within thirty days of the agreement to terminate (see section 23 of the Partnership Agreement template J8 for details of what the Running-out Agreement should include).

Contractual Arrangements

J28: Partnership Agreements are normally negotiated in the period between due diligence and Institutional Approval. Once Institutional Approval has been granted the draft Partnership Agreement can proceed to be signed by UCA and the partner institution (see J8 Partnership Agreement template). Partnership Agreements are established for an agreed period of time, but normally no longer than five years (it is usual practice for the initial Partnership Agreement post Institutional Approval to be for three years and for subsequent Partnership Agreements post Institutional Re-approval to be for five years provided the partnership has operated effectively).

J29: The fees associated with the operation of the partnership are reviewed annually at the Executive Partner Meeting (Feb / March each year) and are documented in Appendix 1 of the Partnership Agreement. Appendix 1 is therefore annually updated for the upcoming academic year following the agreement reached at the Executive Partner Meeting. The notes of the Executive Partner Meeting are received by the

Leadership Team.

J30: Should any additional courses that would lead to a UCA award be approved for the partner, Appendix 2 of the Partnership Agreement would require appropriate revisions.

Cost of institutional approval, validation and periodic review

J31: The costs of the institutional approval visit and any subsequent institutional re-approval visits will be agreed in advance and recovered from the prospective partner.

J32: The costs of course validation events and subsequent periodic review / re-validation events will be recovered from the partner.

COURSE LEVEL

Operation of collaborative partnerships at course level

J33: Details about the operation of individual courses offered with collaborative partners must be described in the course Link Liaison Document which is presented and approved at validation. The course Link Liaison Document is subsequently annually updated and approved alongside the course annual academic monitoring report (see template J9 for Link Liaison Document).

The Link Liaison Document contains specific detail on the key committee structure for the collaboration (including Board of Examiner details), assessment (including assessment feedback form, internal verification form), staff development and student feedback.

J34: Courses offered with collaborative partners, are subject to the same quality assurance processes that govern the operation of UCA courses and these processes are outlined in the UCA Quality Assurance Handbook. Paragraphs J35 – J40 below refer the reader to appropriate sections of the QAH.

J35: Portfolio Planning

The process for introducing a new course is detailed in section B of the QAH.

For a new collaborative partner, form B1 (new course proposal) should be submitted once the Leadership team has granted approval for the proposing UCA Faculty to proceed to Due Diligence). The Executive Dean of the proposing Faculty shall be responsible for ensuring this process is commenced.

For an existing collaborative partner wishing to introduce further collaborative courses which lead to UCA awards, form B1 (new course proposal) should be completed and submitted alongside a Business Proposal for consideration by the Leadership Team in the first instance. The Executive Dean of the proposing Faculty shall be responsible for ensuring this process is commenced.

The processes for suspension of recruitment to a course and withdrawal of a course are also outlined in section B of the QAH. The process for termination of a collaborative partnership at Institutional level is detailed in paragraphs J26 – J27 above.

J36: Validation

Validation (the process by which thorough scrutiny is given to a new course) is detailed in section C of the QAH. Validation events are held at the partner institution. In addition to the course documentation required for UCA course validation events partner validation events must receive the Link Liaison Document and regulatory framework (where this is different to the CCF).

A validation event for a course to be offered with a partner institution cannot be held until both Institutional approval (see paragraphs J9 – J18 above) **and** Course proposal approval (see section B of QAH, in particular approval of form B1) has been secured.

J37: Periodic Review

Periodic review (the process by which thorough scrutiny is given to a course including consideration of the quality performance data relating to that course over the period since the last periodic review) is detailed in section H of the QAH. Periodic Review events are held at the partner institution. In addition to the course documentation required for UCA course periodic review events partner periodic review events must receive the Link Liaison Document.

J38: Annual Academic Monitoring

Course annual academic monitoring is detailed in section F of the QAH; due to the complexity of collaborative provision in some cases a bespoke annual monitoring template is drafted and agreed at validation as part of the Link Liaison Document.

J39: Institutional level annual monitoring is detailed in paragraphs J20-J21 above.

J40: Modification to Courses

The process for proposal and subsequent approval of modifications to existing courses is outlined in section E of the QAH.

J41: External Examiners

The process for nomination, appointment, induction, duties and reports of external examiners is outlined in section G of the QAH.

J42: Overview of Institute and course level procedures**Initial Set up**

The Institutional level process and course level process are shown side by side to show the timing of each process in relation to the other

Institute Level	Course Level
Faculty submit request to proceed to Due Diligence (J1)	
Faculty submit Due Diligence evidence request (J2)	Faculty process Course Proposal Form (B1)
QAE co-ordinates Due Diligence Report (J3)	
Proposing Executive Dean submits Partnership Proposal for Board of Governors Approval (J11)	
Institutional Approval Event held	
QAE draft and arrange signing of Partnership Agreement (J9)	Faculty commence Course Validation process (once Institutional Approval agreed and course proposal (B1) approved)

Review / Re-approval (normally every 3 – 5 yrs)

The table below confirms the Institute level process and the course process of periodic review is detailed in section H of QAH.

Institutional re-approval
Faculty submit Due Diligence evidence request (J2)
QAE co-ordinates Institutional Re-approval report for Academic Board (J6)
QAE draft and arrange signing of Partnership Agreement (J8) or if appropriate arrange Institutional Re-approval event or prepare paperwork for termination of partnership (J7 and Running-out Agreement)

Annual Monitoring

The Institutional level annual monitoring process is designed to follow on from the course level annual monitoring process. The course level annual monitoring process is detailed in section F of the QAH.

Institute Level	Course Level
	October – Course Board of Study held to receive AAM report and Link Liaison Document (LLD)
	November - School Board of Study held to receive AAM / LLD
December – QAE prepare Institutional Annual Monitoring Reports for all partners (J4) and Overview Report on Collaborative Partners (J5) including Collaborative Provision Register	
January – AQC receives J4, J5 and Collaborative Provision Register	January – UCA AQC held to receive all collaborative partner course level AAMs
Feb / March – Executive Partner Meeting (which will receive and agree action arising from the Annual Monitoring Report J4)	