

Information Sheet – Due Diligence and Risk Management

This information sheet provides an outline of the **responsibilities of partners** engaged in any type of academic collaboration, an outline **risk taxonomy** and guidelines on **due diligence** in the consideration and evaluation of collaborative arrangements. This information draws on the Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) *Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision*¹ and is also regularly reviewed against emerging sectoral, national, legislative, European and international developments, including, for example, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) *Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes* guidelines.² The information is also indexed against the *UCD Policy on Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement*.³

Collaborative Programme Basics: the programme approval mechanism

The **Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework (PDARF)** provides the relevant information for supporting programme development, including collaborative programmes, within the University (see http://www.ucd.ie/registry/adminservices/curriculum/curriculum_progs.html).

All collaborative programmes must be approved through the normal routes for new programme approval. The relevant forms for collaborative programmes include PDARF1, PDARF2, PDARF3 and PDARF4, and where a collaboration is being introduced into an already existing programme, PDARF7 is to be used in place of PDARF2 and PDARF3. All of the forms are available at the above weblink.

All forms must be completed and submitted to the relevant College Executive and/or Governing Boards, as well as the University Management Team (UMT) in accordance with the procedures outlined in the PDARF approval process.

Collaborative Programme Directors should list as much detail as possible about the collaborative programme on these forms – all of this information is critical for ensuring that the University can support the programme effectively.

Responsibilities of Partners

Institutions of higher education have the primary responsibility for the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. Good practice, including the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Area (2009)*⁴; the UK QAA *Code of Practice – Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning 2012*; and the UK Council of Validating Universities (CVU) *Handbook for Practitioners (2012): Managing Quality and Standards in Collaborative Provision* suggests that collaborative proposals are given due consideration and approval by the relevant institutional authorities, having been subject to the prescribed institutional approval and quality assurance processes. The following issues (not an exhaustive list) should be considered by prospective partners when discharging their responsibilities:

- Each partner has a formal institutional strategy for collaborative and transnational provision which has been approved at senior management level and is periodically reviewed.
- There is 'in principle' support from the senior management of each prospective partner for the proposal, prior to the full proposal being developed.
- Explicit quality assurance mechanisms exist to ensure that the partners do not enter arrangements which may put academic standards or students at risk.

¹ See http://www.iheqn.ie/fileupload/File/IHEQN_Guidelines_Collaborative_Provision_FINAL_21May13_55218605.pdf

² See http://www.enqa.eu/indirme/papers-and-reports/workshop-and-seminar/ENQA_wr_19.pdf

³ See <http://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/ucdqaandenhancementpolicy.doc.pdf>

⁴ See http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ESG_3edition-2.pdf

- There is a clear and shared appreciation by the partners of the specific responsibilities and risks associated with collaborative and transnational provision, including, for example, the role of the awarding body, if not one of the partners, and that ongoing monitoring and periodic review of provision is undertaken.
- There is clarity and transparency regarding the programme approval processes which apply; they are formally documented and staff know where to access them.
- The nature of the collaborative and transnational activity is clearly defined and inter-institutional responsibilities set out in the Agreement (note: as collaborative and transnational arrangements can vary widely, there may not always be an 'even' distribution of responsibilities between partners).
- There is a glossary of terms used in the procedural and regulatory documents.
- Each partner has an organisation summary which describes for example: the organisation, its status, position in law, awarding authority, recognition of awards (e.g. reference National Framework of Qualifications), education provision arrangements, financial standing, external quality assurance and regulatory obligations (this can greatly assist in the initial due diligence phase).
- There is a clear appreciation of each partner's own legislative context, the scope of its authority, awarding and validating powers, and how these might be limited or enhanced in another country or in a particular partnership.
- Procedures for the approval of programme promotional/marketing material, with clear and accurate information to enable prospective students to make informed decisions about the programmes, are formally agreed between the partners and is accessible to all appropriate stakeholders.
- There is a clear understanding of each partner institutions responsibilities in the event that the Agreement is terminated e.g. provision and support for current students enrolled on programmes.

Risk Taxonomy

In taking an overview of the full range of actual and potential forms of collaboration, the University may apply different taxonomies or modes of classification. The Risk Taxonomy may be used to determine the best way to manage different types of collaboration, and can be used to inform the approach to managing such collaborations, including a determination of the necessary approval process, scope and extent of due diligence required, necessity for a site visit, and the nature and frequency of the application of mechanisms for monitoring and review. These categorisations are not definitive and are subject to change based on developments within the University, and any other regional, national, sectoral, legislative, European and/or international developments.

Risk Taxonomy		
High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCD Franchise to overseas partner • Non-domestic, non-third level institution (not a recognised awarding body) • Large number of students (>100 p.a.) • Third party agency involvement • Unfamiliarity with partner / no previous relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic non-third level institution (not a recognised awarding body) • Medium-sized number of students (>50-100 p.a.) • Dual Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student exchange • Joint graduate research programme • Co-Tutelle • Articulations • Small number of students (< 50 p.a.) • Prior experience working with partner institution

Due Diligence

Good practice suggests that an institution establishes documented due diligence checks as a critical step in managing risk in order to safeguard the interests of students, and institutional reputations. An institution may wish to prepare a written summary of its own institutional standing and context, reflecting on the four key areas below, and share this document with potential partners. The scale of the Due Diligence undertaken in relation to a collaborative programme or partnership is proportional to the level of risk associated with the endeavour, as determined by the relevant UCD senior management and academic committees. In all instances, basic information regarding Due Diligence must be provided (normally via **PDARF1: UCD Partnership Proposal**) when first proposing a collaborative partnership. Where deemed necessary, a more detailed and thorough Due Diligence exercise may be required. A **Due Diligence Checklist** is included (Table 1) as well as a **UCD Due Diligence Pro Forma** (Template 1).

The Due Diligence document may include various layers of information, some of which may be subject to a non-disclosure agreement as appropriate. Information from potential partners should be documented and be capable of independent verification. Due diligence always involves site visits to partner or transnational sites. As there are many types of collaborative and transnational arrangements (e.g. different partners, location, programmes), an assessment should be made of the conditions that are required to enable the proposed arrangement to succeed. **The Due Diligence enquiries should then be tailored to these, to ensure that appropriate and proportionate due diligence checks are made, in consultation with the proposed partner.** Grouping questions under the four key headings in Table 1 may be helpful. Please note that the sample questions are not exhaustive and are only suggestions to guide discussion and reporting.

Table 1: Due Diligence Checklist (indicative areas to the examined)

1) General and Academic
<p>Sample Questions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What benefits will derive from the partnership?• Is there 'in principle' institutional management support (all prospective partners)?• Is the proposed environment is one in which human rights can be respected and the ethical values of your institution upheld?• Will the proposed environment will promote learning?• Are the proposed education and training facilities appropriate?• Do the partners have the competence and capacity to fulfil the roles assigned to them in a sustainable way?• Can the partners have an open intellectual community that values critical reflection and fosters personal and professional development for students and staff?• Are partner staff are appropriately qualified and experienced?• Does the pedagogic style of the partners incorporate good practice?• Do the partners have peer relationships with the broader local/regional community of higher education and training?• Can the partners demonstrate an understanding that higher education and training is a collegial, international endeavour?• Have the partners described and listed all formal collaborations with other higher education institutions or organisations?• Do the partners have the human resource capacity (academic, professional, administrative, etc) to allocate staff on an appropriate basis for the management of the 'branch campus' and /or the provision of the proposed programmes, and said staff deployment will not compromise current provision?• Will there be receiver-country recognition of awards made?• Are support services for students capable of being provided on a comparable basis to those available to students at the institution's main location or in Ireland generally?• As awards made under Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications are intended to promote mutual recognition and confidence in the learning outcomes attained - it is important that other awards or validation offered through the partners are recognised by reputable bodies.
2) Quality Assurance
<p>For an internal focus, sample Questions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do the partners have robust quality assurance and quality enhancement policies, procedures and practices? Do the partner institutional strategies, policies and procedures for quality assurance meet for example, European (or relevant country/regional equivalent) standards for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions e.g. Part 1 of <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area</i> (ESG) or the Malaysian Qualification Agency guidelines. These may include:

- Policy and procedures for quality assurance
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
- Assessment of students
- Documented staff appointment procedures with criteria for appointment and promotion, Staff Development Provision
- Learning resources and support
- Information systems and data protection
- Public information
- Do the partners have a culture and practices underpinning access to, progression from and transfer within, higher education and training?
- Do the partners assign credit in a transparent way, for example, consistent with the Bologna process and ECTS credit framework (or equivalent)?
- Is the availability of support services for students comparable to those available to students at the institution's main location in Ireland?
- Has the partner similar Agreements in place and can they confirm that they are currently in order?

For an external focus, sample Questions may include:

- Are the requirements of the national quality agency or other licensing authorities in the relevant country (and the countries of other partner-institutions, where relevant) acknowledged and provided for?
- Are the partners externally reviewed?
- Are the partners in good standing with any relevant national agencies or require state 'permission' to engage in the provision envisaged?
- Have procedures through which the requirements of external parties and the requirements of awarding bodies and other partner-institutions been established, so that they can be harmonised on a continuing basis?

3) Legal Standing

Sample Questions may include:

- Does the potential partner have the legal capacity to enter into an Agreement?
- Are the legal requirements in the partner/transnational jurisdiction known and capable of being adhered to - e.g. delegated authority to make awards, compliance with national legislation relating to education or other domains, e.g. appropriate human resources policies and procedures, company registration, etc.?
- Is the jurisdiction where the agreement is to be enacted, have agreed arrangements for the settlement of disputes, mediation, and sharing of liabilities defined?
- Where relevant, do the potential joint awarding partners have the authority to make awards?
- Are there issues relating to Freedom of Information legislation?
- Is Government Agency/Department support/approval required?
- Are there any institutional Governance issues?
- Are there statutory reporting requirements?
- Is the proposed form of collaboration recognised?
- Are there any intellectual property issues?

4) Financial and Resource Issues

Sample Questions may include:

- Can the proposed programmes be funded in a secure way and is the partner institution adequately resourced to undertake and complete the programmes proposed?
- Is there clarity on financial matters such as sharing of costs and income; payment of taxation, including the currency/currencies in which fees and payments are to be made and arrangements for handling currency fluctuations?
- Are there appropriate transfer or bonding plans in place to protect students in the event that it is not possible to complete the provision of a programme after it has commenced?
- Are the financial plans based on realistic projections of student numbers and other variables e.g. income stress tested against varying student intake targets?
- Can the physical and electronic infrastructure be provided on a stable basis?
- Is the administrative infrastructure able to provide timely reports/information to regulatory bodies and other stakeholders including other awarding bodies?



University College Dublin

Collaborative/Transnational Provision

Due Diligence Pro Forma

(To be provided to prospective institutional partners)

Introduction

University College Dublin (UCD) aims to ensure that all its collaborative partners are of good repute. UCD therefore requires all prospective collaborative partners to supply a range of background information.

In the interests of reciprocity and transparency (and as an example of the level of detail required) this completed *pro forma* for UCD is provided. An electronic blank template to be completed by prospective partners is available from the UCD Quality Office (www.ucd.ie/quality).

This document should not be taken as an indication that UCD is prepared to enter into a collaborative agreement with your organisation. Nevertheless, your replies to due diligence enquiries are an important step in progressing your organisation's relationship with UCD.

Enquiries about this document can be made to the UCD Quality Office (qualityassurance.office@ucd.ie).

Contact details

Name of organisation: *University College Dublin*

Full postal address of organisation: *Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland*

Website of organisation: www.ucd.ie

UCD Profile: <http://www.ucd.ie/universityrelations/about-ucd/index.html>

Contact details (email address and telephone number) and role of the person who completed the *pro forma*:

To be inserted on a case-by-case basis

Contact details (email address and telephone number) of a senior member of the organisation with responsibility for collaborative provision (e.g. vice-president or similar):

Professor Mark Rogers, UCD Registrar and Deputy President: email: officeoftheregistrar@ucd.ie Tel: +353 1 716 1404

Contact details (email address and telephone number) of a member of the organisation's quality assurance office/academic secretariat etc, as appropriate :

UCD Quality Assurance: Dr Roy Ferguson

UCD University Secretariat: Dr Sinéad Critchley

1 Governance and status

1.1 Please provide a brief history of the organisation and its development, indicating its position within the local, regional, national and international context (as applicable)

UCD University History timeline: <http://www.ucd.ie/president/universityhistory/timeline/>

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN (UCD) is one of Europe's leading research-intensive universities where undergraduate education, postgraduate masters and PhD training, research, innovation and community engagement form a dynamic continuum of activity.

The University was established in 1854 by [John Henry Newman](#) whose classic work *The Idea of a University* is one of the most enduring texts on the value of higher education and a source of inspiration for UCD's current educational philosophy.

UCD is Ireland's largest university with almost 25,000 students. It is the most popular destination for Irish school-leavers and actively promotes university life as a journey of academic and personal discovery through its highly innovative and flexible undergraduate curriculum.

UCD is Ireland's leader in postgraduate education with approximately 7,000 postgraduate students, representing approximately 28% of the UCD student population, and almost 2,000 PhD students. Over 50% of UCD undergraduates progress to postgraduate studies.

UCD is home to over [5,000 international students](#) and, in addition, places great emphasis on the internationalisation of the Irish student experience – preparing all UCD students for future employment and life that crosses borders, boundaries and cultures.

The role of UCD within Irish higher education is underscored by the fact that UCD alone accounts for over 30% of international students, over 25% of all postgraduate students and almost 28% of all doctoral enrolments across the seven Irish universities.

UCD is the national leader in research funding, attracting quality investment that has helped the University to establish a reputation as a world-class destination for leading researchers. The University has established four major interdisciplinary research themes that match Ireland's needs and current global challenges.

UCD keeps an external focus, seeking to lead and shape agendas through alliances and partnerships with its peers, nationally and internationally.

The international standing of UCD has increased rapidly in recent years and the University is currently ranked within the top 1% of institutions world-wide by the Times Higher Education rankings.

UCD is located on a large 133-hectare campus close to Dublin's city centre, which provides a mix of academic facilities, research institutes, libraries and archival collections, enterprise space, student villages, and sports and recreational facilities.

Teaching and Learning

UCD offers a wide range of [undergraduate programmes](#). In addition to high quality programmes in the humanities, social sciences and the natural, physical and performance sciences, UCD offers courses in most professional disciplines including architecture, business, education, engineering, law, medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, and diagnostic imaging. To view a complete list of UCD's undergraduate and graduate programmes go to http://www.ucd.ie/students/course_search.htm

UCD is the only university on the island of Ireland to offer programmes across the spectrum of agriculture, food science, food safety and veterinary medicine. [UCD Quinn School of Business](#) is highly internationally networked and a major feeder to [UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business](#), one of the world's leading graduate business

schools.

The high quality learning and [student experience](#) at UCD is made visible through the attributes of the UCD graduate. Achieving these attributes drives UCD's education objectives and institutional priorities. The UCD graduate is academically excellent, intellectually flexible and culturally literate, and globally engaged.

The modularisation of UCD's extensive portfolio of [taught graduate programmes](#) and the development of the UCD Structured PhD and Graduate Schools has established the University as a national leader in graduate education. UCD also offers a menu of continuing professional development, executive education and adult learning opportunities.

Research and Innovation

UCD has prioritised four major research themes which build on the University's established or emerging research strengths, dovetail with national research policy objectives and contribute to the preservation and exploration of Ireland's cultural heritage and the development of solutions for current global challenges. The priority areas are:

- *Earth Sciences, Energy and the Environment*
- *Health and Healthcare Delivery*
- *Information, Computation and Communication*
- *Global Ireland.*

UCD is home to a number of primary Research Institutes which have been established to provide world-class facilities for a critical mass of academics and PhD students who are conducting research into a broad spectrum of areas. These include:

- *UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research*
- *UCD Geary Institute*
- *UCD Complex and Adaptive Systems Laboratory*
- *UCD Institute for Food and Health*
- *UCD Humanities Institute*
- *UCD Urban Institute*

UCD also leads or partners in several major externally-funded Centres for Science, Engineering and Technology, Strategic Research Clusters, Inter-Institutional Collaborative Programmes and Research Centres in such areas as:

- *Sensor web technologies*
- *Systems biology*
- *Nanobiotechnology and biopharmaceuticals*
- *Drug delivery*
- *Solar energy conversion*
- *Financial mathematics*
- *Technology research for independent living and healthy ageing*
- *Electricity grid integration*
- *Molecular medicine*
- *War studies*
- *Life courses issues and public policy.*

For more on UCD's research programmes visit

<http://www.ucd.ie/research/whatweresearch/strategicpriorities/>.

In addition the University hosts research programmes built around key archival collections and databases such as:

- *Papers of many of Ireland's key political parties and leaders*
- *Irish Franciscan Archive*
- *Irish Folklore Archive*
- *Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive (IVRLA)*

- [Irish Social Science Data Archive \(ISSDA\)](#)

The University has won over €480m in externally funded research contracts in the last five years.

The [UCD-TCD Innovation Alliance](#) is a partnership between University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin (TCD), Ireland's leading research universities. Its over-arching objective is to leverage the combined resources of both institutions in concert with the State and its agencies, and business and venture capital communities to develop a world-class ecosystem for innovation that will drive enterprise development in Ireland.

UCD has one of Ireland's most successful technology transfer and incubator units, [UCDinnovation](#), which supports both companies spinning out from the university's research programmes and external start-ups wishing to avail of the university's pool of expertise and technologies.

For more information visit [UCD Research](#).

Internationalising the Student Experience

UCD is home to over [5,000 international students](#) from 121 countries. Many of these are full degree undergraduate or postgraduate students spread across UCD's full range of subjects.

UCD also offers vibrant Junior Year Abroad (JYA) and Semester Abroad programmes for international students seeking to sample Irish and European education and culture for shorter periods. While initially designed for US students these programmes are becoming increasingly popular for students from other countries.

UCD has student exchange and/or collaborate educational programmes with many leading Chinese universities including Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Renmin University, Fudan University, Wuhan University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Shenzhen University.

UCD has recently partnered with Beijing University of Technology (BJUT) to establish the first international university in the Chinese capital. UCD also runs overseas programmes in partnership with leading international universities and private higher education providers in China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain, and Sri Lanka.

UCD students have access to a variety of study abroad and international volunteering opportunities. The university has the largest outgoing cohort of Erasmus exchange programme of any English-speaking university in Europe. In addition, UCD is a member of the [Universitas 21](#) network of global research universities which offers a variety of student mobility initiatives, including the Undergraduate Research Conference, Summer School and traditional exchange programmes.

[UCD's Volunteers Overseas](#) (UCDVO) and Medical Students Overseas Relief societies send hundreds of students volunteering per annum to the developing world.

1.2 Please provide details of the organisation's legal status (e.g. corporation, company or charitable trust); its charitable status; whether it is public (i.e. wholly or largely government funded) or private; the legal basis of its degree awarding powers (if applicable); and its capacity in law to contract with other organisations (including any powers to award joint degrees). Reference should be made to relevant supporting documentation e.g. charter and statutes, or instrument and articles of government, or licence to operate etc. If the organisation has degree awarding powers please state at what level (undergraduate, taught masters, doctoral).

University College Dublin (UCD) traces its origin to the creation of the Catholic University of Ireland by Cardinal John Henry Newman in 1854. UCD was incorporated into the federal National University of Ireland (NUI), as a constituent college, to which a Charter was granted on 2 December 1908. UCD was established as an autonomous, publicly funded institution in 1997 (one of seven universities in the State), within the NUI framework.

The *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (2012) Act* and the *University Statutes* provide the legislative context for the governance of the University (see <http://www.ucd.ie/quality/>).

UCD has degree awarding powers from undergraduate to doctorate.

1.3 Please provide details of the organisation's main strategic objectives and/or mission statement. This should include academic objectives

UCD Strategic Plan 2015-2020: <http://www.ucd.ie/strategy2015-2020/>

1.4 Please provide details of the organisation's corporate/university plan

As above

1.5 Please provide details of the organisation's organisational structure, including its committee structure (if applicable) and senior management team (its composition and role)

UCD Organisational Structure: <http://www.ucd.ie/structure/>
University Management Team: <http://www.ucd.ie/president/umt/>

1.6 Please provide a link to the organisation's prospectus

UCD Prospectus: <https://www.myucd.ie/ucd-prospectus/>

2 Finance

2.1 Please provide details of how the organisation is financed, including information about the major sources of income

Please see: <http://www.ucd.ie/bursar/>

2.2 Please provide the organisation's audited accounts for the last three years

Please see: <http://www.ucd.ie/bursar/>

2.3 Please provide any annual corporate reports produced by the organisation for the last three years

<http://www.ucd.ie/president/speechespublications/publications/>

3 Experience of, and procedures for, collaboration provision

3.1 Please provide details of the organisation's objectives for collaboration provision

<http://www.ucd.ie/strategy2015-2020/>

3.2 Please provide details of the organisation's previous experience of collaborative provision (i.e. including links that have finished) and a list of current collaborative partners (Ireland and overseas). Please note that the [Institution] may wish to contact former or current collaborative partners to request further

information or obtain a reference. It would be helpful, therefore, if you could provide the contact details for current or former collaborative partners

Please contact: qualityassurance.office@ucd.ie

3.3 Please provide policies and procedures relating to the establishment and monitoring of collaborative arrangements (e.g. quality assurance procedures)

<http://www.ucd.ie/quality/>
<http://www.ucd.ie/governance/>

3.4 Please provide details about any national quality agency or other awarding/licensing authority requirements

Quality and Qualifications Ireland: <http://www.qqi.ie/>

UCD's Quality Assurance arrangements are externally reviewed at least once every seven years. The most recent Review Report (2011) is available at the web address set out in 4.1 below.

4 Academic good standing

4.1 Please provide evidence of the academic good-standing of the organisation, making reference to any recent external audits, reviews of the organisation, or similar published reports

UCD was subject to an independent Institutional Quality Review in March 2011 – the Review Group Report and UCD response is available at: <http://www.ucd.ie/quality/ucdqualityframework/qualityreviewschedule/>

4.2 Please provide details of the organisation's strategy for learning and teaching (or equivalent)

<http://www.ucd.ie/strategy2015-2020/>

4.3 Please provide a brief summary of the human and material resources which are dedicated to the academic objectives of the organisation

Please see:

Financial - <http://www.ucd.ie/bursar/>

Human Resources - <http://www.ucd.ie/hr/about>

Buildings & Services - <http://ucdestates.ie/>

IT Services – <http://www.ucd.ie/itservices/>

Research – <http://www.ucd.ie/research/>

Library – <http://www.ucd.ie/libraryandarchives.htm>

Academic Affairs - <http://www.ucd.ie/registrar/>

5 Treatment of staff and students

5.1 Please make reference to and/or provide policies that demonstrate that the organisation is committed to the equal treatment of all staff and students

A list of relevant policies may be found at: <http://www.ucd.ie/hr/policies/>

5.2 Please make reference to and/or provide policies (e.g. health and safety, professional indemnity insurance) that demonstrate that the organisation is committed to ensuring a safe working environment for staff and students

Related policies:

Health and Safety at Work – <http://www.ucd.ie/hr/a-z/healthsafetyatwork/#d.en.31454>

Safety Office – <http://www.ucd.ie/safety/>

Insurance/indemnity – <http://www.ucd.ie/sirc/>

Further information can be obtained from corporate.legal@ucd.ie and/or insurance@ucd.ie