Partnership Teaching Staff Approval

Procedure and Guidance

1.   Introduction

The University and its educational partners agree that all staff with regular teaching responsibilities and/or responsibility for the setting and marking of assessment for University-approved programmes must receive prior approval from the University to teach the specific modules at the level and in the subject discipline that they deliver.

When considering the approval of partnership teaching staff, the University considers its obligations to comply with the conditions of the Regulatory Framework for Higher Education in England (Office for Students, 2018) as well as internal strategic and operational objectives, particularly those articulated in the Education Strategy 2030.

Through the Programme Design and Approval process, the University appraises the ability and capacity of partner academic staff to deliver the programme and develops a central register of approved teaching staff.

Any subsequent changes are approved by subject specialists in the appropriate School of Study following an application by the partner to the Academic Governance and Quality (AGQ) team. AGQ is responsible for informing educational partners of approvals and for maintaining the central register of all approved partner teaching staff.

2.   Principles

This procedure is supported by the following underlying principles. Partner staff are:
- given approval to deliver specific modules on named programmes;
- granted approval indefinitely, however this is monitored through the partner organisation's staff appraisal mechanisms and through Partner Programme Review;
- expected to undertake professional practice, scholarship, or research in line with those University staff teaching a similar range of modules at the same level in a similar subject discipline.

3.   Approval Criteria

The Head of School (as chair of School Quality Management Committee) will initially assess staff against the following minimum criteria for approval:
- a formal academic qualification at the level of the award that they would be teaching. If the qualification has been gained overseas equivalency will be assessed where possible, and familiarity with teaching and assessing in UK Higher Education should be evident;
- staff being appointed to teach accredited degrees must have a qualification recognised by the relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), if required;
- experience of teaching and assessing at the level and in the subject discipline;

- a teaching qualification or currently registered on one, particularly Advance HE's Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE);
- where in a leadership position related to the management of quality and standards at programme level, evidence of similar leadership at module level;

Where staff do not meet all these criteria, the Head of School may need further information in order to make a decision. The partner institution will be expected to demonstrate to the University that the proposed staff member has a continuing ability to deliver teaching and assessment at the assigned level and in the subject discipline. The following are examples of the types of evidence partner institutions may be asked to provide to demonstrate that the proposed staff member undertakes professional practice, scholarship, or research in the subject discipline:

- involvement with external professional bodies;
- consultancy work;
- liaison with industry and commerce;
- obtaining external funding and awards;
- participation in external conferences or otherwise raising the external profile of the institution;
- undertaking research and publishing in books, journals and monographs;
- editorship of journals;
- producing public output such as films, exhibitions, performance;
- curriculum development;
- involvement with quality assurance processes including programme/module design and review.

4.   Approval Process

Partner teaching staff for newly approved programmes will initially be approved through the Programme Design and Approval process by the Head of School as part of the submission to an Academic Approval Panel or through the desk based review paperwork to Curriculum Committee.

Subsequent applications for approval will be required where there are changes to staffing or to the allocation of modules. They must be submitted to AGQ using the Changes to Partnership Teaching Staff form (available on the AGQ webpage under Quality Handbook, Partnership Management) in order to allow time for approval by the Head of School before the teaching has started.

It is the responsibility of the educational partner to inform AGQ of any approved teaching staff who leave or change their teaching responsibilities, as well as applying for approval for new teaching staff.

Applications cannot be submitted by individual staff members. They must come from the educational partner, having already been endorsed through its internal procedures. If this is not evident from the application, AGQ will refer it back to the partner.

Where an application is received for a programme spanning more than one School of Study, it will be referred to the Head of School in the owning School and it is the responsibility of that School to involve the other in the approval process.

Decision

The Head of School will consider the application, as submitted, against the approval criteria. If there is any doubt about the validity or veracity of evidence, further information in the form of a reference or interview with the candidate may be requested.

Consideration should be given to whether the programme teaching team is over-reliant on the knowledge, skills, and experience of one or few staff member/s. In situations where this may be in question, further information may be sought from the partner, and agreed between the partner and the University on:

1. The ongoing development of the teaching team, including support and mentoring within the teaching team
2. Additional support and oversight required by the Link Tutor, for example, with marking and assessment activities.
3. Mitigations for staff absence.

The Head of School agrees the programme(s), level, and/or modules for which approval is granted.

If the Head of School considers that the member of staff does not meet the criteria for approval then the application will be rejected. In the event of any disagreements over approval of applications, the PVC Partnership Strategy retains the ultimate responsibility for making approval decisions.

Notification of outcome

The Head of School notifies AGQ of the outcome, ensuring that a rationale is provided where:

- approval has been granted to a partner staff member who does not meet all of the criteria for approval;
- the level of approval differs from that applied for;
- an application has been rejected.

The partner institution is informed of the decision and, if approval is confirmed, the staff member can then commence teaching.

## 5.	Register

AGQ maintains the definitive Register of Partner Teaching Staff and publishes an internal list for each partner programme to the Head of School and Link Tutor(s) in the owning School of Study. Schools should monitor the register and report any omissions or inaccuracies to AGQ.

Document Details

Responsible Office: Academic Governance and Quality

Responsible Officer: Head of Academic Governance and Quality

Approving Authority: Academic Board

Date of latest approval: April 2023

Effective Date: May 2023

Related Policies and Procedures: Programme Design and Approval

Supersedes: n/a

Next review due: April 2027