**Academic Approval Of Taught Award Or Credit-Bearing Provision Delivered In Partnership**

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# Outline of the procedure

1. This stage in the approval process has been designed to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and to meet the common and core practices for standards and quality. It takes account of a number of guiding principles set out within the accompanying Advice and Guidance sections.
2. Having approved the separate due diligence and risk reports from the Vice Principal for International and External Relations(or nominee) and Finance, and the outcomes of the partner visit (if required) the Collaborative Provision Committee will authorise the proposal to proceed to the academic scrutiny stage.
3. The academic approval process for taught provision delivered in partnership, follows an identical process for taught provision delivered at an Edinburgh campus, that is, scrutiny by internal and external academic peers at a formal approval event. See [Quality Framework Section 1: Curriculum Management: Development, Approval, Change & Withdrawal](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection1curriculummanagement.pdf) for detailed information on internal school-level scrutiny.

# Underpinning principles

1. Academic approval is undertaken on behalf of the University by a panel consisting of independent internal and external academic peers with no direct connection to the proposing school.
2. Academic approval is undertaken to judge whether the proposed partner has the ability to support and carry out the delivery of the proposed provision and to support students’ learning through the intended delivery model.
3. Academic approval events involving a new partner organisation will take place either at the partner organisation or online in a series of videoconference meetings. The location will be decided by the Collaborative Provision Committee taking account of the factors referred to below, whether the proposed partner is a current or new partner and if the will be taught on a different campus. Each location of delivery will require a separate approval.
4. The location of subsequent programme approval events involving an existing partner will be agreed by the Collaborative Provision Committee on a case-by-case basis taking account of the following criteria:
5. monitoring by the Vice Principal for International and External Relations and Finance has not identified any potential reputational risk to the University
6. the proposed additional provision is in a subject area already being delivered in partnership with the existing partner
7. existing approved provision in the proposed subject area must have been scrutinised through the first year review process
8. any action required of the partner as a result of University monitoring and review activities has been satisfactorily resolved
9. the proposed provision will be delivered on the same premises as existing approved provision and by the existing partner
10. the partner has appropriate and proven as effective video conferencing facilities to enable an event to be conducted through this medium if agreed by the Collaborative Provision Committee
11. the partner agrees in writing to the approval event not taking place at the place of delivery.
12. The location of the approval event will be discussed and agreed by the Collaborative Provision Committee as part of the CPC1 approval process.
13. Approved modules within a proposed programme structure will not be subject to scrutiny and re-approval but module descriptors will be made available electronically to the approval panel considering a proposal.
14. Academic approval enables external and internal peers to meet with a programme team to evaluate critically and reflect upon a proposal to offer students in another location, a viable and secure learning experience, equitable to that provided to Edinburgh-based students.
15. The time taken to prepare for and complete the academic approval of a collaborative programme delivered in partnership is controlled by the proposing school and dependent on the nominated coordinator(s) ensuring that the Collaborative Provision Committee is kept fully informed of progress in developing a proposal in accordance with this process.
16. Due to the nature of franchise and the possibility it may involve programmes from more than one school, the time taken to prepare for and complete the academic approval process will be guided by the Schools and Partner offices, with input from DLTE, International Operations and other professional services area as appropriate.
17. CPC will not allow the proposal to proceed to approval until the Business Case is agreed
18. The Convenor of the Collaborative Provision Committee reserves the right to cancel an approval event should inadequate or incomplete documentation be available three weeks before the agreed date for the event.
19. [CPC4](https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/learning-design-and-support/quality-and-standards/quality-framework/section-4-related-resources) provides a planning template of key dates and activities associated with the academic approval process.

# Responsibilities

## Nominated coordinator responsibilities

1. Nominated coordinators are responsible for:
2. leading and coordinating the development of a proposed taught award or credit-bearing programme and for ensuring that the proposal is supported by subject colleagues and the Dean of School(s)
3. ensuring that Collaborative Provision Committee is kept fully informed of any subject specific matters which have the potential to affect the formal academic approval process
4. ensuring all administrative arrangements relating to travel and accommodation are completed and for arranging for all financial costs associated with the academic approval event to be met by the School(s).
5. liaising with the module leaders of all modules within the proposed programme structure to ensure that they are aware of and support the proposal
6. liaising with colleagues to design and develop new taught modules where appropriate
7. liaising with Information Services colleagues regarding the provision of learning resources
8. Liaising with Information Services and Admissions colleagues regarding the provision of appropriate matriculation tasks if the proposed provision is a franchise
9. liaising with appropriate School Support Service staff to arrange sign off by the Dean of School in the Curriculum Management Environment and to confirm the target date for the proposal to be considered by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel
10. ensuring that any matters identified during School-based approval workflows are addressed (and signed off by the Dean of School before the proposal is considered by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel
11. liaising with the module leaders of all modules within the proposed programme structure to ensure that they are aware of and support the outcome of the school-level scrutiny
12. ensuring that the approved information set to support a programme proposal is signed-off and released by the School Academic Lead for Quality as being of an appropriate standard and quality for consideration by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel
13. liaising with appropriate School Support Service staff to provide the approved minimum information set to support the proposal within the agreed school timescale
14. where appropriate, providing appropriate School Support Service staff with amended paperwork to take full account of any changes required by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel.

## Clerk to Collaborative Provision Committee responsibilities

1. The Clerk to Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for:
2. appointing the approval panel and briefing them on their role
3. circulating the approved minimum information set to support the academic proposal to panel members a minimum of 14 working days before the agreed date for the approval event
4. receiving from panel members a list of points they wish to explore with the programme team(s) during the event a minimum of seven working days before the agreed date for the approval event. This list will be developed using approval checklist [CPC3](https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/learning-design-and-support/quality-and-standards/quality-framework/section-4-related-resources)
5. where practical, sending the nominated coordinator(s) a summary of panel members’ comments on the proposal before the day of the meeting
6. providing a report to the Collaborative Provision Committee and the appropriate School Education & Student Experience Committee on the points discussed during the approval event, the outcome reached, areas of good or innovative practice, strengths and achievements noted by panel members (and a brief reflection by panel members on the conduct of the approval event)
7. reviewing the amended paperwork sent by the nominated coordinator to ensure that approval panel requirements have been met
8. forwarding the amended paperwork to the approval panel convenor for final approval
9. for overseas partnerships or franchises, liaising with the Office of the Vice Principal for International and External Relations regarding the preparation of the final collaboration agreement and [CPC5](https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/learning-design-and-support/quality-and-standards/quality-framework/section-4-related-resources) for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relations and the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee
10. for global online support centres, liaising with the Global Online Enhancement Lead regarding the preparation of the final global online support centre collaborative agreement and CPC5 for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relationsand the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee
11. for UK-based partnerships or franchises, liaising with appropriate School Support Service staff regarding the preparation of the final collaboration agreement and CPC5 for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relations and the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee
12. maintaining and retaining accurate and complete records to demonstrate that all taught provision is designed, developed, approved and amended in accordance with this procedure.

# The Collaborative Provision Committee’s academic approval panel

## Selecting the Collaborative Provision Committee’s academic approval panel

1. The Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee in liaison with the nominated coordinator will appoint, on behalf of Collaborative Provision Committee, an approval panel to consider each proposal and arrange for them to be briefed on their role. A standard Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel will consist of:
2. a convenor (typically a member of an Academic Board sub-committee but not from the proposing school(s)
3. An external academic peer for each subject area under consideration (agreed in principle by the nominated coordinator and Clerk to the Committee, in accordance with guidance set out in [Quality Framework Section 0b: Appointing External Peers](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection0bappointingexternalacademicpeers.pdf))
4. an internal academic peer (typically a member of an Academic Board sub-committee but not from the proposing school(s) and preferably with experience of managing provision delivered in partnership)
5. a clerk (nominated by the Head of Quality & Enhancement).

## The Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel programme

1. A typical Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel programme will, as a minimum, include:
2. a meeting with programme and partner representatives as appropriate to clarify any points arising from panel members’ initial scrutiny of documentation
3. a tour of specialist learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposal where appropriate. For online events, this would typically be in the form of a presentation or video shared with the panel in advance of the event.
4. a meeting of the panel to discuss and agree the outcome of the approval event
5. a meeting with programme and partner representatives to provide initial feedback on the outcome of the Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel.

20. In the case of franchise involving more than one programme / subject area the programme will include:

1. a joint meeting with partner senior management as appropriate to clarify any points relating to eg strategy, resources and other issues relevant to the development and running of the franchised programmes
2. a tour of specialist learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposal where appropriate
3. Separate meeting with programme and partner academic staff as appropriate for each programme / subject area being considered to clarify any points arising from panel members’ initial scrutiny of documentation
4. a meeting of the panel(s) to discuss and agree the outcome of the approval event
5. a joint meeting with programme and partner representatives (including senior management and academic staff involved in the teaching of the programme(s) being considered to provide initial feedback on the outcome of the Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel.
6. The programme for each Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel will be agreed by the Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee in liaison with the approval panel convenor, nominated coordinator(s) anbd relevant partner representatives.

## Information to be made available to the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel

1. The Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee will circulate the following information set to panel members a minimum of 14 working days before the agreed date for the event:
2. a programme for the meeting of the Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel
3. the names, appointment and home institution of panel members
4. the following documents which have been approved for circulation by the School Academic Lead for Quality on behalf of the School Education & Student Experience Committee:
5. a CME Provision Record for each proposed programme of study which meets University expectations
6. a brief and concise academic rationale within in the CME provision record(s) to support the introduction of the proposed award or credit-bearing programme which clearly describes the following topics not included in the programme specification
* the ways in which the proposal contributes to meeting the University’s approved Strategy and the school strategic or operational plans
* the market analysis undertaken by the programme leader to underpin the viability of the proposal
* the management and administrative arrangements to support the mode of delivery
* the outcome of the assessment of any potential risk that could affect adversely the University’s reputation and standing as a result of delivering the proposal
* the account given to the feedback and comment received from the external subject specialist peer(s) on the appropriateness of the proposal with particular reference to subject area expectations regarding the content, academic challenge and learning, teaching and assessment practices
* any other areas of interest that the programme team wish to bring to the attention of the panel.
1. electronic access to a module descriptor for each module within the proposed taught award or credit-bearing programme structure
2. the report of the school scrutiny event
3. [a CPC3 which provides panel members with a list of points to be considered during the Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel.](https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/learning-design-and-support/quality-and-standards/quality-framework/section-4-related-resources)
4. A minimum of seven working days before the visit, panel members will provide the clerk with a brief written commentary of points they wish to explore with programme team and school representatives during the meeting. This commentary will be developed using the CPC3.
5. Panel members’ written commentaries are not shared with the nominated coordinator. Where practical, the Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee approval panel will aim to provide the nominated coordinator with a summary of panel members’ comments on the proposal(s) before the day of the meeting.

## Scrutiny undertaken by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel

1. Using the CPC3 members of the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel will assess, using their academic experience and judgement, whether University expectations for the academic standard and quality of the student learning experience for a taught award or credit-bearing programmes are met. The panel will also provide comment and feedback on the overall appropriateness and quality and standard of the proposal.

## Recording the outcome of the approval event

1. Having scrutinised and discussed the proposal with the University and proposed partner programme teams the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel will record a decision as follows:
2. **Approved without amendment** to the programme specification or supporting documentation.
3. **Approved with recommendations** which the programme team will be encouraged to reflect on in implementing the proposal. Unlike conditions, recommendations do not need to be taken into account before the programme is offered to students. However, the first year review will provide an opportunity to explore with the programme team(s) what account was given to any recommendations made.
4. **Approved with conditions** which must be addressed and the amended programme specification must be signed-off by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel convenor before the proposal can be deemed to be approved. In such cases the panel will provide the programme team(s) with precise feedback on the matters to be addressed. Following discussion with the programme team(s) the panel will agree a date by which the proposal can be amended to take account of each condition which will enable the convenor to sign-off the proposal as being approved.
5. **Not approved.** In the unlikely event that a Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel does not believe that a proposal can be approved the panel will provide the programme team(s) with precise feedback on the matters to be addressed before the decision can be reconsidered. In such cases the panel convenor will provide the Dean of School, School Academic Lead for Quality and appropriate School Support Service officers with the reason for this decision being made and precise feedback on the matters to be addressed before the decision can be reconsidered.
6. Students must not be offered a place on a programme until it has received academic approval and the collaboration agreement has been signed by both parties in accordance with [Quality Framework Section 4f: Signing the collaboration agreement](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection4fsigningthecollaborationagreement.pdf). In exceptional cases, prior to approval being granted a programme may be advertised but must clearly state that it is subject to formal approval.
7. The clerk to the approvals panel will provide a report which includes:
8. the names, appointment and home institution of panel members
9. detailed information on how comments and feedback from panel members have been addressed
10. the outcome reached
11. the period of approval granted by the panel which must not exceed five years (or 7 years in the case of franchise arrangements)
12. any conditions set by the panel
13. any recommendations made for consideration by the programme team
14. areas of good or innovative practice, strengths and achievements or areas for further development identified by panel members
15. The Collaborative Provision Committee and School Education & Student Experience Committee will receive the report on the outcome of each approval event with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the collaborative programme design, development and approval process. Areas of good or innovative practice, strengths and achievements or areas for further development identified by the panel will be discussed with a view to disseminating relevant information University-wide through School Education & Student Experience Committee meeting minutes and the school annual summary report to Quality & Standards Committee as appropriate.
16. In addition, it is the responsibility of the School to incorporate the new programme into the schedule of Institution-led Review to ensure that it is reviewed no more than six years following approval, and in accordance with [Quality Framework Section 2b: Institution-led Review of Taught Programmes](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection2binstitutionledreviewilr.pdf). The updated review schedule must be approved by the University Quality & Standards Committee.
17. The report on the outcome of each approval event must be retained by the Clerk to Collaborative Provision Committee as a means of informing future internal or external audit, monitoring or review activities including first year review. The report should be retained until the provision is either formally re-approved or withdrawn, whichever is sooner.

# Action to be taken after the proposal receives academic approval

1. After the Collaborative Provision Committee’s academic approval event the nominated coordinator is responsible for ensuring that:
2. the programme specification and all other paperwork is amended to take full account of any changes required by the Collaborative Provision Committee’s academic approval panel
3. the amended paperwork is sent to the Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee by the date agreed at the approval event
4. Finance is notified
5. for overseas partnerships, franchise arrangements and Global Online support Centres the TNE and Global Online Operations Manager is notified,and for UK-based partnerships the appropriate School Support Service Manager is notified to enable the collaborative agreement to be finalised
6. the appropriate School Support Service Manager is notified to ensure the appropriate programme codes are set up in CME and SITS
7. Information Services (and when appropriate, admissions) are notified to enable appropriate matriculation support
8. the Office of the Vice principal for International and External Relations is notified to enable a Project Proposal Form to be completed and a new project created in the relevant planning systems.
9. After the academic approval event the Clerk to the Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for:
10. reviewing the amended paperwork sent by the nominated coordinator to ensure that approval panel requirements have been met
11. forwarding the amended paperwork to the Collaborative Provision Committee’s approval panel convenor for final approval
12. for overseas partnerships liaising with the University’s International Programmes Manager regarding the preparation of the final collaboration agreement and [CPC5](https://intranet.napier.ac.uk/academic-and-student-resources/learning-design-and-support/quality-and-standards/quality-framework/section-4-related-resources) for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relations and the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee
13. for global online support centres, liaising with the Global Online Enhancement Lead regarding the preparation of the final agreement and CPC5 for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relations and the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee
14. for UK-based partnerships liaising with the appropriate School Support Service officer regarding the preparation of the final collaboration agreement and preparing CPC5 for signature by the Director of Finance, Dean of School, Vice Principal for International and External Relations and the Convenor of Collaborative Provision Committee.

# Amending taught award or credit-bearing provision delivered in partnership

1. All proposals to amend taught award or credit-bearing provision delivered in partnership with another organisation must be submitted to Collaborative Provision Committee for consideration and approval.
2. The process for amending taught award or credit-bearing provision is set out in [Quality Framework Section 1: Curriculum Management: Development, Approval, Change & Withdrawal](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection1curriculummanagement.pdf) and the same principles apply to provision delivered in partnership with another organisation.

# Systematic re-approval of an approved collaborative programme

1. The cyclical programme review process described in [Quality Framework 2b](https://documentcentre.napier.ac.uk/-/media/files/academic-policies/quality-framework/qualityframeworksection2binstitutionledreviewilr.pdf), Institution led Review of taught programmes provides an opportunity for programme teams to systematically review and re-approve all taught provision.