2015 - 2017
The Academic Partnerships Strategy
Introduction

The Academic Partnerships Strategy 2015 - 2017 supports the University vision to be recognised as a ‘modern civic university delivering solutions to the challenges of the 21st century’, and its purpose is to support the University in the attainment of the following Core Aims from the Liverpool John Moores University Strategy Map 2012 - 2017 and namely; (to be)

- A university that supports the life-long education of its students through proactive links with other education providers to enhance social mobility and access, whilst sustaining our relationship with alumni;
- A university that initiates and supports research collaboration with partners;
- A university that supports the local, national and global economy with innovative knowledge and technology exchange;
- A university that is globally engaged and embraces internationalism to the benefit of its students, staff and partners.

The rationale underpinning Academic Partnership activity is;

The endeavour, through partnership working, to widen the reach, reputation and knowledge base of the University and impact upon the opportunities available locally, regionally and internationally for the educational, social and cultural development of our students and staff.

This document sets out the principles within which the University will aim to develop its Academic Partnership activity in support of the Core Aims stated above. The strategy is operationalised through the Academic Collaborative Partnerships Operational Manual which is reviewed, updated and approved by the Collaborative Quality and Standards Panel (CQSP) on an annual basis. CQSP reports to the Education Committee.

Context

The scope of the Quality Code Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education with Others is:

“... all learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body.

In determining which provision falls within the scope of this Chapter, the critical factor is whether the achievement of the learning outcomes for the module or programme are dependent on the arrangement made with the other delivery or support organisation(s).”

In line with B10, for the purposes of this strategy, an Academic Partnership is classified as being any one of the following arrangements:

- Where the partner delivers either the complete or, a part of the University award;
• Where the partner delivers their own award which is found to be equivalent in standard and level to a body of University academic credit to afford advanced standing entry to the agreed University programme;
• Where the University delivers the academic credit and the partner provides an element/s of support (environmental and/or interactional) that directly impact upon the achievement of learning outcomes for that module or programme.

The Academic Partnerships Strategy 2015 - 2017 encompasses some of the arrangements that fall within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others (December 2012) namely:

• Franchised and validated programmes;
• Joint, dual/double or multiple awards;
• Provision by ‘embedded colleges’ of study preparatory to undergraduate or postgraduate higher education programmes;
• Recognition and Articulation arrangements;
• Study Abroad, including exchanges and student mobility programmes.

The agreed University definitions for the above are found in Appendix 1.

The Governing Principles of Academic Partnership

The governing principles are;

1. **Strategic**
   a. The partner organisation can be seen to reflect the vision and values of the University.
   b. The academic, public and legal standing of the partner organisation is without doubt.
   c. The partner organisation can demonstrate financial viability and stability.
   d. There is demonstrable benefit for each partner.
   e. The partnership will contribute to the civic responsibilities of both organisations.

2. **Standards**
   a. The University remains responsible at all times for the academic standards granted in its name.
   b. The partner organisation can demonstrate that the quality of learning opportunities offered to the student is equivalent to the standards of the University.
   c. The University award/s are fully delivered and assessed in English.

3. **Potential**
   a. There is potential to develop a broader base to the partnership in one or more terms of;
      i. Research or knowledge transfer opportunities.
      ii. Student exchanges and/or joint student projects.
      iii. Internationalisation of the curriculum and the student community.
Each new organisation seeking a partnership with the University is judged according to its strategic fit against a set of criteria which require approval by the Strategic Management Team prior to programme arrangements being developed. Full and due consideration is applied to the organisation in respect of their:

- Reputation.
- Strategic fit with the University.
- Academic Standing.
- Financial Viability and Stability.

Ensuing programme arrangements must be:

- Aligned with the UK Quality Code.
- Compliant with University Academic Framework.
- Compliant with University policies and procedures for academic collaborative provision.
- Based as a minimum on full cost recovery.

**The Scope of the Strategy:**

The term Academic Partnerships reflects a wide range of partners and arrangements reflecting the ever changing nature of Higher Education.

The University has national and international partnerships within both the public and private Education sector with other Universities, Colleges and/or Institutes of Higher Education, Further Education Colleges, Hospital Trusts, the Voluntary Sector, organisations within the Public Sector, and Training organisations.

An Academic Partnership must provide for one or more of the following:

- Progression to the University with recognised advanced standing for entry at either Undergraduate (UG) or Post Graduate (PG) levels (for example: entry to Level 5 or 6 at UG and advanced entry to complete a Masters award);
- Progression to the University having studied part of an LJMU award in the partner organisation and progressing to the University to complete the target award or complete an approved progression award;
- Progression for entry to LJMU at either UG Level 4 or Masters (for example: developing pipeline progression pathways);
- Select opportunities to follow a complete, or top up to, an LJMU award in country through Franchise and/or Validation arrangements;
- Select opportunities to engage with a Joint/Dual award at UG or PG level with time spent in each of the awarding institutions;
- Delivery by University staff in country with follow up distance learning activity for bespoke programmes developed to respond to and meet a particular need at a particular time;
• Study Abroad opportunities involving study¹ within a University leading to the achievement of transferable credit with the associated student experience, or, study activities within a University not involving transfer of credit;
• Summer School experience packages to suit the partners, students and staff including educational and social activities within the University, the city and beyond;
• Provision of short courses on subjects of UK history, culture, language, politics and many others providing cultural and educational experience beyond Summer Schools and tourist trips.

The strategy does not support the development of an Academic Partnership in an area where the University cannot provide academic expertise. Furthermore, outside of a Franchise arrangement it will normally not support the approval of a programme at a Partner bearing the same award title as a programme delivered at the University.

The Strategic Aims:
The Academic Partnerships Strategy 2015 – 2017 has six overarching aims:

1. To support the growth and optimisation of Trans-National Education partnerships.
2. To increase student progression to the University from International partnerships.
3. To support the growth and optimisation of UK partnership activity.
4. To increase the number of opportunities for home students to study abroad.
5. To engage where possible with Government initiatives on collaborative partnership activity.
6. To review year on year existing processes to ensure continued mitigation of risk to the University.

Delivering the Aims:
Academic Partnership activity is working in partnership not only with another organisation, but equally is partnership working between each constituent part of the University that is involved in the totality of the relationship. To be successful in finding and approving the ‘right’ partners, approving the ‘right’ programmes or opportunities, establishing and enhancing the quality of the programmes or opportunities, monitoring the inputs and outputs of the partnership, and, ensuring a student experience equitable to that of home students the University will work as a team to deliver the strategic aims.

The University will do this by:

¹ The term ‘study’ also refers to research or scholarship activity.

4th September 2015
1. Increasing the number of progression routes with advanced standing entry to the University.

There will be a focus on developing arrangements that increase the number of progression opportunities that enable students to enter the Liverpool-based programme with Advanced Standing through the recognition of the partner award as equivalent to part of the University award.

This activity will have regional and international dimensions. Regional in terms of working with Further Education Colleges to provide progression programmes from, for example, HND’s and Foundation Degrees, and International in terms of working with public and private providers to establish progression pathways from their awards into Level 5 or Level 6 of an Undergraduate programme in Liverpool, and/or progression pathways from Post Graduate Certificate level into Post Graduate Diplomas and Masters programmes in Liverpool.

2. Increasing the number of international partnerships with Universities.

Whilst this covers a spectrum of engagement possibilities, there will be a focus on increasing the number of international Joint or Dual Masters, Professional Doctorates and Dual PhD arrangements.

3. Developing the number of Study Abroad programmes and or opportunities with partner organisations.

There will be a focus on working with all LJMU Faculties to identify and develop the offer for both student exchange programmes and study abroad activity.

There will be a focus on working in strategic partnership with external providers of international cultural activities.

4. Providing staff development activity/events for University and partner staff.

The provision of appropriate staff development activity is a key driver in mitigating risk to the University and developing the relationship capital with partner organisations. The activities provided to support this objective include:

- Engagement with the Partnership Forum;
- Engagement in the wider academic community through participation in CPD events and/or particular occasions such as the LJMU Learning and Teaching Conference;
- Provision of training for University staff, for example in reference to developing a new partnership, managing risk and undertaking the required quality and standards processes;
- Provision of training for Partner staff for example in reference to following policy and procedures of the University, enhancing pedagogy and research informed teaching, or responding to a bespoke request.

5. Ensuring a rigorous risk and reputation based approach to the appraisal of new partnership opportunities.

Working closely with Faculties and Professional Services Teams to ensure that the agreed University processes are followed at all times in both (i) the development of a new partnership and (ii) the regular and appropriate monitoring of, and reporting on, existing partnerships.

6. Assisting Government agendas in respect of the provision for transnational education opportunities.
There will be a focus on particular countries with particular needs and aspirations, and working with organisations to support a Governments particular initiative; for example, an agenda to build capacity and knowledge in a certain field or to provide a particular programme of study.

7. **Facilitating and enabling accurate exchange and flow of information.**

Ensuring that full, frequent and accurate information is exchanged between internal colleagues and external colleagues to enable efficient and effective work flows is essential for successful partnership working and the bedrock of developing the relationship capital. Equally important is ensuring that all internal stakeholders are aware of, and have an understanding of, as their role requires, either the institutional or the programme level arrangement/s with a particular partnership, or range of partnerships.

8. **Ensuring that partnership activity is led and managed in full consultation with the Strategic Management Team and other Professional Service Teams as required.**

The provision of appropriate and accurate reports based on regular monitoring activity is available in a timely manner and provide informed discussion and decision taking.

9. **Ensuring that the University agreed processes are followed at all times to mitigate and control risk.**

Internal stakeholders receive, prepare and submit the required paperwork to the appropriate committees/panels to ensure that the agreed process is fully complied with at all times and instigate checks and balances to test and/or realign process where it is agreed that an amendment would mitigate risk further.
Appendix 1

The University has agreed the definitions below to identify the type of academic collaborative programme arrangement that it may have with an external partner. It is possible that a partner with more than one programme could have more than one arrangement.

Collaborative Activity:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Franchise</th>
<th>Where a partner institution is approved to deliver a programme, or part of a programme, designed by LJMU which leads to an award of LJMU. The programme does not also have to be a programme delivered at LJMU. Students on a franchise programme would be LJMU students and the University retains control and responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Validated</td>
<td>Where the partner institution develops its own programme and delivers it as an LJMU validated programme leading to an LJMU award. Students on a validated programme are LJMU students and the University retains control and responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.</td>
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<td>Dual Award</td>
<td>A dual award is defined by LJMU as an arrangement where LJMU, together with one or more awarding bodies, provides a programme leading to separate awards and certificates being granted by all the awarding bodies. Each partner is responsible for its own assessment and quality assurance.</td>
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<td>Embedded College</td>
<td>A private organisation operating near to, or within, the premises of LJMU, usually engaged in the preparation of students for entry to higher education programmes.</td>
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<td>Joint Award</td>
<td>A joint award is an arrangement where LJMU, together with one or more awarding bodies, provides a jointly developed and delivered programme, leading to a single award made jointly by all the awarding bodies. A single certificate is produced, not separate certificates from each awarding body. Responsibility for assessment and quality assurance is in accordance with the agreement between partners.</td>
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<td>Distance Learning</td>
<td>Distance learning is where a programme does not normally require the presence of the students at the LJMU (or partner) campuses. Learners usually study these programmes overseas through the use of specially developed learning materials which can take a number of different formats and will not normally require face-to-face contact with their tutors, e.g. via e-learning. The University retains control and responsibility for academic standards and quality of learning opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distance Taught</strong></td>
<td>A distance taught programme is one that is delivered away from the University, often overseas, by LJMU staff (alternatively called ‘flying faculty’). It may include pastoral support and learner support from local staff but will not include teaching by them. The programme is delivered using premises and resources provided locally by the partner. The University retains control and responsibility for academic standards and quality of learning opportunities.</td>
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<td><strong>Recognition arrangements and articulation arrangements</strong></td>
<td>Recognition arrangements and articulation arrangements are agreements where students who have completed a defined external programme (or an agreed part of the external programme), which is owned by the partner institution, can enter with advanced standing to a subsequent part or level of a programme validated by LJMU. The Articulation Process is used as an alternative streamlined process to the Recognition Process where the proposed partner is well established and meets the prescribed criteria. Each institution is responsible for academic standards and quality of learning opportunities for its own programmes.</td>
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**Study Abroad Activity:**

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<th><strong>Study Abroad</strong></th>
<th>An arrangement whereby students can spend an agreed period of time at another higher education institution following the same programme of study alongside their home students. The home organisation recognises the credit achieved by the student whilst at the host institution, and the grained credit is transferred to the home institution. The home and host institutions agree the point of opportunity for the students to undertake the activity eg students of LJMU would attend x in semester 2 of level 5 / to undertake level 5, students of x would attend LJMU in semester x of level x / to undertake level x. There is no requirement for the activity to be in parallel or sequential.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Exchange</strong></td>
<td>An arrangement with, or without credit, whereby an agreed number of students attend organisation x, as a group, to follow either the same programme of study alongside home students, or, to undertake a bespoke module at a bespoke point in time. The arrangement is reciprocal with students from each organisation attending the other in turn.</td>
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