

# QUICK-REFERENCE GUIDE

## Setting up an international partnership agreement

### Foreword

This Quick-Reference Guide provides Kent staff with an overview of how to set up an international partnership agreement.

Developing an international partnership can be both a rewarding and exciting prospect, but we understand that it can be challenging to know how to approach this and where to go for further support. We hope that you will find this a useful tool to understand and navigate the processes involved, and look forward to working with you.

### Introduction

#### Why are international partnerships important?

The University of Kent is committed to driving forward the development of a range of global partnership activity. We are proud of our excellent international reputation and of our interaction with our partners overseas. You can find a full list of our international partnership agreements on our [International Partnerships Links Database, SharePoint](#).

The [University's Internationalisation Strategy](#) focuses on enhancing our global presence, profile and esteem through a wide range of partnership activities which encompass student & staff exchanges, visiting faculty, dual awards, joint research, enterprise activities and progression arrangements.

#### What are we looking for in an international partnership?

Developing the right partnership provides valuable benefits to both institutions, strengthening education and research objectives and enhancing reputation and esteem. The partnership must be appropriately strategic and sustainable to ensure its success. When contemplating a formal partnership, it is fundamental to first consider whether it will meet both Divisional and Institutional objectives.

### Steps to follow

In order to establish effective international partnerships and ensure the success and longevity of the collaboration, internal policy requires all Kent staff to adhere to a series of pre-collaborative checks, approval processes and guidelines, prior to any binding negotiations with the proposed partner. This applies to both proposed new arrangements and the monitoring and renewal of existing arrangements. Risks must be assessed, managed and minimised by due diligence and risk assessments conducted by both institutions.

#### When is a formal institutional agreement required?

A formal agreement is required to provide a framework for particular activities undertaken with another institution. For a full typology of partnership models that require a formal agreement please see: [The Summary of Typology of Partnerships and Related Approval Processes](#).

#### Where do I start?

We suggest that you instigate an initial discussion with your Head of School and Director of Division regarding the proposed collaboration.

We also encourage you to talk to a member of the International Partnerships team if you would like preliminary discussions and guidance on the most appropriate route to take.

#### How to instigate formal institutional consideration

Once you have the initial support from your Director of Division or equivalent, you should submit a [Statement of Strategic Benefit](#) to International Partnerships. If the proposed partnership would result in a Kent award, the [Quality Assurance and Compliance Office \(QACO\)](#) should also be copied in.

The Statement of Strategic Benefit (SSB) should outline the value of the proposal to the School, Division and the University. It should, wherever relevant, refer to market research and projected KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for the partnership.

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### What due diligence is undertaken?

International Partnerships is responsible for undertaking the pre-collaborative checks on all proposed new international partnerships and the renewal of arrangements, with the oversight of the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office. The following documents are completed by International Partnerships and submitted for institutional consideration;

- Due Diligence Checklist
- Academic Risk Assessment
- Country Risk Assessment

Please see [Annex O of the University's Code of Practice for Quality Assurance](#) for full details of the approval and quality assurance procedures for collaborative partnerships.

### Which committees consider the proposal?

The International Partnerships Approval Panel (IPAP) will consider the Statement of Strategic Benefit (SSB) and pre-collaborative checks. Recommendations from the IPAP are submitted to the Academic Strategy Planning and Performance Board for ratification. The Board will then send ratified recommendations to Senate for final institutional approval.

The IPAP meets once a term. Please contact International Partnerships for submission deadlines for the Statement of Strategic Benefit.

It is important to note that this is an approval of the partnership in principle. Where the proposed partner will be teaching or contributing to a Kent programme, the relevant Division will need to approve the academic collaboration itself.

### What happens when approval is granted?

International Partnerships is responsible for the negotiation and monitoring of the following types of non-collaborative international agreements (*i.e. those that do not entail a University award*):

- Non-Erasmus European and International Exchange
- Incoming only Study Abroad Agreements
- Erasmus+ Inter-institutional Agreements
- Progression Agreements not involving advanced standing
- Formal Overseas Staff Exchange Agreements (Non-Erasmus)
- Memoranda of Understanding.

The Quality Assurance and Compliance Office oversees international agreements that lead to a University award or to specific credit towards a University award (as follows):

- Dual/joint awards
- Articulation arrangements
- Course delivery support partner
- Standalone module delivery provider
- Course delivery provider
- Co-supervision of research degrees
- Joint research awards.

[Kent Graduate and Researcher College \(GRC\)](#) is responsible for the strategy and policy relating to international postgraduate collaboration provision. The GRC works closely with International Partnerships and the Quality Assurance and Compliance Office in this area. The GRC oversees the agreement of individual student contracts for the co-supervision of PhDs with international partners.

## Key contacts

### International Partnerships

- **Hannah McNorton** Head of International Partnerships  
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- **Primrose Paskins** Senior International Partnerships Officer  
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### Quality Assurance and Compliance Office

- **Tina Hagger**, Quality Officer New Collaborative Provision  
[T.J.Hagger@kent.ac.uk](mailto:T.J.Hagger@kent.ac.uk)

### Kent Graduate and Researcher College (GRC)

- Graduate and Researcher College  
[kentgrc@kent.ac.uk](mailto:kentgrc@kent.ac.uk)

## References

- 1 [International Partnerships Links Database SharePoint](#)
- 2 [University of Kent Internationalisation Strategy](#)
- 3 [The Summary of Typology of Partnerships and Related Approval Processes](#)
- 4 [Statement of Strategic Benefit Template](#)
- 5 [Quality Assurance and Compliance Office \(QACO\)](#)
- 6 [Annex O of the University's Code of Practice for Quality Assurance](#)
- 7 [Kent Graduate and Researcher College \(GRC\)](#)