



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

**University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Collaborative Partner Operations Manual**

**Academic Office
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1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Wales, Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) was formed through the merger of three institutions: University of Wales Lampeter, Trinity University College Carmarthen and Swansea Metropolitan University. On 18 November 2010 UWTSD was formed through the merger of the University of Wales Lampeter and Trinity University College Carmarthen, under Lampeter's Royal Charter of 1828. On 1 August 2013, Swansea Metropolitan University became part of UWTSD. The University's Royal Charter is the oldest in Wales and England after the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In 2011 HRH the Prince of Wales became the University's Royal Patron.

During 2017/18 the University will complete its merger with the University of Wales (UW). Following the merger, UW will continue to meet its obligations to students who are registered on programmes of study leading to UW awards, and to the collaborative centres and other institutions where the students are enrolled. Such programmes will continue to be managed in accordance with the academic regulations and quality assurance procedures of UW, which are published separately and are available from the University Registry in Cardiff.

UWTSD's mission is: *Transforming Education; Transforming Lives*

The University's vision is to be a University for Wales, with a commitment to the well-being and heritage of the nation at the heart of all that it does. Central to the vision is the promotion and embedding of a dual sector educational system which educates learners of all ages and backgrounds, and stimulates economic development in the region, across Wales and beyond.

The core values of the University are articulated and advanced through the promotion of the following planning themes:

- *Excellent teaching informed by scholarship and professional practice, and applied research* that influences knowledge and policy in Wales and beyond.
- *Inclusivity*, by removing barriers to participation and supporting people from all backgrounds and circumstances to fulfil their potential.
- *Employability and creativity*, by offering educational programmes that develop entrepreneurial and creative skills, enabling learners to have the best opportunities to gain employment and to contribute to the prosperity of their communities.
- *Collaboration*, through strategic relationships, working with others to provide educational and commercial opportunities to ensure that Wales is connected to the wider world.
- *Sustainable Development*, by behaving in a way which ensures that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and by systematically embedding this principle in our approach to teaching and learning.
- *The concept of Global Citizenship*, through the development of multi-national activities and opportunities for students, staff and partners.
- *Wales and its distinctiveness*, through embedding the goals of the *Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act* in all of our activities, and by celebrating the vibrant culture, heritage and language of Wales.

Two colleges, Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion are part of the UWTSD Group and together the Group is connected in the UK through 17 campuses in rural, town and city locations – Carmarthenshire, Cardiff, Ceredigion, Lampeter, Swansea and London.

The University recruits students from many overseas countries. Its offer to international students includes the opportunity to study the range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at its

campuses in Wales, as well as a range of programmes offered at its London campus. Its international connections extend across the world and its activities promote the internationalisation of the student experience by encouraging international students to study in the UK, but also encouraging home students to take part in the range of study abroad and exchange opportunities that are offered.

The University also offers programmes of study delivered through collaborative partnerships with other institutions in the UK and overseas. These programmes are expected to achieve the same high standards as those delivered at the University's campuses, under the guidance and regulation of its team of qualified and experienced academic and support staff.

Collaborative provision is important to the University as it enables its programmes to be made available to students from a wide range of geographical areas and offers them a truly global education experience. It is also beneficial to the University's partner institutions, and students studying there, in offering valuable links to higher education in the UK, research and staff development opportunities, opportunities for student progression and the benefits available to all University of Wales Trinity Saint David alumni.

The types of collaborative partnership which the University engages in are defined as follows:

- Structural partnerships - within which there is a formal, structural relationship where academic and mission goals are shared. Structural partnerships are likely to include some or all of the following: partnership representation on key University committees and vice versa; the sharing of academic staff (with staff from the University sometimes contributing to programme delivery and other academic activity at the partner institution and vice versa); and the two-way sharing of other resources (including, for example, physical and virtual electronic resources). Structural partners are also referred to as Constituent Colleges.
- Programme partnerships - in which the primary focus of the engagement is the management and delivery of specified academic programmes. Within such partnerships, joint activity is limited to areas that are necessary in order to enable the University to maintain appropriate central oversight of the provision, and so meet its responsibilities in relation to quality and the academic standards of awards. Partner institutions in programme partnerships may be designated Associate Colleges of the University if they meet the required criteria and are approved by the University Council.

Within these types of partnerships, five modes of provision are possible:

- Dual award provision - in which, on the successful completion of programmes, separate and distinct qualifications are awarded by the partner institution and by the University respectively.
- Validation provision - in which curricula are developed by the partner institution's staff, in liaison with the University's staff, for approval by the University.
- Franchise provision - in which a partner institution adopts existing University curricula, either in their entirety or with some permitted degree of flexibility in modifying the content.
- Off-campus provision - in which University staff deliver and assess a programme of the University in a partner institution. Delivery may be supported through the provision of academic, pastoral and/or administrative support by the partner institution's staff. In common terminology, such partnerships may also be described as 'tutor-supported' or 'outreach' partnerships.
- Articulation links - in which students at the partner institution have direct entry with advanced standing into specified programmes of the University.

It is the University's policy that students studying for its awards at partner institutions should have a comparable experience to those studying at one of the University's campuses, with access to the same level of facilities and advice. Therefore, the quality assurance procedures in place at the University are also applied to its partner institutions. The operation and scope of the collaboration is defined by the details, regulations and procedures contained in:

- The report of the Partnership Approval.
- The Definitive Programme Document, produced for programme validation.
- The Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Principal/Vice-Chancellor of the two institutions.

For any collaboration to work effectively there must be a good working relationship between the partners, which is generated by formal and non-formal contact established over a period of time. Opportunities for contact between respective colleagues are provided through attendance at programme meetings/committees, examining and assessment boards and staff development events, as well as ad-hoc contact by academic and administrative staff for a variety of purposes.

About this Manual

This Operations Manual has been written primarily for the guidance of partner institutions, although much of the information it contains will also be relevant to University staff involved in collaborative partnerships. The aim of the Manual is to provide a general guide to operating a collaborative programme, and to confirm the University's commitment to providing a quality service to its partner institutions, to enable them to operate effectively. Throughout the Manual hyperlinks have been used to direct you to relevant supplementary information. There is also a website, <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office>, where academic and administrative staff can gain access to regulations and procedures and related forms.

It is understood that overseas partner institutions recruit students at different times in the year, but there are certain processes that will still need to meet the UK academic year deadlines, such as the submission of Annual Programme Review (APR) reports. If you are in an overseas partner institution and have any questions or concerns regarding how the activities below might affect you, please do not hesitate to contact the Head of Collaborative Partnerships to discuss this (contact details are provided in section 10).

It is especially helpful if partner institutions that have more than one intake a year track the needs associated with each cohort and progress the administrative arrangements on time. It is important to remember that, in addition to administrative issues, there will be other tasks and procedures to be undertaken, such as the approval of assessment materials. There will also be certain activities which will need to be maintained throughout the year, such as the notification of student withdrawals, extenuating circumstances requests, module evaluation forms, publicity materials and minutes from programme meetings. It is vital that any relevant information is received as soon as possible, so that the University's programme and student records can be kept up-to-date.

1.2 The Academic Quality Handbook

The University's Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) is designed to provide guidance and act as a source of reference for the principles, regulations, procedures and administrative practices upon which the University's quality assurance mechanisms are based. The AQH is available to partner institutions electronically, at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/> and in hard copy.

The handbook covers a broad range of areas, including the academic regulatory framework, the University's internal committee structure and quality assurance systems. The principles, regulations and procedures outlined within the handbook apply to all academic activities and should be adhered to wherever it is appropriate to do so.

As a manual of good practice, the processes and procedures outlined will be reviewed and updated regularly and in response to changing circumstances and experiences. Partner institutions will be informed of changes to regulations, processes and procedures in writing.

The AQH consists of chapters, which have associated appendices. The appendices can be found separately at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

This manual includes content from the AQH and refers to the appropriate chapters and appendices for further details, as applicable.

2. PARTNER AND PROGRAMME APPROVAL

2.1 International Affairs and Collaborative Partnerships Committee

Within UWTSD, oversight of academic quality and standards is the responsibility of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC), which reports to the Senate, the most senior academic committee. There is also an International Affairs and Collaborative Partnerships Committee (IACPC), which oversees the University's arrangements for collaborative provision. Specifically, IACPC reports to the Senate on arrangements relating to initiation, development, monitoring and review of the University's collaborative provision, and supports AQSC in advising the Senate on matters relating to the academic quality and standards of that provision. In addition, it leads on the strategic development of the University's International Strategy and opportunities and support for international activity.

The Terms of Reference for all of the University's committees can be found in Chapter 2 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>. The University's key processes for managing its collaborative partnerships are:

- Initial consideration, including investigation, risk assessment and due diligence.
- Partnership approval.
- Programme validation and approval.
- Provision of appropriate academic and related support.
- Monitoring.
- Review.

These processes have been developed in the light of sector best practice and the expectations of Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA's) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*, in particular Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others,

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>

2.2 Approval process

A key feature of the University's approach to collaborative provision is the separation of approval of partner institutions from the approval of individual programmes. The University will not consider the delivery of individual programmes until the partnership approval process has been successfully completed to the satisfaction of Senate, with all conditions met and recommendations considered and acted upon where appropriate.

The University's approval process for new partnerships commences at the corporate level with the submission of a proposal (on Form CP1, available from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>), which includes an initial risk assessment and initial costing, to the Senior Management Team (SMT). The proposal includes a clear indication of the mode of provision envisaged in the first instance. Prior to that there will have been exploratory discussions led by individuals or faculties within the University. (There is a separate process for proposals for articulation links, which is detailed in section 9.14 of Chapter 9 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>).

Following consideration of Form CP1, SMT takes one of the following decisions:

- To approve the proposal for due diligence and detailed costing and to forward the proposal to IACPC to progress.
- To approve the proposal for further investigation at the appropriate time.
- To ask for further information, clarification or discussion.

- Not to approve the proposal.

After a proposal has been given formal approval to proceed, the next steps are to complete due diligence and detailed costing, which is undertaken in four parts:

- Legal due diligence, to establish the statutory and constitutional framework governing the operation of the prospective partner institution and its capacity to enter into a legal agreement with the University. This activity will normally be overseen by the Clerk to the Council, who will provide advice on whether or not the findings are satisfactory.
- Financial due diligence, to establish whether the prospective partner institution is of sound financial standing and has the capacity to meet the financial obligations of a partnership with the University. This activity will normally be overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Planning), who will provide advice on whether or not the findings are satisfactory.
- Academic due diligence, to establish whether the prospective partner institution is of good academic standing and has experience appropriate to the proposed collaboration. In respect of overseas institutions, this will include consulting as appropriate with the British Council and relevant government agencies. Where appropriate, it will also include consultation with relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. This activity will normally be overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who will provide advice on whether or not the findings are satisfactory.
- Detailed costing of the proposal based on the mode of provision envisaged. The costing covers all expenses, including an estimate of the University staff (both academic and support) resource that will be required to support the partnership. The costing will normally be undertaken by the Faculty or individual putting forward the proposal, under the guidance of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Planning), using the proforma provided in Appendix CP2.

The findings of the due diligence process are reported by the Academic Office to a Standing Group designated by IACPC. In the event that the Standing Group concludes that the findings of the due diligence process are satisfactory, it recommends to Senate a formal approval visit to the prospective partner institution is arranged.

2.2.1 Partnership approval

The process of partnership approval is overseen by IACPC and is based on a visit to the prospective partner institution by a University panel appointed by IACPC on behalf of Senate. The purpose of the visit is to ascertain the following:

- That there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the prospective partner institution is of appropriate academic standing.
- That the learning environment, including the human and physical resources, is or can be made appropriate to the standards of UK higher education.
- That the prospective partner institution has an understanding of the administrative and quality assurance requirements of UK higher education and will be able to fulfil those requirements.
- That staff are appropriately qualified, familiar with the requirements and ethos of higher education, have an understanding of UK assessment requirements, and will be able to deliver academic programmes successfully in collaboration with the university.
- That the prospective partner institution and its staff have experience appropriate to the mode of provision envisaged, and that the learning environment is appropriate to that mode of provision.
- That the University's understanding of the local operational context, such as registration with regional and/or national governments and/or regulatory bodies, is accurate, so required actions can be confirmed.

The visit provides an opportunity to have discussions concerning the development of the curriculum; the development of specific resources to support the proposed collaboration; and identify the key staff involved at the institution and at the University.

The duration of the visit is determined by the University. Arrangements are made by the Academic Office in liaison with the prospective partner institution. The visit includes, as a minimum:

- Meetings with the senior management of the prospective partner institution.
- Meetings with a group of students of the institution, including elected student representatives
- Meetings with the teaching staff of the institution.
- (Where the proposed provision includes postgraduate research degrees) meetings with research supervisors.
- Meetings with the staff responsible for the provision of learning resources, student support and student administration.
- Scrutiny of the institution's learning and teaching facilities, and other facilities for students.
- Scrutiny of the records of the institution's academic committees, including those involving the participation of students.
- Scrutiny of the institution's student records and records of examining boards.
- Scrutiny of external examiners' reports and other reports by relevant external bodies.
- Scrutiny of prospectuses and other examples of publicity and marketing, together with the institution's procedures for ensuring that such information is complete and accurate.
- Scrutiny of the curriculum vitae of the senior management team, relevant academic staff and directors.

The outcome of the visit is a report to Senate, via IACPC, setting out the findings of the panel. The report concludes with one of the following recommendations:

- That the institution is approved as a collaborative partner of the University. Approval may be subject to conditions, which must be addressed to the University's satisfaction prior to the next stage in the process, and/or recommendations which must be formally considered by the institution. Where this recommendation is made, the panel also specifies the mode of provision to be offered in the first instance.
- That the partnership is not approved at the current time, but that the University is prepared to consider a partnership in the future, subject to certain conditions.
- That the partnership is not approved as a collaborative partner of the University and that no further consideration should be given to the prospective partnership in the foreseeable future.

In the event that Senate approves the institution as a collaborative partner of the University, the Chair of the approval panel is responsible to IACPC for ensuring that the institution is aware of any conditions of approval and for confirming to IACPC and Senate when such conditions have been met.

When the conditions of approval have been satisfied a Memorandum of Agreement governing the partnership is prepared by the Academic Office for signing by the Vice-Chancellor. The Memorandum of Agreement will be supplemented in due course to reflect the provision approved for delivery by the partner and the agreed financial schedule. The signing of the Memorandum of Agreement is reported formally to IACPC and Senate, and the document is held by the Academic Office.

The partnership may not be advertised until the conditions have been met and the Memorandum of Agreement has been signed.

2.2.2 Programme validation and approval

The initial approval of new programmes is the responsibility of SMT and the process of programme validation is overseen by the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC). Both activities are undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 4 of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH), which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

Upon approval by SMT, the designated administrator shall provide the Faculty and the partner institution with a schedule of deadlines to support the validation.

Validation will normally constitute an event that takes place at the partner institution and includes:

- An opportunity for the validation panel to visit the learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposed programme(s), and to look in detail at the library and technical resources available. (Where the programme is to be delivered at more than one location, visits to other locations may have already taken place as part of the partner approval process and/or via a new centre approval visit; the approved reports of these visits will inform the programme approval process for those locations).
- Consideration of the arrangements proposed by the University and the partner institution for managing the delivery of the programme(s), including liaison and quality assurance arrangements, and the identification of key staff.

Where the proposed provision is in relation to a franchise or off campus partnership, the focus of the validation shall be the partner's capacity to deliver and/or support programme(s), rather than the academic content of the programme. (However, off-campus provision for an existing programme of study may not require a validation event, such as when the programme does not need to be adjusted to fit the location of delivery. Where a validation event is not held there will always be a New Centre Approval visit and documentation for existing programmes of study will be amended, as per the requirements for programme modifications).

First Stage

The first stage of the validation process, prior to an event, is the preparation of documentation, some of which will become the definitive programme documents following the successful validation of the proposal.

The preparation of documentation for validation is undertaken by a Programme Team at the Collaborative Partner, in liaison with staff identified by the relevant Faculty at the University. The precise nature of this activity will vary depending on whether the programme already exists at the University or whether the programme has been designed by the partner in liaison with the University.

In all cases the documentation required for validation takes the form of:

- A draft Programme Document
- An institutional Resources Document
- Written confirmation from specified University officers that the programme is consistent with requirements and that any significant issues identified during the programme development process have been resolved.¹
- Confirmation by the Dean or nominee that the Faculty approval process has been completed satisfactorily

¹ It should be noted that the views of external advisers to the Faculty will normally be sought as part of second stage process and not during this stage, as occurs with campus based provision.

The draft Programme Document² and Resources Document must be prepared in accordance with the relevant University templates (Appendices PV2, PV2a and PV3, found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>), which are designed to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to all relevant matters, including:

- The intended aims and learning outcomes of the programme.
- The title and level of the programme - its intellectual challenge and value, and its relationship to the *UK Quality Code* and other relevant external benchmarks.
- The balance of the programme, for example in relation to academic and practical elements, personal development and academic outcomes, curriculum breadth and depth.
- The mode of delivery of the programme, with particular attention to proposals for blended and/or distance learning.
- The concept of progression so that the curriculum imposes an increasing level of demand on the learner during the course of the programme.
- The assessment strategy.

In devising the assessment strategy, the Programme Team must consult the Assessment Equivalence Policy (Appendix PV4, found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>), which sets out the normal minimum and maximum assessment workloads for modules of different credit values at each level. Where the proposed assessment workloads differ from Appendix PV4, an explanation is required in the draft Programme Document.

In finalising the draft Programme Document, the Programme Team must:

- Ensure that there have been meetings with potential students or students from similar programmes in order to seek student input on the design of the programme and appropriate student participation in the validation process;
- Seek, via the relevant University Faculty, written feedback from relevant University officers on the proposed programme and confirmation that the programme is consistent with the particular requirements of the relevant University officer's remit. Where the relevant University officer raises any queries or potential issues with the proposed programme, a summary of any actions taken in response (and, where appropriate, an amended version of the proposed programme) must be submitted to that relevant University officer for final approval. The initial feedback and final confirmation must be provided on Appendix PV6, which includes a list of the University officers to be consulted as well as details of their specific remit.
- If the proposed programme makes use of an existing module, consult the Programme Team(s) for other programmes which make use of the same module. In considering proposals, the relevant University Faculty may recommend changes to existing modules to ensure that they form an integral part of the new programme.

The first stage process concludes with the submission of the final version of the documentation to the relevant Faculty. The Faculty-approved documentation will then be submitted to the validation panel, via the Academic Office.

Constitution of the panel for validation events

The size of a validation panel will be determined by the nature and scale of the provision under consideration and by the requirements of any professional bodies involved.

² Where the proposed programme is to be delivered in both Welsh and English, the draft Programme Document must normally be submitted in both languages. Where this is not feasible at the point of submission, a bilingual statement setting out areas of difference between the Welsh and English versions of the programme must be provided. The final, definitive version of the Programme Document (DPD) must be produced in full in both languages.

The panel will normally include up to three internal members and two external members. At least one of the two external members of the validation panel and at least one of the internal members will have experience of collaborative provision.³

At least one internal panel member will be drawn from a Faculty outside the Faculty responsible for the programme of study and none may have any direct involvement with the provision under consideration.

External members are nominated by the Faculty and/or partner concerned and must meet the criteria stated by the University, and where appropriate that of the validating or professional body. Each nominee will be required to complete Appendix PV5 (found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>). All nominations must be approved by the Head of Regulations and Compliance.

It is the normal expectation that all panel members will attend the event. The University shall reserve the right to postpone an event should it become clear that a significant number of the panel are unable to attend.

The validation event may be attended by staff from the University who have been involved in the development of the proposal. Such individuals are seen to fulfil a 'facilitating' function, advising the partner institution in the approval process as appropriate. They are not involved in the decision-making process but help to ensure that decisions made are properly informed.

Process for the validation events

Validation events normally take place in a day and documentation (prepared for stage one) is sent to the panel one to two weeks before the event.

An itinerary will be circulated before the event. The Chair will brief the panel at the beginning of the event and will invite members to identify any further questions on the programme documentation which they would wish to raise at given points during the itinerary. Any proposed changes to the itinerary on the day will be subject to agreement by the panel.

On the day of the event the panel is able to put questions to the presenting team. The event will:

- Include an opportunity for the validation panel to visit the learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposed programme(s), and to look in detail at the library and technical resources available.
- Include consideration of the arrangements proposed by the University and the partner institution for managing the delivery of the programme(s), including liaison and quality assurance arrangements, and the identification of key staff.

Where the event is to consider a programme under the franchise mode of provision, the Panel should also agree with the Programme Team and Faculty staff what support might be available from the University in terms of teaching materials. In doing so the maturity/expertise of the partner should be considered.

³ Where the proposed provision includes research degrees, at least two members of the panel will have direct experience of the management of research degrees. The panel will consult with the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) in advance of the validation event to ensure that its deliberations take place in the light of the University's requirements for research degrees' management.

It will be the Panel's decision as to whether the programme should be recommended to AQSC for validation; this is often done with conditions attached (see section below).

A report and the conclusions of the panel are reported to the next available meeting of the AQSC. All reports covering the delivery of a programme at collaborative partner institutions shall include specific reference to the ways in which delivery is contextualised to the needs of students at the partner institutions.

Outcomes of the validation event

The outcome of a validation event is a report to AQSC, setting out the findings of the panel. The report concludes with one of the following recommendations available to the panel:

- That the programme is approved for delivery, based on the specified mode of provision. Approval may be subject to conditions, which must be addressed to the University's satisfaction prior to the commencement of the programme, and/or recommendations which must be formally considered by the partner institution and/or relevant University Faculty.
- That the programme cannot be approved in its current form, but that the proposal should be significantly revised by the partner institution, working with the relevant University Faculty, and in accordance with the advice given in the report of the validation panel. The proposal may then be re-presented for consideration by the panel.
- That the programme cannot be approved based on the specified mode of provision, but that an alternative mode of provision may be appropriate. In such cases the report of the validation panel should be referred to the partner institution and the relevant University Faculty for determination of the next steps. The proposal may be re-presented in due course, based on an alternative mode of provision.
- That the proposal cannot be approved within the current timescale. In such cases the report of the validation panel should be referred to the partner institution and the relevant University Faculty for determination of the next steps. The proposal may be re-presented in due course and in accordance with a new timescale.

Nature of conditions/recommendations available to the validation panel

The full details of the necessary conditions and/or recommendations will be provided via verbal feedback at the conclusion of the validation event and later in writing.

Validation conditions are applied to matters which, if not addressed, will render the programme undeliverable and these must normally be met in full before final approval can be conferred. However, in certain circumstances the panel may feel it appropriate to set conditions of a longer-term nature which cannot by their nature be met until delivery has commenced. These are sometimes referred to as 'operating conditions' and when setting them, the panel will usually stipulate that they are reviewed them at the programme's first annual review.

Following the validation event

Following the validation event, the Secretary will provide the Programme Team with a monitoring form detailing all conditions, recommendations and action points arising from the panel's deliberations and prepare a report for AQSC summarising the panel's recommendation.

The Programme Team, in liaison with staff identified by the relevant Faculty at the University, will be responsible for implementing the conditions and/or recommendations. This will include revising the documentation as appropriate and taking any other action that is necessary, through

completion of the monitoring form, to confirm that action has been taken in relation to the conditions and recommendations.

Programme Teams are not obliged to act on recommendations from the panel but must be able to demonstrate that they have at least been considered. The panel may also make recommendations for consideration by the University which should be addressed by AQSC and/or the Senate.

In the event that AQSC approves the programme, the Chair of the validation panel is responsible to AQSC for ensuring that the institution is aware of any conditions of approval and for confirming to AQSC when such conditions have been met.

When the conditions of approval have been satisfied:

- The Memorandum of Agreement is supplemented to reflect the provision approved for delivery by the partner institution.
- The Academic Office writes to the partner institution and the parent Faculty confirming that approval has been given and specifying the date of first review.
- The University's Register of Collaborative Partnerships is updated by the Academic Office.

The staff identified by the relevant Faculty at the University will submit the final Definitive Programme Document (DPD) to the Academic Office.

Delivery of the programme cannot commence until the validation process has been completed. Completion of the process requires confirmation by AQSC that the conditions of approval have been met, receipt of the final, approved version of the DPD by the Academic Office and final approval by the AQSC. Following final approval, the Academic Office will inform other departments of the University as appropriate.

Following completion of the validation process, Faculties, in liaison with the collaborative partner, are responsible for ensuring that a Programme of Study Handbook is produced and distributed to students, normally during the first week of study. The Handbook must be produced in accordance with the template provided in Appendix PV8c, found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/> (or PV8d for postgraduate programmes) and may be supplemented by additional materials as appropriate.

The successful presentation of a proposed programme of study will result in the validation of the programme (with any agreed modifications) normally for a period of four years.⁴ Programmes offered collaboratively are reviewed and revalidated by the University in accordance with its standard processes, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

The full process for partnership approval and validation is described in the AQH, which includes the University's regulations and can be found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), which gives details of the credit-rating system used by the University, can be found at: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualificationsinwales/creditqualificationsframework/?lang=en>

⁴ If a programme is already validated at the University, the programme may be due for revalidation earlier. The partnership itself will be reviewed either immediately after the first cohort of students have completed the programme (in respect of 1 year programmes) or after 2 years for new partners (interim review), with a partnership review taking place at least every 5 years.

The UK Quality Code Subject Benchmark Statements can be found at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

2.1 Definitive Programme Documents

The UK Quality Code states that:

Definitive records can assume a variety of forms of which the programme specification is one. It is the responsibility of the degree-awarding body to determine the preferred format.

The definitive record, which is changed only through due process, serves as a reference point for academic and support staff involved in delivering the programme and enabling student development and achievement, internal and external examiners, and QAA reviewers. Higher education providers determine the best ways to produce and disseminate information derived from these records for their various audiences such as prospective and current students and employers.⁵

Since the publication of the Quality Code, the University has taken the view that rather than producing programme specifications for its programmes, the definitive record for each of its programmes will consist of the final version of Definitive Programme Document produced for validation (and updated for major review). The Definitive Programme Document is in two parts:

The first, the curriculum document, includes the following:

- Overview of the programme.
- Employment Roles and Employability
- Links with Other Organisations
- Programme Details
- Module Details

The second, a resource information document, includes the following:

- General learning and teaching resources
- Specific and/or specialist learning and teaching resources
- Staffing resources

The University will liaise with partner institutions to ensure that Definitive Programme Documents are available and accessible for the programme(s). Programmes that are delivered at several locations will have customised versions of Definitive Programme Documents where differences exist.

Definitive Programme Documents, or relevant extracts, should serve to inform key stakeholders (students, prospective students, employers and staff) of the educational aims and outcomes of each programme. Partner institutions should ensure that Definitive Programme Documents are used as the reference point to produce and disseminate public information for stakeholders.

Definitive Programme Documents will be made available electronically by the University and each partner will be advised of the appropriate link for these.

⁵ Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2013) UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards, Chapter A2: Degree-awarding bodies' reference points for academic standards, p22

Some partner institutions will have produced programme specifications in accordance with previous guidance published by QAA. Partner institutions that wish to continue to produce their own Programme Specifications should provide their template to the Academic Office for approval.

2.4 Memorandum of Agreement

A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) is signed with a partner institution, initially after the successful partnership approval event. Thereafter a new MoA will be produced after each Partnership Review. UWTSD's MoAs consist of an overarching institutional memorandum, appendices detailing programme and financial details and a programme supplement for each of the programmes validated by the University to the partner institution. The overall memorandum outlines the responsibilities of both the University and the partner institution in areas such as academic responsibility, admission and enrolment of students, programme delivery and management, assessment, support to students, copyright and termination of the agreement. The programme supplement includes information specific to the programme, such as the validation report and Definitive Programme Document.

The overall memorandum is signed by the University's Vice-Chancellor and the Principal (or equivalent) of the partner institution, following partner approval and a copy of it is sent to the partner. The appendices detailing programme and financial details are produced (and signed) after programme validation. The programme supplement is made available electronically.

If another programme is subsequently validated to the partner institution before a partnership review takes place, the existing Memorandum of Agreement will remain in force but an addendum will be issued in respect of the programme and financial details and an additional programme supplement will be produced in respect of the newly validated programme; these will be subject to the agreements in the original Memorandum.

3. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Financial Arrangements for publicly funded partner institutions based in Wales

Details of financial arrangements, including the charge payable to the University are subject to annual review by the University. This charge encompasses the academic and administrative time and other costs involved in meeting the obligations of this Agreement, and includes the payment of fees and expenses by the University to its external examiners. Fee levels must be agreed by October each year for the forthcoming academic year.

The fees for any provision (FT and PT) at a structural partner must not be less than those set by the University, unless agreed in advance by both parties. Full-time fees will be collected by the University and dispersed to partner institutions. Partner institutions will process and collect part-time fees.

The University is responsible for confirming the students and changes of circumstances on the SLC database.

Queries and information should be directed to Mr David Jenkins, Director of Finance, at david.jenkins@uwtsd.ac.uk.

3.2 Financial Arrangements for partner institutions based outside Wales (or private institutions based in Wales)

An agreed fee per student is paid by the partner institution based on the mode of provision. It is the responsibility of the partner institution to collect fees and to make payments for their students to the University. At the discretion of the University, the partner institution may be refunded fees for any students who withdraws up to two calendar months after enrolment.

There is usually an agreed minimum institutional payment and partner institutions reimburse the University, at cost, for the travel and accommodation costs for two visits by up to two members of the University's staff to the study location each academic year.

Payments shall be made within 30 days of the date of issue of an invoice from the University's Finance Office. The University shall not register any further students for the partner if invoices are outstanding.

Payments will be reviewed annually and notice of changes shall be issued not less than three months before their implementation.

4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The University is committed to ensuring that the academic standards achieved by its students, including those delivered under collaborative arrangements, are appropriate and compare favourably with those achieved in other UK higher education institutions. Consideration of academic standards features in the partnership approval process, programme validation, in the assessment of students and in the assurance of the quality of programmes.

This section details assessment procedures for all taught programmes of study. For information on postgraduate research degrees please see section 5.

4.1 Delivery and Assessment

Delivery and assessment methods will have been set down in the original Definitive Programme Document prepared by the partner institution within the validation stage and these will have been ratified, or made the subject of specific amendments as a condition of approval, by the validation panel. These, and further details included in the Memorandum of Agreement, will form the basis for the delivery and assessment of the programme. Detailed guidance on delivery, assessment and examinations issues appear in the University's Academic Quality Handbook. Help and advice is also available from the Partnership Team Leaders and there are many examples of good practice, where the University works together with partner institutions in relation to delivery and assessment, which include:

- New partners being offered module handbooks, sample dissertations and other course-related material by the University.
- Partner institutions taking the lead in re-designing assignment briefs.
- Staff from partner institutions meeting annually with University staff and/or staff from other partner institutions to second mark or moderate assignments and/or dissertations to ensure common standards of assessments are being implemented.
- Visits by partner institution staff and students to the University's campuses.

4.1.1 Assessment Principles

The University's principles in relation to assessment are as follows:

- Rigorous assessment procedures are essential for the maintenance of appropriate academic standards.
- Assessment is used to provide feedback to students on their performance, to promote learning and to determine performance. All modules have an element of assessment to determine performance.
- Assessment methods and strategies are designed to ensure that achievement of the learning outcomes of the module/programme can be demonstrated, and that all students are provided with equal opportunities to demonstrate such achievement.
- Modules and programmes have aims which reflect the appropriate academic level, and have clearly stated learning outcomes specifying what the student should be able to do or understand on successful completion of the module/programme. The level of the programme and qualification awarded is consistent with the guidance outlined in the *UK Quality Code*. The level of the module is consistent with level descriptors specified in the *Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales*.
- Assessment methods and strategies are designed to motivate students by providing them with opportunities to review, demonstrate and consolidate what they have learnt at particular stages of their programme of study. Students are provided with opportunities to experience a range

of different kinds of assessment. Feedback on assessment performance provides students with information on their strengths and weaknesses, with the aim of helping them to improve the quality of their knowledge, understanding and skills.

- Assessment methods have assessment criteria which are used to measure student achievement and which demonstrate reliability and fairness in the allocation of marks and grades.
- Students are provided with a clear statement of the assessment methods and criteria for each module on which they are enrolled.
- Assessment is undertaken only by appropriately qualified staff who have been adequately trained and briefed, and given regular opportunities to update and enhance their expertise.
- External examiners are appointed for all provision that leads to an award.
- Assessment regulations are published in a full and accessible form within the Academic Quality Handbook and are made available to students, staff, collaborative partner institutions and external examiners.
- Assessment regulations include regulations to deal thoroughly, fairly and effectively with individual student needs in relation to assessment and with problems that arise during the assessment process.
- The suitability of assessment methods is monitored annually as part of the Annual Programme Review process. The validity of assessment regulations is monitored annually as part of the annual review of the Academic Quality Handbook.
- Where programmes are offered in partnership with other institutions, memoranda of agreement confirm that assessment and examination arrangements are the responsibility of the University.

The full assessment procedures for taught programmes are described in Chapter 7 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

4.1.2 Assessment tasks (including written examinations)

Partner institutions are asked to liaise with the host Faculty to establish that their intended assessment periods will allow assessments to be marked in time for examining boards, whether they are held at the University or at the partner institution.

All assessment tasks prepared by staff at partner institutions must be cleared by the host Faculty staff before being issued. Draft assessment tasks and a timetable for assessments should be forwarded to the University three weeks before the start of the semester in which they will be set. The tasks will be considered by academic staff and external examiners using the same procedures used internally at the University. Copies of the amended tasks will be kept on file and the amended tasks will be returned to the partner institution as soon as possible. Assessment material should be sent to the Faculty in a secure format and partner institutions should contact their Partnership Team Leader (PTL) for guidance on the process.

All students must be provided with information relating to assessment as follows:

- The learning outcomes to be assessed in each module.
- The assessment criteria to be used, including descriptors of expected standards of student achievement, what is expected in order to pass, and what is expected for the award of a particular grade or classification.
- The methods and dates of assessment tasks, including information about the format of examination papers, and the structure and length of written and other assignments.
- Where group working is to be assessed, the information about the methods to be used to apportion marks must be provided.
- A schedule of assessment tasks.

- An indication of how and when marking will take place.
- An indication of how they will receive feedback.

The arrangements for submission of work for assessment and the deadlines by which submission is required must be explained clearly to students.

For validation programmes staff at partner institutions are expected to:

- Develop assessment tasks and examinations, ensuring that methods of assessment are prepared and approved in line with the procedures in the AQH
- Liaise with external examiners to secure the approval of assessment tasks.

For franchise programmes staff at partner institutions are expected to:

- Contribute to the preparation of assessment tasks as required by the University, and comply with University timetables and deadlines for all aspects of the student assessment process, including the completion of mark sheets and submission of data
- If required, liaise with external examiners to secure approval of assessment tasks.

4.1.3 Procedures for written examinations

Where the programmes at partner institutions are based on existing UWTSD curricula the University, via its Registry department, will inform partner institutions of the dates for written examinations.

Where the programmes at partner institutions are not based on UWTSD curricula or where a degree of flexibility has been permitted in respect of UWTSD curricula, the partner institution should include the dates of written examinations in the timetable for assessments sent to the Faculty.

Preparation of examination papers

Documentation for examinations will be prepared by the University's Registry and will include an attendance list, examination booklets, guidance for invigilators, an invigilator's report form and question papers, where appropriate. Examination booklets will be posted, with the other documentation being made available on-line via a SharePoint site. Partner institutions should ensure the question papers are kept in a safe place, as required by the University's regulations, until the day and time of the examination.

Following the examinations

Scripts will be marked by partner institution tutors and samples supplied to the University before being sent to the external examiner, as per 4.2.3 below; completed invigilator report forms should be forwarded to the University's Registry department

4.1.4 Setting tasks for re-assessment

Where an Examining Board has determined that a student is to be re-assessed capped at the bare minimum pass mark (40% at Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 and 50% at Level 7):

- The nature of the re-assessment task must be identical to the original assessment task. This regulation may be varied only with the approval of the Dean of Quality and Standards.
- Where the re-assessment task takes the form of a timed examination, the examination questions must differ from those set in the original examination. The same questions must not

normally be used on more than one occasion over a period of three years. Exceptions may include generic questions that are applied to different contexts.

- Where the re-assessment task takes the form of an assignment, case study or other form of project, the student will normally be given the opportunity to re-work and re-present the original assignment if the original attempt gained a mark of greater than 0%. If the original attempt gained a mark of 0%, then the student will normally be set a new topic.

Where an Examining Board has determined that a student is to be given the opportunity to repeat a module or a period of study for an uncapped mark:

- The nature of the repeat assessment task may differ from the original assessment task providing that the nature of the assessment has been approved by the Faculty Board and the relevant learning outcomes are fully assessed.
- Where the repeat assessment task takes the form of a timed examination, the examination questions must differ from those set in the original examination. The same questions must not normally be used on more than one occasion over a period of three years. Exceptions may include generic questions that are applied to different contexts.
- Where the repeat assessment task takes the form of an assignment, case study or other form of project, the normal expectation is that a new topic will be set.

4.1.5 Assessment Submission

Work submitted for assessment must be kept in a secure and safe environment.

The normal expectation is that all assignments and other forms of assessment are submitted electronically, normally through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used by the partner. Where such requirements are in place, tutors must ensure that all involved with the assessment process have sufficient knowledge to enable them to use the electronic submission facilities, together with the facilities for grading and feedback.

Where students submit coursework in hard copy, they should be given a receipt that is signed and dated by an authorised member of staff and a copy of the receipt should be retained.

Late submission penalties must be applied to work that is not submitted by the published deadline. Work which is submitted up to 1 week late will be capped at the bare minimum pass mark (40% for Levels 4, 5 and 6 and 50% for Level 7) for first attempts; 0% for re-assessment. Late submission penalties may be lifted only with the approval of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel (see section 8.1.3 below and Chapter 13 of the AQH, which can be accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>).

Work cannot be accepted more than 1 week after the submission deadline and must be recorded as a non-submission.

4.1.6 Marking and Marking Processes

The University's principles in relation to marking are as follows:

- Marks for individual assessment tasks that contribute to an award must be expressed as a percentage or as a pass/fail grading. Any other scheme of marking must be approved explicitly at validation.
- Marks are awarded to students on an individual basis irrespective of the nature of the assessment task.
- Marks are provisional until confirmed by a Progression/Award Examining Board.

Marking processes (undergraduate programmes and the taught element of postgraduate programmes)

The University uses a variety of marking processes to reflect the varying demands of different disciplines and the different requirements of various types of assessed material.

All assessments which contribute to a final award/degree classification must be subject to moderation. Double-marking may be used in place of moderation but this should be agreed with the relevant PTL.

Where moderation is used, a representative sample of at least six pieces of work will be selected and should include:

- examples of work in the first class category (or equivalent for other awards)
- examples of work in the fail category
- examples of work from each classification
- examples of work within 2% of a classification boundary (or equivalent for other awards)
- any work on which the marker wishes for a second opinion.

Staff at partner institutions should liaise with their PTL in terms of internal moderation/double marking (at partner institution level) for their UWTSd programmes. Where internal moderation is used partner institution staff are encouraged to use the Moderation Report Form (Appendix GA28), available from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

If the moderation process identifies concerns relating to the marking in one or more categories, all work in the identified category must be double-marked and any residual differences in marks awarded by two markers must be resolved by means of discussion and negotiation. If such resolution is not possible, the work must be marked by a third marker identified by the Chair of the relevant Progression/Award Board. The marks awarded by the third marker are final. The process by which a final mark is agreed must be carefully documented so that the external examiner is able to follow that process. The same process should be used if double marking is used and the markers cannot reach agreement.

All formal written examinations must be marked in the anonymous state. Candidates in such examinations must be identified only by their student number until such time as both first marking and moderation or second marking have been completed.

There is no requirement that assessments other than formal written examinations be marked in the anonymous state as the University recognises that the preservation of anonymity may be either impossible or pedagogically undesirable. However, assessments will be marked in the anonymous state where this is deemed appropriate for a particular assessment and this is clearly indicated in the relevant documentation for the assessment.

4.1.7 Assessment samples for external examiners

Assessments will be marked by partner institution tutors and samples supplied to the University before being sent to the module external examiner(s).

For taught modules (all levels):

- A module external examiner shall be responsible for no more than 480 credits of modules across all levels (not including Level 7 dissertation/project modules) in a single appointment.
- The module external examiner shall receive a copy of all assessment tasks and the associated assessment criteria at every level that may contribute towards an award (Level 3 for

Foundation Certificate; Level 4 for HNC and Cert HE; Level 5 for HND, Dip HE and FD; Levels 5 and 6 for Honours Degrees, Levels 5, 6 and 7 for Integrated Master's Degrees, Level 7 for Master's Degrees) for approval before their distribution to students. In some cases, the module external examiner may be asked to consider assessment tasks in levels that do not contribute to an award.

- The module external examiner must agree, with the University Programme Director or Programme Leader at the partner institution, the marking process that shall be applied to any particular module, or module component.
- The module external examiner must liaise with the University Programme Director or Programme Leader at the partner institution, as appropriate⁶, to identify a minimum of half the modules for which he/she is responsible to be reviewed in any given academic year (minimum of 120 credits in total across all Levels). The actual credit rating of modules reviewed in any particular academic year may be greater than the minimum, as the module external examiner is required to have reviewed every module for which he/she is responsible at least once during his/her period of appointment (assuming an appointment of 4 years).
- Where the module external examiner is responsible for modules with a total credit value of less than 120 credits per academic year, then the module external examiner must review all the modules she/he is responsible for. The module external examiner must agree with the University Programme Director or Programme Leader at the partner institution which assessment tasks in the modules identified to be reviewed will be considered in a given year. Assessment tasks considered must account for a minimum weighting of 40% in the module. For modules worth 40 credits or more, the major component must always be considered.
- The module external examiner must agree on the selection of a representative sample of first-sit work from the assessment tasks chosen for consideration for moderation, with the sample consisting of at least 6 students (the work of all students must be included in the sample where there are fewer than 6 students being assessed).
- Where modules are delivered concurrently across multiple locations and where the same assessment tasks are used in each location, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total and at least 2 students per location.
- Where modules are delivered in multiple cohorts in a single location and where the same assessment tasks are used for each cohort, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total with at least 3 students from each cohort.
- Where modules are delivered in multiple cohorts across multiple locations and where the same assessment tasks are used for each cohort and in each location, the sample must consist of at least 6 students in total and at least 3 students from each cohort and at least 2 students per location.
- If the assessment task is different across locations or cohorts, then each location or cohort should be treated as an individual sample (with a minimum size of 6) and the module should be counted a separate module for determining the credit rating of responsibility for an external examiner.
- Agreement on which modules will be reviewed, which assessment tasks will be considered and how the sample for moderation will be defined shall be recorded on the External Examiner Agreement (Appendix GA15).
- If, in moderating an assessment, the module external examiner is unable to confirm that internal marking is of an appropriate standard or consistency for work in the sample, the module external examiner may request that all work be remarked.

⁶ Where the programmes at partner institutions are based on existing UWTSD curricula the University Programme Director will liaise with the external examiner in relation to all programmes, wherever they are delivered. Where the programmes at partner institutions are not based on UWTSD curricula the Programme Leader at the partner institution will liaise with the external examiner, however the relevant Partnership Team Leader (PTL) should be consulted before form GA15 is submitted to the University.

- Where marks in the sample are considered to be consistently over or under-marked, re-marking will take the form of a scaling up or down of marks across the cohort by a figure agreed between the internal examiners and the module external examiner.
- Where the internal examiners and module external examiner cannot reach agreement on the figure for scaling up or down of marks, the matter shall be reported to the Chair of the Progression/Award Examining Board who will act as arbiter. The Chair's decision shall be final.
- Where there is no clear pattern in over or under-marking in the sample, re-marking will take the form of a full re-mark of all work. A senior member of academic staff, who has not been involved in the internal marking of the work, shall be appointed as an additional marker. The mark of the additional marker shall be final.
- Where warranted, the module external examiner may request that assessment tasks not covered by the External Examiner Agreement, either in modules identified for review or modules not identified for review, be subject to moderation by the module external examiner.

The process of module external examiner assessment for Level 7 dissertation/project modules

Any Level 7 module worth 60 credits or more is classified as a Level 7 dissertation/project module.

For dissertation/project modules:

- A module external examiner shall be responsible for no more than 30 dissertations/projects in a single appointment.
- The relevant module external examiner must see a sample of at least 6 dissertations/projects.
- Where warranted, the module external examiner may request that projects/dissertations not initially included in the sample, be subject to moderation by the external examiner.
- If, in moderating a dissertation/project, the external examiner is unable to confirm that internal marking is of an appropriate standard or consistency for work in the sample, the external examiner may request that all work be re-marked.
- Where marks in the sample are considered to be consistently over or under-marked, re-marking will take the form of a scaling up or down of marks by a figure agreed between the internal examiners and the external examiner.
- Where the internal examiners and external examiner cannot reach agreement on the figure for scaling up or down of marks, the matter shall be reported to the Chair of the Progression/Award Examining Board who will act as arbiter. The Chair's decision shall be final.
- Where there is no clear pattern in over or under-marking in the sample, re-marking will take the form of a full re-mark of all work. A senior member of academic staff, who has not been involved in the internal marking of the work, shall be appointed as an additional marker. The mark of the additional marker shall be final.

4.2 Disclosure of marks/grades

Unconfirmed or provisional marks or grades are those which have yet to be presented to a Progression/Award Examining Board. Confirmed marks or grades are those that have been agreed by a Progression/Award Examining Board having been endorsed by the relevant module external examiners.

Students must be made aware that any marks and grades released prior to endorsement by a module external examiner and formal approval by a Progression/Award Examining Board are provisional.

Decisions of the Progression/Award Examining Board are communicated to students by the Registry after the relevant Board has met.

4.3 Feedback and the return of work

For undergraduate programmes and the taught elements of postgraduate programmes, marking of students' work must be completed no later than 20 clear term-time working days after its submission and students must be provided with provisional feedback within the same time scale. For taught master's dissertations, the marking must be completed and students provided with provisional feedback within 30 clear working days. Where appropriate (for example, in respect of end-of-term formal examinations) the feedback may be provided at the start of the following term. Staff must seek written permission from the relevant Dean of Faculty in the event that marking and feedback cannot be completed within this timescale and students must be notified accordingly.

The University recognises that feedback to students may take many forms, such as immediate diagnostic feedback on individual and/or group tutorials. Formal written assessment feedback reports must be prepared for every piece of assessed work that contributes to the formal assessment of an individual student's performance. Partners must provide the student with a copy of every report and retain a copy for its records.

4.4 Collation of assessment results

The process for collating and recording assessment results on the University's student record system will be discussed with each partner individually. Generally, named members of staff at the partner institution will be given access to the relevant screens on the University's staff portal. Results should be entered as soon as assessments are marked and at least a week in advance of the Examining Board. Any subsequent changes to marks should be submitted to Registry on the appropriate form.

4.5 Examining Boards

Examining boards are a crucial part of the assessment process. Further information on the purpose, terms of reference and membership of each of the examining boards, within the framework for managing the assessment of the University's taught degrees, is available in Chapter 7 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

Examining Boards deal with progression issues at all levels, and with the awarding of qualifications. Additional Boards may be necessary in certain areas to meet professional body requirements.

Where the programmes at partner institutions are based on existing UWTSd curricula the examining boards will normally be held at the University. It is likely that some boards will be conducted via video-conferencing.

Where the programmes at partner institutions are not based on UWTSd curricula the examining boards will normally be held at partner institutions, but will be administered by University staff.

The University operates a two-tier structure for formal examining boards:

- Initial examining boards
- Progression/award examining boards.

Pre-board meetings must be held in advance of each formal examining board. Further details can be found in section 7.15.2 of Chapter 7 of the AQH.

Initial examining boards

All module external examiners are expected to attend the appropriate initial examining board for the module(s) (or programme where applicable) she/he has been appointed to scrutinise in person.

Initial examining boards will meet prior to the progression/award examining board to consider and provisionally agree the outcomes for each module and for each student and to agree formal recommendations for the progression/award examining boards.

Initial examining boards consider the outcomes for each student in each module and the overall profile of the student and agree a formal recommendation on progression or award.

Progression/award examining boards

All initial examining board progression and award outcomes remain provisional until they are confirmed by a progression/award examining board. Such Boards will normally meet at the end of each academic year and whenever necessary to determine progression and award outcomes. In addition to receiving formal external examiner endorsement of provisional assessment outcomes, progression/award examining boards serve as the University's mechanism for securing institutional oversight of the assessment process and ensuring institutional consistency in the treatment of its students.

A procedural external examiner attends each progression/award board.

Re-assessment examining boards

Re-assessment boards take an overview of student progress at the end of each re-assessment period. These Boards normally consider students who required re-assessment and students who failed to complete their assessment during the academic year for medical or other acceptable reasons.

Following written endorsement from the appropriate external examiners, re-assessment examining boards may make decisions with regard to student progression and award. In such cases it is not normally expected that the module external examiners will attend the initial examining board in person.

Follow-up action

The submission of minutes and grades will take high priority immediately after an examining board. The University's Registry department will confirm the results for each student.

End of year results along with a progression or award letter will be available for students to view on the student portal, <https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>. Students will be sent instructions for logging on to the portal.

Students who are receiving a final award will also receive a hard copy letter and official transcript in the post.

The University will deal with any academic appeals (see section 8.1.2 below).

4.6 External Examiners

The principal purposes of the University's external examiner system are to ensure that:

- The standard of each award is maintained at the appropriate level
- The standards of student performance are comparable with standards on similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which they are familiar
- The processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted.

The procedure for appointment of external examiners for partner institutions (whatever the type of provision, e.g. franchise or off-campus) is the same as that employed for programmes delivered at the University. External examiners are nominated by the individual subject areas within the Academic Faculties and approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, on behalf of Senate. Detailed information on the nomination, selection and appointment of external examiners can be found in section 7.14 of Chapter 7 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

The University will appoint at least one module external examiner for all taught provision which leads to an award of the University. (There is not a requirement to have several external examiners for each programme of study at a partner institution. For example, a module external examiner might be appointed to all the modules on one programme).

In addition, the University will appoint a procedural external examiner for each Progression/Award Examining Board.

For franchise provision, wherever possible, the University will invite its existing external examiners to widen their appointments to include the programmes offered through partner institutions. Where such an appointment is not possible, and different external examiners are appointed, parity of assessment will be established by a number of means:

- The consistent implementation of the Definitive Programme Documents, including the delivery of modules to the same specification as applies at the University, as appropriate and the utilisation of grade criteria
- The approval of assessment briefs and examinations for partner institutions by the relevant host Faculty
- The arrangements for confirmation of results at examining boards
- Continuing staff development to maintain awareness of developments to the programme.

Parity of assessment will also feature in the monitoring of issues raised during Partnership Team Leaders' and external examiners' visits and in the programme monitoring and annual review of the programme.

Partner institutions will be notified by the University as to who their external examiner will be. The external examiner will liaise with the Faculty concerned and/or the partner as applicable, to make arrangements for visits, and will request certain documentation to be made available during his/her stay. Partner institutions will not be involved in the payment of fees and expenses.

Role of External Examiner

The University expects an external examiner to:

- Assist the University in the comparison of academic standards across Higher Education awards, including those offered in collaborative partnerships, and verify that standards are appropriate for all modules for which the external examiner is responsible, providing advice

and guidance on any changes which she/he considers necessary at a module or programme level.

- Approve and, if necessary, suggest amendments to draft examination papers, coursework assessment tasks and the associated assessment criteria prepared by internal examiners for all assessments in modules which contribute to a final award (and in some cases, approve assessments which do not contribute to the final award).
- Review, evaluate and moderate the marking assessment in modules which contribute to a final award.
- Provide an independent view of the operation and effectiveness of each module she/he has been appointed to scrutinise and thereby on any programme to which the modules contribute.
- View a sample of students' assessed work from all levels of performance that contribute towards an award to ensure that the internal marking has properly assessed student performance against the appropriate standards.
- Provide feedback to management on the performance of students in comparison to their peers on comparable modules and programmes elsewhere.
- Be a member of, and fully contribute to, appropriate Initial Examining Boards to ensure fairness and consistency in the decision-making process, and to ensure that the assessment process is in accordance with the University's academic regulations.
- Ensure that the assessment process is fair and equitable in the marking, grading and classification of student performance and endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes that she/he has been appointed to scrutinise.
- Present written reports to the University that include commentary and judgements on the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student attainment.
- Work as appropriate with other external examiners appointed by the University.
- As appropriate, provide advice on proposals for any exchange opportunities developed by Schools/Faculties in terms of their appropriateness in meeting the Learning Outcomes of the student's Programme of Study for programmes that she/he has been appointed to scrutinise.

External Examiner Report

Each module external examiner is required to complete an annual report on the Module External Examiner's Report pro-forma following the last relevant Examining Board of the academic year and return it to the Academic Office electronically. A separate report has to be completed for each appointment. A module external examiner is not restricted to the suggested areas and can comment on any appropriate matter. Constructive suggestions for future action are particularly helpful, and a list of the main issues on which the University would welcome feedback is also provided on the pro-forma. Names of all students and staff must be omitted from reports, to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

The primary role of the External Examiner's Report is to provide independent assurance of the academic standards and quality of the student's learning experience for the provision for which she/he is appointed to scrutinise. Other key purposes of the report are to enable the University to judge whether modules are meeting their stated aims and outcomes in order to contribute to the achievement of Level and Programme Learning Outcomes and to provide guidance on any necessary improvements, either immediately or at the next review of the programme(s).

Responding to External Examiner's Report

Each External Examiner's Report is considered in detail at different levels within the institution. Upon receipt of a report, copies are distributed to Heads of School, Programme Directors, Deans of Faculty and the Dean of Quality and Standards and the designated contact at partner

institutions. Confirmation of how issues raised by external examiners have been addressed forms part of the Annual Programme Review process (see section 6.3.1 below). Following consideration at School level, Heads of School and Programme Directors are required to ensure preparation of the School's response to any issues raised in consultation with the Programme Team, to inform external examiners of any action to be taken in response to the recommendations that are made and to provide the Academic Office with a copy of the related correspondence. The reports, together with the response are formally discussed during the Annual Review of each Programme of Study.

Deans or their nominees are responsible for scrutinising all external examiner reports and for reporting any significant issues that require an urgent response to the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee. A report is prepared centrally for the Academic Quality and Standards Committee summarising the findings of all the external examiners' reports and identifying themes and issues that require an institutional response. The report, together with the Academic Quality and Standards Committee's recommendations for actions at an institutional level in response to issues raised, is then presented to the Senate for approval of the recommendations. Copies of the report and the recommendations for action are circulated to all external examiners. In addition, the Head of Collaborative Partnerships prepares a summary of matters raised in the external examiner reports for collaborative provision for consideration by the International Affairs and Collaborative Partnerships Committee and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

5. POST GRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

The University may offer postgraduate research degrees in collaboration with a partner institution. The process for approving partnerships which include research degrees is that set out in paragraphs 9.5.1-9.6.12 of Chapter 9 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

5.1 Student Progress and Research Degrees Committee

The progress of individual students studying for research degrees in partner institutions is monitored in accordance with the University's standard arrangements for research degrees provision, which includes the submission of annual reports on each student for consideration by the Research Degrees Committee (RDC). Collaborative partnership institutions will normally have their own research degrees committees that report to the University's RDC. Collaborative partnership institutions are represented on the University's RDC through the UWTSD Faculty that they are linked with. Students associated with collaborative partnership institutions are represented on their local research degrees committees and any feedback or issues raised by students that need to be considered by the University RDC will be reported by the Faculty that the collaborative partnership is linked to.

The University's RDC, will draw IACPC's attention to any matters of concern or requiring further consideration. IACPC may similarly draw RDC's attention to matters requiring further consideration or action.

5.2 Code of Practice for Research Degrees

There is Code of Practice for Research Degrees, which sets out the policies and procedures of the University related to all research degrees offered by the University. These include all MRes programmes of study, MPhil and PhD degrees by Research, all Professional Doctorates, and the PhD by Published Works. The Code of Practice also applies to collaborative partnership institutions with research degrees provision. Together with the regulations contained the Academic Quality Handbook (see chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10), it forms the framework for the management of research degrees.

The Code of Practice for Research Degrees is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/other-forms-and-policies/>.

5.3 Research Degrees currently offered collaboratively

The types of Research Degrees currently offered collaboratively are:

- Doctor of Philosophy by Research, including practice-based PhDs (PhD)
- Master of Philosophy by Research (MPhil)
- Professional Doctorates

5.3.1 Doctor of Philosophy by Research (PhD)

The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Research may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a programme of advanced study and research.

Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Appointment of Supervisors

Every PhD by Research student must have a supervisory team of no fewer than two supervisors approved by the Research Degrees Committee. One of the supervisors will be identified as the Lead Supervisor. One of the supervisors, normally the Lead Supervisor, will act as the Director of Studies with primary responsibility for supporting the student on a pastoral level and for the administrative oversight of the supervision and the supervisory team. Further details in relation to supervisors are described in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

Monitoring and progress

A student's progress will be monitored at least annually to determine whether the student is:

- Still actively engaged on the research project and making satisfactory progress
- Maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team
- Likely to complete successfully by the end of the minimum period of study.

The process for monitoring of progress is set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. .

Probationary Period of Study

Students enrolling on the degree of PhD by Research will be registered in the first instance on a probationary period of study. The processes for monitoring progress during the probationary period and for assessing whether or not a student has successfully completed the probationary period are set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

The probationary period for a student may be extended on one occasion only. Students who are judged not to have successfully completed the required probationary period will be required to withdraw from the degree or transfer to another degree where appropriate. Students have the right to appeal all decisions relating to the probationary period as set out in Section 8.2.15 of Chapter 8 of the AQH.

Examination process

The examination process for students of the degree of PhD by Research consists of two stages:

- Preliminary independent examination of the thesis by the examiners, who are approved for the purpose by the University and who shall prepare independent interim reports on the thesis (see Code of Practice for Research Degrees for further details)
- An oral examination conducted by an Examining Board (see Section 8.2.13 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

A student of the degree of PhD by Research must be examined on the work submitted by that student. A student may not amend, add to, or delete from the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to examination save with the consent of the Chair of the Examining Board. A student may withdraw the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to the examination, but once a thesis has been withdrawn by the student it cannot be submitted again for examination of the same degree.

A student's research for the PhD by Research must be completed by the presentation of a thesis embodying the methods and results of the research. A student should submit an intention to submit form at least 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. The thesis is to be written in Welsh or English. The use of brief quotations in other languages is permitted.

The format and word length of the thesis must comply with the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

The function of the Examining Board is to ascertain that the thesis submitted for award is at the appropriate standard, that it is the work of the student who is being examined and that the student displays the attributes expected of holders of the award (see Section 8.2.1 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

5.3.2 Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

The Degree of Master of Philosophy by Research may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a programme of advanced study and research.

A Master's degree is awarded to a student who has demonstrated:

- The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- A systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Appointment of Supervisors

Every MPhil by Research student must have a supervisory team of no fewer than two supervisors approved by the Research Degrees Committee (see Code of Practice for Research Degrees for further details).

One of the supervisors will be identified as the Lead Supervisor. One of the supervisors, normally the Lead Supervisor, will act as the Director of Studies with primary responsibility for supporting the student on a pastoral level and for the administrative oversight of the supervision and the supervisory team.

Monitoring and Progress

A student's progress will be monitored at least annually to determine whether the student is:

- (a) still actively engaged on the research project and making satisfactory progress;
- (b) maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team;
- (c) likely to complete successfully by the end of the minimum period of study.

The process for monitoring of progress is set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. For students who have completed the minimum period of study as set out the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, an action plan for completion is expected as part of the annual monitoring process.

Examination process

The examination process for students of the degree of MPhil by Research consists of two stages:

- Preliminary independent examination of the thesis by the examiners, who are approved for the purpose by the University and who shall prepare independent interim reports on the thesis (see the Code of Practice for Research Degrees)
- An oral examination conducted by an Examining Board (see Section 8.3.13 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

A student of the degree of MPhil by Research must be examined on the work submitted by that student. A student may not amend, add to, or delete from the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to examination save with the consent of the Chair of the Examining Board. A student may withdraw the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to the examination, but once a thesis has been withdrawn by the student it cannot be submitted again for examination of the same degree.

A student's research for the MPhil by Research must be completed by the presentation of a thesis embodying the methods and results of the research. A student should submit an intention to submit form at least 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. The thesis is to be written in Welsh or English. The use of brief quotations in other languages is permitted.

The format and word length of the thesis must comply with the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

The function of the Examining Board is to ascertain that the thesis submitted for award is at the appropriate standard, that it is the work of the student who is being examined and that the student displays the attributes expected of holders of the award (see Section 8.3.1 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

5.3.3 Degree of Professional Doctorate

The Degree of Professional Doctorate may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of an approved programme of directed study (Part One) together with successful completion of a programme of advanced study and research (Part Two).

Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice

- The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

The Professional Doctorate consists of two parts. Part One will comprise of 180 credits of taught modules at Level 7; Part Two will be research-focused and completed by the presentation of a thesis and any portfolio of supporting material embodying the methods of the research.

A student may seek Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) either as based on Certificated Learning or Experiential Learning for part or all of Part One of a Professional Doctorate following the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure as set out in Section 10.4 of Chapter 10 of the AQH. All requests for Recognition of Prior Learning must be made before a student initially registers. Any restrictions on recognition of prior learning must be approved at programme validation.

Supervision

From the start of Part Two of a Professional Doctorate every student must have a supervisory team of no fewer than two supervisors approved by the Research Degrees Committee (see the Code of Practice for Research Degrees for further details).

One of the supervisors will be identified as the Lead Supervisor. One of the supervisors, normally the Lead Supervisor, will act as the Director of Studies with primary responsibility for supporting the student on a pastoral level and for the administrative oversight of the supervision and the supervisory team.

Monitoring and progress

A student's progress will be monitored at least annually to determine whether the student is:

- still actively engaged on the research project and making satisfactory progress;
- maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team;
- likely to complete successfully by the end of the minimum period of study.

For students in Part One of the Professional Doctorate monitoring will be carried out by the relevant Examining Boards (see Section 7.15 of Chapter 7 of the AQH).

The process for monitoring of progress for students in Part Two of the Professional Doctorate is set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. For students in Part Two of the Professional Doctorate who have completed the minimum period of study as set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, an action plan for completion is expected as part of the annual monitoring process.

Examination process

Examination of Part One - Part One shall comprise of modules at Level 7 with a total credit rating of 180 credits. The process for managing the assessment of modules, the awarding of credit and the rules for progression for modules at Level 7 follow the same principles as those outlined in Sections 6.8 and 6.8.5 of Chapter 6 of the AQH, with the exception that there is no condonement of modules and students must accumulate 180 credits at Level 7 in Part One in order to progress to Part Two. The process for setting of tasks for re-assessment follow the same principles as those outlined in Section 7.9 of Chapter 7 of the AQH.

Module external examiners will be appointed for all modules which form part of Part One in accordance with Section 7.14 of Chapter 7 of the AQH. The performance of students on Part One will be considered by Examining Boards in accordance with Section 7.15 of Chapter 7 of the AQH.

Examination of Part Two - A student must have successfully completed Part One before being permitted to present the thesis and any portfolio for examination under Part Two. The examination process for students of Part Two of the degree of Professional Doctorate consists of two stages:

- Preliminary independent examination of the thesis by the examiners, who are approved for the purpose by the University and who shall prepare independent interim reports on the thesis (see Section the Code of Practice for Research Degrees)
- An oral examination conducted by an Examining Board (see Section 8.5.13 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

A student of the degree of Professional Doctorate must be examined the work submitted by that student. A student may not amend, add to, or delete from the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to examination save with the consent of the Chair of the Examining Board. A student may withdraw the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to the examination, but once a thesis has been withdrawn by the student it cannot be submitted again for examination of the same degree.

A student's research for the Part Two of the Professional Doctorate must be completed by the presentation of a thesis embodying the methods and results of the research. A student should submit an intention to submit form at least 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. The thesis is to be written in Welsh or English. The use of brief quotations in other languages is permitted.

The format and word length of the thesis must comply with the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

The function of the Examining Board is to ascertain that the thesis submitted for award is at the appropriate standard, that it is the work of the student who is being examined and that the student displays the attributes expected of holders of the award (see Section 8.5.1 of Chapter 8 of the AQH).

5.4 Change of mode and withdrawal

5.4.1 Change of mode of study

Change of mode of study (full-time to part-time or part-time to full-time) is only permitted for students who have not completed the minimum period of study as set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. A change of mode of study will normally only be actioned on the student's enrolment anniversary. Changes from part-time to full-time will normally only be permitted at the end of even years of part-time study (after 2 or 4 years). Exceptional circumstances may be considered as a special case by the Research Degrees Committee on a case by case basis.

The student must discuss the proposed change of mode with their Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in their Faculty or collaborative partner institution. The student should seek approval from their sponsor (if appropriate) before requesting a change. If all parties agree to the change in principle, then the student should complete all relevant sections of the relevant form. The Director of Studies should provide a statement indicating whether or not the change is supported. The student will also need to provide written consent from their sponsor (if appropriate).

The completed form must be sent to the University and will then be considered by the next meeting of the Research Degrees Committee. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Director of Studies or collaborative partner institution or the student's sponsor (if appropriate) will not be able to be considered by the Research Degrees Committee. Requests to retrospectively change mode of study will not normally be considered.

The procedures for requesting a change of mode of study ensure that all requests are scrutinised at Faculty/Partner and University level. Requests are judged against clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request a review of the decision of the Research Degrees Committee in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

Required to change mode of study

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to change mode of study due to academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. In such cases the student will be informed that their mode of study has been changed and will be notified of the reasons for the change. All such cases are approved by the Research Degrees Committee.

In all cases where a student has been required to change mode of study, the student will have the right to request that a review of the decision of the Research Degrees Committee in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

5.4.2 Withdrawal

Before a student considers withdrawing from the University it is important that they discuss this with their Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in their Faculty or collaborative partner institution, so that possible alternatives are considered before a final decision is made. International students are strongly encouraged to consult the University and/or partner institution before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. The student should also consult with Student Services and his/her sponsor (if applicable).

Formal notification of withdrawal has to be on the appropriate form. The form must be signed by the student and by the student's Director of Studies and Head of School or nominee to confirm that the Faculty/collaborative partners institution is aware of the student's decision. The University must be notified of the reasons why the student has decided to withdraw, and have confirmation of the last date of attendance.

5.5 Suspension, interruption of studies and extension

Under exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, a student may be required to undertake a suspension of studies by the Research Degrees Committee.

Under exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, a student who has not completed the minimum period of study may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for an interruption of studies.

Under exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, a student who has completed the minimum period of study may apply for an extension to the maximum submission date.

5.5.1 Interruption of studies

These regulations only apply for students undertaking the research element of a research degree. Professional Doctorate students in Part One of their studies who wish to interrupt their studies should refer to Section 13.3 of Chapter 13 of the AQH.

Students do not have the automatic right to interrupt their studies; a request to interrupt studies must be made to the Research Degrees Committee on the approved form. Students are also eligible to apply to the Research Degrees Committee for an interruption of studies during the re-submission period. The grounds on which a student can request an interruption of studies are as follows:

- Health or Medical
- Maternity, paternity or adoption leave
- Compassionate (including bereavement and serious domestic difficulties)
- Financial
- Exceptional Professional Commitments
- Opportunities which contribute to academic development
- Exceptional circumstances outside the control of the student that seriously compromises his/her ability to continue with his/her studies.

All applications must be supported by appropriate independent evidence. Incomplete applications will not be approved.

The student must discuss their intention to interrupt their studies with their Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in his/her Faculty or collaborative partner institution. International students are strongly encouraged to consult the University and/or partner institution before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. The student must complete all relevant sections of the form and make sure that the grounds for interruption of studies are clearly marked and that independent supporting evidence is provided.

In consultation with the Director of Studies, the relevant Faculty or collaborative partner institution must provide a statement indicating whether or not the Faculty supports the request and provide details of the plans and any conditions for return to studies. The completed form must be sent to the University and will then be considered by the next meeting of the Research Degrees Committee. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Faculty or collaborative partner institution will not be able to be considered by the Research Degrees Committee. Applications for interruption of studies will not normally be considered unless they have been made in a timely manner.

The University will inform the student of the final decision by means of an Interruption of Studies letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

Review of decision not to approve interruption of studies request

The procedures for requesting an interruption of studies ensure that all requests are scrutinised at Faculty/partner institution and University level. Requests are judged against clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request a review of the decision of the Research Degrees Committee not to approve an application in accordance with the procedures set out in University and/or partner institution.

Timing and period of interruption of studies

The interruption of studies should normally begin from the beginning of a month so that there is a clearly identifiable point at which a return to studies can be made. In exceptional circumstances a suspension may begin immediately in situations where the student's absence from the University is unavoidable or urgently required.

Normally the interruption of studies should be for a definite period and a date for return to studies must be agreed at the time the interruption of studies is approved. In supporting a request for interruption of studies, the Faculty or collaborative partner institution must produce a plan for a return to studies which details whether any conditions are set for the return to studies.

A student who interrupts studies should be aware that it may not be possible to continue to work with exactly the same supervisory team once studies are continued again (e.g. for example as the result of staff retirement or changes in staffing). In such cases, the University/partner institution will work with the student and seek to identify a suitable alternative member for the supervisory team.

If a student is unable to return on the agreed date, they must seek further approval to extend the period of interruption. If a student fails to return to their studies by the date specified and approval for an extension to the interruption has not been sought, the University shall assume that the student has withdrawn from the University. The student shall be informed in writing that they have been withdrawn and the record amended. The student shall have the right to appeal against the decision in accordance with the Research Degrees Academic Appeal regulations.

Normally, the total maximum period for interruption of studies for a research award is 12 months for a full-time student and 24 months for a part-time student. If a period of interruption of greater than this is required, the student should normally withdraw from their studies. The student can reapply when able to commit to study again and the University will take previous periods of study into consideration when considering applications.

Where a second period of interruption is applied for, the Research Degrees Committee will only grant this if it is satisfied that the exceptional circumstances are likely to be sufficiently resolved before the end of the second period of interruption for the student to complete the research programme without further application for interruption.

When an interruption of studies is approved, then the student's maximum period of candidature will be extended to reflect the period of approved suspension.

A student must consult their sponsor to obtain a clear understanding of the funding implications before interrupting studies; the University is not able to guarantee the resumption of any external grant or loan. If the suspension takes place during a year for which tuition fees have already been paid, the partner institution will recalculate the amount due pro rata to the period of study up to the time of interruption. Changes in a student's status may affect funding/benefits for which the student can apply

If a student is from overseas and has student leave to remain in the UK, an interruption of studies will have serious implications for their immigration status and they will not be permitted to remain in the UK for the duration of the interruption of studies.

5.5.2 Required to Suspend

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to interrupt studies due to academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. In such cases the period of interruption will be classified as a suspension of studies and the student will be informed that their studies have been suspended and will be notified of the reasons for the suspension. The student will be given a return to studies date and informed of any conditions that must be met before they can resume studies.

A student may also be required to suspend studies where the University deems that on health grounds it is not appropriate for a student to continue with their studies, whether in exercising its duty of care to others or where it is deemed not to be in the interest of the particular student. In all cases where a student has been required to suspend studies, the student will have the right to request a review of the decision.

5.5.3 Extensions to the maximum time limit for completing a research degree

Details of the maximum time limits for the completion of each research award are provided in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. These time limits may be extended in exceptional cases by submitting a request to the Research Degrees Committee. The maximum time limit for completing a research award will automatically be adjusted to take into consideration time spent on an approved interruption of studies. Students are eligible to apply to the Research Degrees Committee for an extension during the re-submission period.

The grounds on which a student can request an extension to the maximum time limit for an award are as follows:

- Health or Medical
- Compassionate (including serious domestic difficulties)
- Exceptional Professional Commitments.

All applications must be supported by appropriate independent evidence. Incomplete applications will not be considered and the form will be returned to the student and/or Faculty or collaborative partner institution. The student must provide a full and reasoned case, identifying the length of the requested extension and supported by appropriate independent evidence, for consideration of the Research Degrees Committee, as detailed the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. The student's submission must be accompanied by a statement from the Director of Studies and Faculty or collaborative partner institution, showing that they have evaluated the situation and indicating whether or not they consider the requested extension to be appropriate. They must provide clear evidence of the work completed, the work to be completed, and an assessment of whether the period requested is feasible to achieve this.

The Research Degrees Committee will consider the evidence provided and the statement from the Director of Studies and Faculty or collaborative partner institution and reach a final decision on whether the extension request is to be granted or not and the exact length of the extension in cases where the extension request is granted.

The procedures for requesting an extension ensure that all requests are scrutinised at both Faculty or collaborative partner institution and University level. Requests are judged against clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent, therefore the decisions of the Research Degrees Committee are final. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request a review of the decision of the Research Degrees Committee in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

5.6 Unfair practice

An Examiner, who, either in the course of the examining process or subsequently, considers that a student has engaged in unfair practice, shall immediately report the circumstances in writing to the Chair of the Examining Board concerned.

If concerns of unfair practice are identified by either the external or the internal examiner or both, the Chair of the Examining Board and the Postgraduate Research Office must be notified immediately and the entire examination process will be put on hold while unfair practice procedures are instigated.

In the event that unfair practice issues only arise during the actual examining of the thesis by the external and internal examiners in the viva, the examination process will be put on hold and unfair practice processes will be instigated.

In all instances the University's unfair practice procedures are followed to determine if unfair practice has actually occurred. The external examiner and/or internal examiner submit(s) a formal allegation of unfair practice to the Postgraduate Research Office and Chair of the Examining Board. This consists of a written report outlining on what grounds the unfair practice allegation is made. Because of the seriousness of the allegation at this level of study, a Panel of Inquiry will always be set up, normally within 4 weeks and the student is informed of the process in accordance with the University's procedures. In line with standard procedures the student will be invited to attend the Panel of Inquiry's meeting (as per the Code of Practice for Research Degrees).

The Chair of the Examining Board is responsible for carrying out a preliminary investigation of the allegation, in liaison with the Postgraduate Research Office and another academic member of staff with experience of research degree supervision, nominated by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. The member of staff must not have had any previous involvement with the work of the student and will not be a member of the Examining Board or a member of the Panel of Inquiry. The purpose of the preliminary investigation is to establish whether there is a clear case of unfair practice and to prepare a report for the Panel of Inquiry. To support this work, the Postgraduate Research Office will run the thesis through *Turnitin*.

If the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee is of the view that no one internal academic member of staff is sufficiently independent and academically qualified in this area to be able to conduct the process objectively and adequately, the Chair reserves the right to choose an academic from another institution or to have two academics, one of which is external.

If the preliminary investigation concludes that there is no clear case, then the Panel of Inquiry will arrive at a determination that the allegation of unfair practice is unsubstantiated and the examination process will resume.

The Panel of Inquiry's terms of reference and membership are outlined in 13.8.5 of Chapter 13 of the AQH. The preparations for the Panel of Inquiry follow the procedures as outlined in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the procedure during the meeting follows paragraph 13.8.6 (2), of Chapter 13 of the AQH.

5.7 Appeals and Complaints

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal against decisions concerning transfer, termination of study or against an outcome of the examination process, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

- Appeals which question the academic judgement of examiners shall not be admissible.
- Appeals against informal assessments of the student's work by the supervisor shall not be admissible.
- Appeals where the grounds concern the inadequacy of supervision or other academic arrangements during the period of study shall not be admissible; such complaints should be pursued as soon as they arise, in accordance with the Procedure for Postgraduate Research Degree Students Complaints about Supervision.

A separate procedure applies to students of the University following taught programmes of study and to Professional Doctorate students in Part One of their studies (see 13.6 of Chapter 13 of the AQH).

Complaints

Students have the right to make a complaint about any specific concern about the provision of their programme of study or academic services, in accordance with section 9.3 of this manual.

Students have the right to make a complaint about supervision, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. Most complaints about supervision can be resolved simply and swiftly in an informal manner, at a local level, by discussing the issue or concern with the student's Director of Studies, the Faculty's/partner institution's Director of Research Degrees, the Head of School, or the relevant Dean of Faculty or equivalent at the partner institution. The University encourages students to raise matters of concern as soon as they arise. The University/partner institution will seek, in turn, to find effective remedies to those concerns as quickly as possible and with minimum disruption.

If an issue or concern cannot be resolved through the informal complaints procedure, a student may submit a formal complaint in writing, as per section 9.3 of this manual.

6. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality of the delivery of the University's programmes through collaborative partnerships is underpinned at University level by formal procedures. Relevant sections of these procedures, relating to delivery and assessment, are supplied to partner institutions at the time of partner approval and validation, and adherence to them forms a condition documented in the Memorandum of Agreement. These procedures are designed to provide a framework within which all programmes are delivered and assessed, and to install documented practices which are monitored to ensure that consistently high standards are maintained throughout the University and all its programmes in all their places of delivery. The procedures take account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) published by the Quality Assurance Agency.. The code can be accessed at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality>. The University also monitors new developments and initiatives by the Quality Assurance Agency the Higher Education Funding Councils for England and Wales and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for students in Higher Education, to ensure that its operations are in keeping with national good practice.

Partner institutions will be informed of relevant external reviews/accreditations for the University, such as QAA Higher Education Reviews, and partner institutions should also inform the University of any relevant reviews/accreditation in which they are participating.

6.1 Day-To-Day Quality Assurance

To ensure that the ongoing student experience at partner institutions is comparable to that at the UWTSD campuses, programme directors and tutors at the institutions are required to follow agreed arrangements for delivery and assessment, as set out in the approved validation documents and the Memorandum of Agreement. These, including any amendments or additions specified as conditions of validation, form part of the agreement to deliver the programme and partner institutions are expected to adhere to them throughout the duration of the partnership.

Adherence to administrative procedures also forms part of the ongoing quality of provision. These include, for example, the timely registering of students on the University's system, presenting results at Examining Boards and making appropriate University procedures and regulations available to staff.

6.1.1 Partner institution staff delivering UWTSD programmes

The University needs to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting the Programmes are appropriately qualified for their role and that the partner institution has established appropriate measures to ensure this and to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff. To support the University in fulfilling its obligations, the partner institution needs to:

- Ensure that all necessary staff hold suitable qualifications to teach the programmes to the standard required to attain the qualifications and submit for the University's approval such details of the qualifications and experience of the staff concerned as the University shall reasonably require.
- Supervise and monitor the performance of its staff, both teaching and non-teaching, including arranging such staff development activity in consultation and association with the University as shall be necessary or desirable in relation to the provision of the programmes and the obtaining of qualifications by students.

- Not without the previous written consent of the University permit the ratio of teaching staff to students to fall below the level established at the date of commencement of the programmes.

Partnership Lecturer Scheme

The University has a Partnership Lecturer scheme for staff that are involved in the delivery of its academic programmes at a partner institution.

The Partnership Lecturer Scheme enables the University to ensure approved partner staff are given access to University e-resources (where permissible under licensing agreements) and also assists the University in ensuring that staff delivering on its programmes are appropriately qualified to teach at a specific level and understand the context of higher education in the UK (as per indicator 13 of the Chapter B10 of the QAA UK Quality Code). It is hoped that the scheme can be developed in future to offer further benefits to Partnership Lecturers.

The scheme is open to partner staff involved in:

- Leading, developing and delivering UWTSD programmes
- Teaching and assessing programmes of study leading to UWTSD awards
- Supporting students in the use of learning resources
- Participating in UWTSD's research and development activities
- Undertaking and contributing to staff development activities within the University

Partnership Lecturer status is granted to individuals in recognition of their expertise to deliver services to the University. They are **not employed** by the University but are required to work in close partnership with the University as part of their role within the partner institution⁷.

Partnership Lecturers will need to understand, and agree to work within, the University's regulations, policies and procedures for the work they undertake. They will be attached for academic purposes to one of the University's Faculties or to Library and Learning Resources.

The University will confer Partnership Lecturer status on those teachers or librarians who meet the following criteria:

- The Teacher or Librarian has the appropriate educational and professional qualifications for the level of contract and has been approved by the University for the teaching or supporting of programmes to its award through the processes of quality assurance.
- The Teacher is teaching or supporting at least part of a module of a programme validated by UWTSD.
- The Teacher or Librarian has a contract with the Partnership Institution of 0.5 or above.

The principles for the Partnership Lecturer status are as follows:

- The Partnership Lecturer must be familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures of the University. These are as set out in the University's Academic Quality Handbook and in other and publications, as amended from time to time, copies of which are available via the University's website.
- The Partnership Lecturer is not indemnified by the University in relation to any duties and/or responsibilities undertaken on behalf of the partner institution.

⁷ For the avoidance of doubt, the partner institution carries liability cover (Employers Liability, Public Liability, Professional Indemnity) for the staff they engage to deliver services on behalf of the University.

- The Partnership Lecturer must not disclose any confidential or personal information they are made aware of as a Partnership Lecturer, except where this is required in the performance of their role.
- The Partnership Lecturer must be familiar with the responsibilities of employees under the Health and Safety of Work Act (1974) and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others whilst working on behalf of the University. In addition, the Partnership Lecturer must be familiar with the University's Health and Safety policies, procedures and arrangements, which may be particularly relevant to their area of work.
- The University reserves the right to remove Partnership Lecturer status with immediate effect in the event that the Partnership Lecturer is deemed to be guilty of gross misconduct or for other good cause.

Principals, or equivalent, of collaborative partner institutions are contacted annually to confirm the details of the staff the University believes are eligible for Partnership Lecturer status. Individuals are written to, to confirm their status as UWTSD Partnership Lecturers and to inform them of where they can access the University's regulations, policies and procedures.

6.2 The Student Experience

In accordance with Chapter B5 of the UK Quality Code, the University is committed to the principle that all students are provided with opportunities to engage individually and collectively in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience, (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B5.pdf>) specifically through:

- Their representation on committees responsible for the design, validation and monitoring of programmes of study
- Being given opportunities to contribute to annual reviews of programmes of study
- Being given opportunities to provide formal feedback on the quality of their learning experiences
- Being encouraged to discuss matters directly with all staff and particularly with their personal or year tutor, or with other designated members of staff.

The University's minimum expectation is that the principle and arrangements described above will apply across its campuses and collaborative partner institutions. The arrangements may be supplemented as appropriate to reflect the requirements of specific locations.

It is essential to obtain feedback from students as part of the formal monitoring process. There are various mechanisms that are used to receive feedback.

Student bodies should be encouraged to nominate student representatives to take part in programme meetings. Their comments should be recorded in notes taken at the meetings, and any issues raised by students should be recorded in the annual programme review report. Reference should also be made to how the issues raised by students have been resolved or dealt with and there should be clear procedures for reporting back to the student body the issues that were raised and the manner in which they have been dealt with.

6.2.1 Programme meetings

Programme meetings enable the evaluation of academic quality to be owned and take place at the closest possible point to the actual process of learning and teaching. There are no formal Terms of Reference for programme meetings but they are responsible for the maintenance of academic standards and the development of the programme in accordance with the definitive

documentation and have a responsibility for continuous evaluation, with a student-centred, action oriented approach. Membership should include the programme leader, all module tutors, student representatives and other staff associated with the programme, such as librarians. Minutes for programme meetings should be forwarded to the University, to be considered at School and Faculty level meetings, as appropriate.

6.3 Review

6.3.1 Programme Monitoring and Annual Review

The University considers programme monitoring to be a continuous process – an integral part of teaching, learning and assessment activities, through which student feedback is gathered, difficulties are addressed, and good practice is promoted. Continuous programme monitoring culminates in a formal annual review of each programme or cluster of programmes. The purpose of the annual review is to enable programme teams, and University Schools and Faculties, to reflect upon the effectiveness of provision over the year as a whole, and to enable the University to assure itself that quality and standards are being maintained.

The annual review process comprises:

- Preparation of an annual programme review report (APR)
- Consideration of the APRs at School level through a process determined by the Faculty in accordance with the minimum requirements set by the University
- Submission of School and Partner overview reports
- Confirmation by the Faculty that the process has been completed in accordance with requirements
- Consideration of the Faculty confirmation reports and Partner overview reports by AQSC, together with sampling of APRs
- Preparation of responses by the University professional services to any recommendations identified in APRs and/or overview reports.

The timelines for submission are:

- Completion of APR reports by 30 November 2017
- Completion of Partner Overview Reports by 31 January 2018

Annual review at programme level

The teaching teams of all collaboratively delivered programmes are asked to provide the same reports as those produced by the University's internal teaching teams, using the template, Appendix PV11a, which can be accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>. The report must be submitted to the Faculty by 30 November (where two partner institutions offer the same programme and undertake some joint activities, such as moderation, a single APR report covering both institutions is acceptable). Where applicable, these reports (and PTL reports, see section 10.3) will inform the APR reports of University programmes. The report must include:

- A Summary of developments to the programme since the last annual review
- Reflection on engagement with students during the review period, including student feedback and responses to such feedback
- Confirmation of how issues raised by external examiners have been addressed
- Where applicable, confirmation that the University Placement Protocol is observed
- An updated programme action plan.

Where delivery of a programme has been formally withdrawn, an annual review is required until such time as any remaining students have completed their studies.

The University's Schools are required to include within their annual review processes consideration of all collaborative programmes appropriately in the School Overview report. .

Annual review at partner level

The partner institution APR report(s) are accompanied by an overview report prepared by the senior management of the institution and commenting on the operation of the partnership as a whole, using the template, Appendix PV12a, which can be accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

The report will include:

- An evaluation of the academic health of the UWTSD provision across the institution
- Confirmation by the partner institution that the APR process has been completed in accordance with requirements
- Where applicable, evaluation of any aspects of the programme delivered in the workplace or on placement
- Confirmation of student engagement and responses to student feedback
- Interaction with the University
- Reflection on whether actions arising from the previous year's review have been completed satisfactorily
- The development of an action plan.

In addition, and as outlined in Chapter 9 of the AQH, the Academic Office will prepare a summary of matters raised in the Partner Overview Reports for consideration by IACPC and AQSC.

6.3.2 Partnership review

The overall arrangements for each collaborative partnership are reviewed by the University at least every five years.

For new partners, delivering a programme with the University for the first time, there will first be an interim review, normally scheduled to take place either immediately after the first cohort of students have completed the programme in respect of one-year programmes, or after two years; the partnership review will then take place after three/four years and then every five years after that. The process for an interim review is to be found in appendix CP10c, found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

The partnership review will focus on the partnership, rather than on an individual programme, (each programme is individually reviewed every four years, see 6.4.1 below). The purpose is to review the general operation of the partnership, including the operation of regulations and procedures, the monitoring and development of the programmes, the assessment of students and the enhancement of quality and standards.

A Panel will be established to undertake each partnership review. Membership of the Panel will be approved by the chair of IACPC. The Panel will scrutinise documentation, undertake meetings with staff and students at the partner institution and make recommendations to the Senate in relation to the partnership.

Review Panels will be required to:

- Report on the ways in which the requirements of the Memoranda of Agreement are being met by both the University and the Partner.
- Review the academic health and development of the programme(s) of study delivered collaboratively.
- Ascertain the strategic views of the Partner's senior management in terms of the continuation/further development, or otherwise, of the partnership with the University.
- Consider appropriate review documentation from the following:
 - The Partner
 - The relevant Faculty/Faculties at the University, normally via the Partnership Team Leader
 - Academic Office
 - Registry
 - Library and Learning Resources
 - Finance Department
 - Student Services (for UK Partnerships only), as appropriate.
- Consider appropriate matters arising from the review.
- Present formal recommendations to the Senate, via the IACPC.

An initial meeting will be held at the University prior to meeting the staff and students at the partner. Prior to the meeting the documentation to support the review will be sent to all Panel members. Following the consideration of the documentation, the Panel will meet with representatives of the Partner's staff and students. This will normally take place during a visit to the Partner.

The Panel may arrive at one of the following outcomes at the end of the review. To recommend to Senate:

- To approve the continuation of the partnership between the University and the Partner.
- To approve the partnership between the University and the Partner but noting concerns regarding the partnership and the need for urgent action.
- Not to approve the continuation of the partnership between the University and the Partner and, as a result of this, to consider how the completion of existing or agreed commitments to existing or accepted students can be met in all respects, following the University's procedure for terminating partnerships.

The Panel may suggest **recommendations** to the University and/or the Partner, for confirmation by Senate. The Panel may also make **commendations**, relating to areas of good practice identified during the review process. Recommendations and commendations may relate to any aspect of the partnership raised during the review process.

The review is expected to lead to identification by the University of a Prioritised Action Plan for appropriate staff at the University or Partner institution, to maintain and enhance the academic health and development of the partnership. Unless the outcome of the review is to discontinue a partnership, in which the University's procedure for terminating partnerships will commence.

Further details of the review process are to be found in appendix CP10. The review process for off-campus partnerships varies slightly and can be found in appendix CP10a. The appendices can be found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

6.3.3 Revalidation

All UWTSD's validated programmes are subject to a major review at least once every four years. Within this overall framework, Faculties may propose their own schedules for major review.

Revalidation will be conducted following the same procedures as for Programme Validation, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH, with the addition of an Appendix via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/>. PV13, available from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>, reflecting on the delivery of the programme since validation or the previous revalidation (drawing on all APR reports in that time period).

6.3.4 Modifications to existing programmes

In the period between revalidations, it is likely that Faculties, Schools and Programme Teams will wish to modify aspects of their approved programmes, such as mode of delivery or assessment arrangements, or to add further modules to those already approved. They will also wish to make more minor changes to content to ensure that the programmes remain up-to-date. AQSC, on behalf of Senate, has oversight of all such modifications in order to ensure that academic quality and standards are maintained, and to enable the Academic Office to maintain accurate, definitive records of all programmes.

The annual review process allows programme teams to recommend changes to the content of modules to ensure that the programmes remain current and to recommend modifications to aspects of their approved programmes. However, modifications can also be made in the period between annual reviews.

The following principles apply in all cases:

- Changes will not normally be applied retrospectively.
- The changes should not conflict with any conditions and/or recommendations made at validation revalidation or last annual review of the programme without strong justification.
- The implications of module changes for any other programme of study that utilises the module(s) (if any) must be taken into account before the changes can be approved. In the event that Programme Teams are unable to reach agreement on changes, it may be necessary to propose the creation of a new module.
- Where the programme is delivered by one or more collaborative partner institutions in addition to the University, the partner institution(s) are consulted about the proposed modifications and have the opportunity to contribute to discussions.

Proposals for modifications involving partner institutions must be discussed with the Faculty and the Academic Office in the first instance. Following consultation with the Chair of AQSC, the Academic Office will advise the partner institution on the process to be followed. However, where the partner institution has entered into a structural partnership with the University and/or where the collaborative programme is also delivered direct by the University, the processes described in Section 4.6 of Chapter 4 of the AQH1 should be followed, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

6.3.5 Withdrawal of modules and/or Programmes of Study

In the period between revalidation and annual the need to permanently withdraw one or more modules, a named pathway or a programme of study may occasionally arise. The reasons may include the following:

- The module, pathway or programme has become obsolete or irrelevant, either academically or professionally
- There is insufficient student demand to justify continuation
- A change in staffing expertise
- Major concerns relating to quality which have not been, or cannot be, adequately addressed in a timely manner

- Financial viability.

Module withdrawals may be made by following the process of modifications described in section 6.3.4 above.

Programme withdrawals (and the withdrawal of named pathways) require the approval of SMT and the Senate. Where a Programme Team or Faculty wishes to withdraw a pathway or programme, a proposal must be submitted to the Faculty Board, setting out the reasons and indicating any arrangements necessary to protect the status and choice of existing and potential students. Where the pathway or programme is offered in collaboration with a partner institution, the proposal must include information about how the partner institution has been consulted. In the event that the Faculty Board approves the proposal, it makes a recommendation to SMT. The Faculty and partner institution is responsible for the implementation of any decision by SMT to withdraw existing academic provision with oversight by the Senate.

The Senate is responsible for confirming the measures to be taken to notify and protect the interests of students registered for, or accepted for admission to, the programme. In dealing with legacy issues, Senate must ensure that appropriate actions are taken to assure academic standards and quality, the equivalence of the student experience and the need to manage any reputational or financial risks that might arise as a result of the decision.

7. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Quality Assurance is defined by the QAA as 'The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the Expectations set out in the **Quality Code**, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved' and Quality Enhancement as 'The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes'. Enhancement is a key priority for the University and its partners. The University will work consistently to ensure that the learning opportunities it provides are of the highest quality.

Learning opportunities occur in many and various ways. There are the more obvious, formal learning opportunities provided in lectures and seminars and tutorials, laboratory and practical work; there are the less formal and even informal learning opportunities provided by the availability of learning resources such as the library and other facilities that are open access; those provided by conversations with fellow students and with staff outside formal sessions; those self-generated and supported by the provision of Wi-Fi and other frameworks for supporting communication, networking and access to information.

The University is committed to forwarding and to supporting Quality Enhancement throughout the full range of its activities.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

8.1 University and partner institution responsibilities

In exercising its responsibilities for the quality and standards of education offered to UWTSD students taught by partner institutions, the University requires partner institutions to implement all of the University's procedures and administrative processes. The University appreciates that institutions will have in place appropriate regulations for health and safety, equal opportunities (including disability provision), copyright policies etc. Institutions will also have academic regulations relating to non UWTSD programmes that they offer. **It is a clear expectation and requirement that the University's academic regulations and procedures will apply to students on all its programmes.**

The University takes direct responsibility for Recognition of Prior Learning (see 8.5 below), Extenuating Circumstances requests, Unfair Practice, and Academic Appeals. In all other instances, the partner institution is expected to ensure that the assessment regulations are implemented and all references to officers of the University should apply to the counterpart officer of the institution. Therefore, partner institutions should expect to make provision, as stated in the AQH, for the conduct of examinations, the implementation of late submission penalties, ensuring that extenuating circumstances requests are forwarded to the University and maintaining appropriate records to enable decisions around late submission penalties and extenuating circumstances to be defensible should they subsequently be contested in an appeal of an Extenuating Circumstances decision or Academic Appeal. The information in relation to Extenuating Circumstances requests, Unfair Practice and Academic Appeals are available in Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/> and the relevant forms and additional guidance are available from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

8.1.1 Unfair Practice

The University's general principles in relation to unfair practice are:

- The University will investigate all allegations of unfair practice, in each case implementing a consistent unfair practice procedure.
- It is unfair practice to commit as any act, intentional or otherwise, whereby a person may obtain for himself/herself or for another, an unpermitted advantage, which may or may not lead to a higher mark or grade than his/her abilities would otherwise secure.
- A claim that unfair practice is related to the re-use of one's own material which has previously been submitted to the University in any form is no defence, except where such re-use has been explicitly authorised under the regulations.
- A claim that unfair practice has been committed unintentionally or accidentally is no defence.
- A claim that unfair practice has been committed due to extenuating circumstances or a long-term impairment (irrespective of whether or not these circumstances or long-term impairment have been acknowledged by the University) is no defence.

Plagiarism is one type of unfair practice. Plagiarism is passing off, or attempting to pass off, another's work as the student's own. It includes copying the words, ideas, images or research results of another without acknowledgement, whether those words etc. are published or unpublished. Persons who allow their work to be plagiarised are also guilty. Plagiarism is also submitting work for an assignment that has previously been submitted for one of the University's programmes in any form without acknowledging that this is the case (unless such re-use has been explicitly authorised under the regulations) – this is self-plagiarism.

It is expected that partner institutions will provide sessions on referencing and plagiarism for students, so that they understand the importance of always acknowledging sources and correct referencing.

The University's Unfair Practice Guidelines and Penalties was developed with reference to the findings of the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and Higher Education Academy (HEA) funded Academic Misconduct Benchmarking Research (AMBeR) Project and reflects the subsequent benchmark tariff for the application of penalties for student plagiarism in Higher Education.

In all cases where the allegation of unfair practice is substantiated (either by the student's own admission or by the findings of a Panel of Inquiry), the outcome is noted on the student's record and the student is placed on a monitoring system such as Academic Probation. Details of the Unfair Practice Guidelines, including penalties, can be found in Appendix GA8, which can be accessed from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>.

Initial investigation of allegations of unfair practice

The designated Unfair Practice Co-ordinator at the Partner Institution shall undertake an investigation into the allegation to determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence of unfair practice to proceed with the allegation.

In cases where it is difficult to document the evidence of unfair practice (such as when a student is suspected of having used the service of an essay bank), the Unfair Practice Co-ordinator, may convene an oral examination to determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence of unfair practice to proceed with the allegation. Oral examinations will consist of a meeting between the student, a senior academic (where applicable from the student's School/Dept.) and the Module Tutor, as well as a note-taker. The student may choose to be accompanied at the oral examination by a person of his/her choosing. The accompanying person shall not normally contribute to the discussions. Legal representation is not allowed. In the oral examination, the student will be asked to critically reflect upon his/her work and defend its content in order to demonstrate that the submission was his/her own work. Students should be informed that they will be required to attend the oral examination and should be provided with details of the specific date, time and location of the oral examination (in the case of distance learning students the oral examination may be conducted via video or audio link). If the finding of the oral examination is that there is sufficient evidence to support the allegation of unfair practice, then the findings of the oral examination will form the basis of the evidence which is presented to any subsequent investigation.

If it is concluded that there is not sufficient evidence to support the allegation of unfair practice, then the Module Tutor will be instructed to mark the student's work following normal procedures. A record of all the relevant paperwork will be sent to the Academic Office.

If it is concluded that there is sufficient evidence to support the allegation of unfair practice, then the completed Unfair Practice Investigation Form (Appendix GA6, accessed from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>) will be submitted to the Academic Office which will initiate the next stage of the unfair practice procedure.

Process for consideration of allegations of unfair practice

The Academic Office will establish whether or not there are any concurrent allegations of unfair practice or any previous substantiated allegations of unfair practice against the student.

The Academic Office will contact the student, outlining the allegation of unfair practice, the evidence available and, noting the Unfair Practice Guidelines and Penalties, give an indication of the penalty which would be applied should the student accept the allegation.

The student will be asked to respond to the allegation, normally within 5 clear working days, either accepting or denying the allegation of unfair practice. If no response is received within this time, it will be understood that the student has accepted the allegation of unfair practice.

If a student accepts the allegation of unfair practice, then the appropriate penalty as indicated by the Unfair Practice Guidelines and Penalties will be applied. The student shall be notified formally in writing of the penalty applied. Following notification of the penalty applied, a student may request that an allegation which has been accepted be considered by a Panel of Inquiry by informing the Academic Office within 5 clear working days of the formal notification of the penalty applied.

If the student denies the allegation of unfair practice, then a Panel of Inquiry will be established to consider the allegation. The Academic Office will establish the Panel of Inquiry as soon as possible, normally within 20 clear working days of receiving instruction to establish the Panel. In the event that it takes longer to verify the facts to which the allegation refers, this period may be extended. The Academic Office will inform the student that a Panel of Inquiry is being established to consider the case. Documentation for the Panel of Inquiry will be prepared by an appropriate officer of the University. All documents considered in identifying the allegations, the initial investigation of allegations, and the consideration of allegations must be included in the documentation for the Panel of Inquiry.

The Panel of Inquiry's terms of reference and membership are outlined in 13.8.5 of Chapter 13 of the AQH. The preparations for the Panel of Inquiry follow the procedures as outlined in paragraphs 13.8.5 (4) and 13.8.6 (1) and the procedure during the meeting follows paragraph 13.8.6 (2), of Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

8.1.2 Academic Appeals

This procedure is applicable to all students of the University following taught programmes of study.

A separate procedure applies to postgraduate research degree students, available in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, which is accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/other-forms-and-policies/>.

Grounds for Appeal

A student in a University assessment is entitled to submit an Academic Appeal, based on one or more of the following:

- That there has been an arithmetical or other factual error in the results published by the University
- That, the Examining Board failed to take appropriate action to implement an Extenuating Circumstances decision
- That there were defects or irregularities in the conduct of the assessments or in written advice relating thereto of such a nature as to create reasonable possibility that the result may have been different had they not occurred.

Appeals which are made on any grounds other than those listed above (including those which question the academic judgement of examiners) shall not be admissible.

If a student wishes to appeal on the grounds that the University was unaware of extenuating circumstances which adversely affected his/her performance, the student should submit a request for consideration of extenuating circumstances in accordance with the appropriate regulations as set out in Section 13.2 of Chapter 13 of the AQH, paying particular attention to paragraph 13.2.3 (6).

Submitting an Appeal

Any appeal shall be sent to the Academic Office on the University's Academic Appeal Form (Appendix GA4, accessed from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>) and received not later than 15 clear working days after the official notification of results. Simple notice of appeal given in writing by a student within the above deadline shall not be deemed to constitute an appeal and shall not be accepted. Appeals received after the above deadline will be deemed to be out of time and may not be conserved unless there is independent evidence to show compelling reasons as to why the appeal was not submitted in a timely manner. The University will not consider any appeal submitted more than 12 months after the relevant Examining Board meeting.

The Academic Office shall acknowledge receipt of an appeal normally within 5 clear working days. If a student submits an appeal which is not acknowledged within 5 clear working days, the student should contact the Academic Office to ensure that the appeal was actually received. Where appropriate to the circumstances of the case, the appeal shall be referred to an appropriate officer of the University for investigation.

Initial Investigation

The appropriate officer shall ensure that the facts are verified and upon completion of his/her enquiries, shall submit a written report to the Academic Office setting out the circumstances of the case and confirming his/her findings.

The Academic Office shall arrange for the relevant Examining Board to re-consider the decision taken if the report indicates that the original decision was inappropriate due to one or more of the following having occurred:

- There was an arithmetical or other factual error
- The Examining Board failed to take appropriate action to implement the decision of an Extenuating Circumstances Panel
- There were defects or irregularities in the conduct of the examinations or in written advice relating thereto of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that the result may have been different had they not occurred.

The appellant shall be informed by the Academic Office of the action being taken to remedy the situation by means of an Appeal Outcome letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

If the report indicates that no error as defined above has occurred, the Academic Office shall determine, based on the contents of the application for appeal and the written report from the appropriate officer whether a clear case for appeal exists.

The Academic Office may disallow any appeal, normally within 20 clear working days of its receipt, which fails to meet the above criteria for making an academic appeal or in which, following the written report, it is apparent that no clear case for appeal has been made. The appellant shall be informed that the appeal has been disallowed by means of an Appeal Outcome letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

Appeal Panel

If it is decided that there is a clear case to be considered, the appeal shall be referred to an Appeal Panel consisting of three members from the standing group. Where appropriate an external person may be appointed as an additional member of the Appeal Panel. The Appeal Panel shall normally meet within 25 clear working days of the appeal. In the event that it takes longer to verify the facts to which the appeal refers, this period may be extended.

An appellant shall be offered a personal hearing by the Appeal Panel. If for reasons of distance or other significant matters (to be agreed by the Academic Office), physical attendance in person is not possible, the appellant will be invited to contribute via video link, audio link or to make an additional written submission. The appellant may not send another person to an Appeal Panel in his/her stead. Should the appellant not attend the meeting of the Appeal Panel and provided that all reasonable means have been taken to contact the appellant, the meeting shall proceed in his/her absence.

Outcomes of an Appeal Panel

The Appeal Panel shall be empowered to take one of the following decisions:

- To reject the appeal and uphold the original decision of the Examining Board
- To uphold the appeal and to refer the case back to a special Examining Board for a review of the initial decision.

Status of students who have submitted appeals

Where an appeal has been submitted, the original decision of the relevant Examining Board shall stand until the outcome of the Academic Appeal Procedure is known.

Further information on Academic Appeal, details of the Appeals Panel and details of reviews of appeals outcomes can be found in Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook>.

8.1.3 Extenuating Circumstances

A student who believes that his/her performance in, or ability to complete, an assessment has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances may request that those circumstances are recognised by the University. Claims for extenuating circumstances are judged on clear and transparent criteria as set out in the regulations and, where necessary, are considered by a cross-University Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

The University defines extenuating circumstances as referring to immobilising ill health during the assessment period, bereavement of a close relative or friend during the assessment period, or other similarly profound experience or difficulty that is outside the control of the student. In respect of students in employment, where study is subsidiary to the employment, pressure from employers may also be considered as extenuating circumstances.

The following are not normally recognised to be extenuating circumstances:

- Minor, non-immobilising health problems with a duration of less than one week including but not limited to: colds, sore throat, sprains (other than in the writing hand/arm).
- Loss of work including, but not limited to: as a result of theft, the breakdown of a computer or other electronic equipment, mislaying an electronic storage device or hard copy.
- Difficulties in submitting for assessment due to technical problems (not caused by a failure in the University's systems).
- Difficulty in gaining access to available materials such as books or videos.
 - Students should guard against such difficulties by keeping electronic back-ups of work, together with hard copies; keeping drafts of work in progress; and managing the time allocated for completing the assessment.
- Non-serious domestic or personal disruptions including, but not limited to: moving house, change of job, holidays, weddings, oversleeping, cultural and/or educational adjustment, normal stress and anxiety experienced in relation to assessment.
 - Students are expected to be able to take reasonable steps to ensure that non-serious domestic or personal disruptions do not affect assessments.
- The normal financial difficulties which may be experienced by students, unless there has been a sudden and unforeseen change in financial circumstances.
 - Students experiencing short-term financial difficulties should seek advice and support from Student Services.
- Long standing impairments or medical conditions, unless it can be demonstrated through evidence that there has been an increase in severity at the time of the assessment, such that the student's academic performance may have been adversely affected.
 - Students should report long standing impairments and conditions to Student Services to ensure that, where appropriate, adjustments are made to the assessment regime and support arrangements are put in place well before assessment commences.

The University's approach to considering requests for extenuating circumstances is based on two principles:

- The object of an assessment is to measure achievement, not potential; what a student has done, not what he/she might have the potential to do.
- Each student is responsible for submitting assessed coursework on time, for presenting him/herself for written examinations at the appropriate time and place, and for submitting information on extenuating circumstances.

As a result:

- Members of staff may not grant extensions. In the event that work is submitted late, the work is marked in the normal way and then penalised in accordance with the regulations i.e. the mark is capped at the minimum pass mark (40% for Levels 4, 5 and 6 and 50% for Level 7) if the work is up to 1 week late for first attempts or a mark of 0% is recorded if the work is for re-assessment. Both the initial mark and the penalised mark are recorded in the first instance. Any decision to lift the late submission penalty is made in accordance with the regulations for extenuating circumstances.
- Work will not be accepted more than 1 week after the original date for submission. In such cases, where extenuating circumstances are approved, the relevant Programme Team will inform the student that the work is to be submitted at the next appropriate assessment point.
- Extenuating circumstances must not be taken into account in the marking of a student's work.
- Academic staff, Examining Boards and the Extenuating Circumstances Panel are not permitted to modify or adjust marks to compensate for extenuating circumstances.

The Role of the Extenuating Circumstances Procedures Panel is to:

- Ensure consistency in the consideration of requests for extenuating circumstances across the University

- Determine whether a claim for extenuating circumstances can be upheld or should be rejected
- Determine the action to be taken in the event that the claim is upheld – either the lifting of a late submission penalty or the opportunity to be re-assessed without incurring an additional penalty.

It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have read and understood the University's procedures for Extenuating Circumstances for Taught Programmes. A student's misinterpretation or lack of awareness of the procedures will not be considered a valid reason for non-compliance.

Further information on Extenuating Circumstances and details of appeals against decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel can be found in Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

8.1.4 Compensatory Measures

Long-term impairments shall not constitute extenuating circumstances, other than in the event of an especially severe episode of symptoms at the time of assessment. Students who have a long-term impairment that has a bearing on the way in which they need to complete assessments may request that compensatory measures are put in place for them. Depending on the circumstances of each individual candidate and where facilities allow, a pattern of compensatory measures, as part of the normal assessment of the student, will be devised. Further information on how students at partner institutions, who believe they are eligible for compensatory measures, can request these is available from the Academic Office.

8.2 Admissions

Applications to UWTSD programmes at partner institutions are received and processed by the partner. Admissions procedures differ in their detail from programme to programme and any queries in relation to the entry criteria for each award should be forwarded to Registry staff at the University.

Partner institutions shall adhere to the general principles of the University Admissions Policy, specifically concerning:

- Compliance with relevant legislation
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to admissions
- Transparency in the admissions arrangements
- Selecting for merit, potential and diversity
- Reliability, validity and relevance of assessment methods
- Minimising barriers to entry
- Provision for feedback to applicants and complaints from applicants
- Provision for appointing, training and supporting admissions staff.

Partner institutions should also refer to the University's English Language Entry Requirements for Academic Study Policy as part of their Admissions arrangements.

It will be for the partner institutions to apply the general principles of the Admissions Policy, determining for themselves the operational details in the context of their own structures and systems.

Feedback to unsuccessful applicants should be on request to the partner institution and normally provided by the partner.

It is expected that partner institutions' admissions policies take full and proper account of prevailing legislation, including in respect of criminal convictions, contact with children or vulnerable adults (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks or equivalent), visa requirements and ensuring only appropriate information is collected from applicants.

Partner institutions should also ensure that information is kept updated following entry onto the programme, such as any change to criminal conviction status.

Applications for PhD and MPhil research programmes must be submitted to, and approved by, the RDC Admissions Sub-Committee of the University before an offer of a place can be made by the partner. This will enable the University to consider whether there is sufficient academic knowledge and supervisory capacity in the relevant area of discipline before a commitment is made to the applicant.

8.3 Enrolment

Students on UWTSD validated programmes at partner institutions must be enrolled on the UWTSD student record system. The process for collecting data may vary between partners. For instance, students at a partner institution that has a very small volume of students on UWTSD programmes will be required to complete the University's enrolment form which should then be forwarded to the University. On the other hand, a partner that has a large volume of students on UWTSD programmes will be asked to extract data from its own student database in the format described in a data transfer specification document. The data will then be transferred securely and imported electronically into the UWTSD student record system.

It is the Partner's responsibility to ensure that students agree to be bound by UWTSD regulations upon enrolment. An Enrolment Agreement form for partner students can be found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/collaborative-partnerships/> and students are required to confirm that they have read and understood the content of the Agreement Form.

it is important that the University is made aware of any changes in circumstances, such as a student's change of address, so that its student records remain up-to-date

All correspondence regarding students must include their full name and UWTSD student number once enrolled. Students are sent their UWTSD student number via email once their details have been entered into the UWTSD student record system.

8.4 Interruption of Studies, Adjustment to Time Limits and Withdrawal

8.4.1 Interruption of Studies

Interruption of studies is defined as the formal pause in a student's study for an extended period of time during which a student is not required to engage with his/her studies. Students do not have the automatic right to interrupt their studies; a request to interrupt studies must be made to the Academic Office on the approved form.

Where an application for interruption of studies is received prior to the start of a semester/term or at most 2 weeks in to a semester/term, the interruption would, if approved, have an effective start date of the beginning of the semester/term. Where an application for interruption of studies is received more than 2 weeks but less than 7 weeks after the start of a semester/term, the

interruption would, if approved, have an effective start date of the date the application was received. Where an application for interruption of studies is received more than 7 weeks after the start of a semester/term will be considered as an indication that the student wishes to apply for extenuating circumstances in that semester/term and the student will be directed to the appropriate regulations (see Section 13.2 of Chapter 13 of the AQH).

The grounds on which a student can request an interruption of studies are as follows:

- Health or Medical
- Maternity, paternity or adoption leave
- Compassionate (including bereavement and serious domestic difficulties)
- Financial
- Exceptional Professional Commitments
- Opportunities which contribute to academic development
- Exceptional circumstances outside the control of the student that seriously compromises his/her ability to continue with his/her studies (including the impact of a situation in relation to learning differences/neurodiversity).

All applications must be supported by appropriate independent evidence.

Normally an interruption of studies should be for a definite period and a date for return to studies should be agreed at the time the interruption is approved. Normally a student will be expected to resume his/her studies at the beginning of the next appropriate Semester or Term in order to continue his/her studies.

The student should discuss his/her intention to interrupt his/her studies with his/her Personal or Year Tutor or Programme Director and relevant members of staff in his/her institution. International students are strongly encouraged to consult staff at their institution before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. The student should complete an Interruption of Studies Form (Appendix GA13, available at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>).

The relevant member of staff must provide a statement indicating whether or not the partner institution supports the request and provide details of the plans and any conditions for return to studies (which must, in the case of a student seeking to interrupt studies partway through a level of study, include a clear indication of whether any partial or full credit already gained will be carried forward or forfeited). The completed form should be sent to the Academic Office for final consideration and determination of actual dates of interruption of studies in cases where the request is approved. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the institution will not be approved.

The Academic Office will inform the student of the final decision by means of an Interruption of Studies letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

In supporting a request for an interruption of studies, the partner institution will have produced a plan for a return to studies which details whether any partial or full credit already gained will be carried forward or will be forfeited when studies are resumed and sets any conditions for the return to studies.

A student who interrupts studies should be aware it may not be possible for the University to guarantee that the same modules or programmes will be part of the provision when the student resumes his/her studies (due to module or programme review). In such cases, the University will

work with the student and seek to identify a suitable alternative (which may mean that the student has to forfeit partial credit which had previously been approved to take forward).

If a student is unable to return on the agreed date, he/she must seek further approval to extend the period of interruption. If a student fails to return to his/her studies by the date specified and approval for an extension to the interruption has not been sought, the University shall assume that the student has withdrawn from the University. The student shall be informed in writing that he/she has been withdrawn and the record amended. The student shall have the right to appeal against the decision in accordance with the Academic Appeal regulations.

Normally the total maximum period for interruption of studies for any award is 12 months for a full-time student and 24 months for a part-time student. If a period of interruption of greater than this is required, the student should normally withdraw from his/her studies. The student can reapply when able to commit to study again and the University will take previous periods of study into consideration when considering applications.

The usual time limit for completing a taught award will automatically be adjusted to take into consideration time spent on an approved interruption of studies; however, the maximum time limit for completing a taught award will not be automatically extended. A student may request an extension to his/her interruption of studies following the application procedure outlined below provided that the student can complete his/her programme of study or obtain an exit qualification within the maximum time limit. Students who require an extension to the maximum time limit for completing a taught award must apply under the specific regulations.

A student should consult his/her sponsor to obtain a clear understanding of the funding implications before interrupting studies; the University is not able to guarantee the resumption of any external grant or loan. If a student carries forward partial credit with the approval of the institution, there may be an implication for fees charged. If a student interrupts studies and returns to repeat a Semester or Term the student will be charged the appropriate tuition fee for the repeated period of study.

Changes in a student's status may affect funding/benefits for which the student can apply, for example students in the UK who have interrupted studies may not be entitled to Council Tax exemption. Students who have interrupted studies are **not** entitled to use the University Library services for partner students.

If a student is from overseas and has student leave to remain in the UK, an interruption of studies will have serious implications for his/her immigration status and he/she will not be permitted to remain in the UK for the duration of the interruption of studies.

8.4.2 Required to Suspend

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to interrupt studies due to academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. In such cases the period of interruption will be classified as a suspension of studies and the student will be informed that his/her studies have been suspended and will be notified of the reasons for the suspension. The student will be given a return to studies date and informed of any conditions that must be met before he/she can resume studies.

A student may also be required to suspend studies where a partner institution deems that on health grounds it is not appropriate for a student to continue with his/her studies, whether in exercising its duty of care to others or where it is deemed not to be in the interest of the particular student.

The University has a Fitness to Study policy, which is intended to be supportive rather than disciplinary in purpose. The policy relates to a student's capacity to participate fully and satisfactorily as a student in relation to their academic studies and student life generally at the University. The policy is limited to students who are registered directly at the University. For students registered at collaborative partner institutions, procedures from that institution are followed in the first instance. However, such students are entitled to submit an appeal to the University with respect to the outcome of their case. The policy can be accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/strategies-policies/2.1-Fitness-to-Study-Policy-FINAL---7.11.16.pdf>.

The University also has a Fitness to Practise policy that outlines the procedures that should be followed where there is cause for concern in relation to fitness to practice. This relates to programmes where students must meet the requirements of professional bodies. The policy is limited to students who are registered directly at the University. For students registered at collaborative partner institutions, procedures from that institution are followed in the first instance. However, such students are entitled to submit an appeal to the University with respect to the outcome of their case. The policy can be accessed at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/strategies-policies/2.0-Fitness-to-Practise-policy-finalEng.pdf>.

8.4.3 Adjustments to the usual time limit for completing a taught award

Details of the time limits for the completion of each taught award are provided in 6.2 of Chapter 6 of the AQH. These time-limits may be adjusted in exceptional cases by submitting a request to the Special Cases Committee on the Application for Adjustment to Time Limit Form (Appendix GA14, available from <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>). The usual time limit for completing a taught award will automatically be adjusted to take into consideration time spent on an approved interruption of studies or in cases where a student is required to repeat a level of study as long as the maximum period of study is not exceeded.

The grounds on which a student can request an adjustment to the usual time limit for an award are as follows:

- Health or Medical
- Compassionate (including serious domestic difficulties)
- Exceptional Professional Commitments.

The student should provide a full and reasoned case, identifying the length of the requested adjustment (which must not result in the maximum time limit being exceeded) and supported by appropriate independent evidence, for consideration of the Special Cases Committee. The student's submission must be accompanied by a statement from relevant staff at the partner institution, showing that he/she has evaluated the situation and indicating whether or not the institution considers the requested adjustment to be appropriate.

The Special Cases Committee will consider the evidence provided and the statement from the partner institution and reach a final decision on whether the adjustment request is to be granted or not and the exact length of the adjustment in cases where the adjustment request is granted. For every request, both the decision and the reason(s) for arriving at the decision must be documented and reported to the Academic Office.

The maximum time limit for completing a taught award cannot normally be adjusted. If a student reaches the maximum time limit for completing a taught award, the student will be withdrawn from the programme and awarded the appropriate exit qualification. However, in very exceptional cases

a request to adjust the maximum time limit may be considered by Special Cases Committee following the procedures outlined above for adjustment to the usual time limit.

8.4.4 Withdrawal

If students decide that they wish to withdraw from a UWTSD programmes, then the appropriate withdrawal form must be completed.. It is important that all the required information is provided as this may have financial implications for the student in relation to tuition fees and student loan, where appropriate. The Notification of Student Withdrawal form can be found out <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/> . The completed form should be returned to the Registry. Withdrawals will be notified to external agencies by the University, where appropriate.

Further information on Interruption of Studies, Adjustment to Time Limits and Withdrawal, and details of appeals against decisions, can be found in Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

8.5 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The facility for accrediting prior learning or experience is available to all students enrolling onto UWTSD credit-rated programmes, whether on campus or at partner institutions. Where the learning or experience is found to be relevant and of an appropriate standard, credit may be awarded against specified modules of the intended programme and the student will be exempt from studying those modules. Partner institutions are requested to notify the University **as early as possible** of any RPL claims.

Information on claims for the Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning Recognition and/or Prior Experiential Learning is available in Chapter 10 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/>.

Staff at partner institutions may also request further guidance from the Academic Office.

8.6 Awards Congregation

The University holds annual awards congregations at its Carmarthen, Lampeter and Swansea campuses in July and November. UWTSD students taught by partner institutions are normally invited to attend. Partner institutions should inform the University of any students who wish to attend the Awards Ceremony and forward attendance forms to the University by the date specified in students' invitation letters. With the University's approval, partner institutions may also make alternative arrangements, where senior representatives from the University may attend.

8.7 Certificates

Certificates for students at partner institutions will be forwarded to the partners for distribution to students. Partner institutions should ensure that students understand that they will not receive their certificates at the Awards Ceremony.

The University will issue certificates of award for successful students, with an accompanying transcript that will state the name of the partner institution and the country where it is located (i.e.

where the studies were undertaken). This will be cross-referenced on the certificate. **Partner institutions are not permitted to issue certification in respect of UWTSD provision.**

Intermediate awards are only issued to those qualified students who leave while part way through the programme or who have completed the programme but failed to achieve the standard required for their intended qualification. Intermediate awards are not made to those students who progress to the next stage of the programme and students are able to confirm that they have passed modules associated with an intermediate stage within the programme by obtaining a transcript of results from the University.

8.8 Publicity Materials

Publicity material produced by partner institutions relating to UWTSD programmes of study must be approved by the University's Marketing Department prior to use (the Marketing Department is responsible for the appropriate use of the University's name and logo).

Partnership Team Leaders are asked to gather examples of promotional materials and student handbooks on their formal visits to the partner institutions and submit them to the Academic Office with their visit reports. The Academic Office will log the material and make a provisional check for accuracy in liaison with the Dean of Quality and Standards. All student handbooks will be held by the Academic Office.

It is expected that promotional materials and student handbooks will be collected at least annually.

All new partners will be asked formally, in a letter from the Academic Office accompanying the signed Memorandum of Agreement, to submit all planned promotional materials (relating to UWTSD programmes or bearing the University's name or logo) to the University prior to issue. Promotional materials include prospectuses, flyers and web content and social media platforms. Materials will be sent, via the Academic Office, to the Head of Marketing for scrutiny and approval for accuracy and use of the University's name or logo.

Existing partners will be reminded via a letter from the DVC (Academic):

- That prior approval is needed from the University (via the Head of Marketing) for all updates to approved promotional materials bearing the University's logo, including prospectuses and web content, and that new forms of publicity – for example, social media, posters, banners or advertisements bearing the University's logo – also require approval.
- That Partnership Team Leaders will be requesting examples of promotional materials formally on their visits.

Regular checks of the websites of partner institutions will be made with a log of the dates that sites were visited and any material of potential concern and the action taken subsequently.

Repositories of promotional materials will be maintained by the Academic Office.

9. OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

9.1 Welsh Language Provision

The University's Language Policy confirms that the University gives equal status to both the Welsh and English languages throughout its activities. This policy gives the right to all who are associated with the University to correspond and to receive a service in their chosen language. The University sees its natural bilingual context as a strength and will develop and extend its provision of bilingual opportunities for the community it serves.

9.2 Intellectual Property

The University's policy on Intellectual Property Rights relates to the ownership of any copyright, design rights, invention, discovery or improvement produced by a student or students in the course of their studies. The policy aims to protect the interests of both the student and the University and is to be interpreted in a spirit of reasonableness. The regulations for issues relating to Intellectual Property Rights are described in the University's policy. The policy is published on the University website: <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/ip/>.

9.3 Student Complaints Procedures

Students who are dissatisfied with an aspect of their experience as a student on a UWTS D programme have a right to make a complaint about any specific concern about the provision of their programme of study or a related academic service. Students are encouraged, in the first instance, to resolve the matter with the person or persons directly involved. If they wish to make a formal complaint, they should in the first instance pursue it through the partner institution's complaints procedures. If they remain dissatisfied, they may request that their complaint is reviewed by the University, as outlined in Chapter 13 of the AQH, which is accessed via <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/academic-quality-handbook/>.

In the event that students are not satisfied with the outcome of a review of a complaint by the partner institution and/or University, they are entitled to take the issue to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education, <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

Please note that disputes about defects or irregularities in the conduct of assessment or examinations should normally be resolved through the procedure for Academic Appeals rather than the Student Complaints procedure.

The Student Complaints procedure does not cover complaints about the behaviour of other students. Complaints of this nature should be dealt with by the designated officer at the partner institution.

9.4 Student discipline

Issues relating to student discipline of a non-academic nature will normally be dealt with directly by the partner institution. Advice on disciplinary issues relating to academic matters is available from the Academic Office.

9.5 Health and Safety

For the purposes of the UK's Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the University treats its students as if they were employees. This means that students have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for other persons who may be affected by what they do or fail to do, and to work and co-operate with the University in fulfilling its statutory duties. Partner institutions should ensure that students have access to their institution's health and safety procedures and regulations and students should be asked to observe any specific information that they have received on health and safety in laboratories, workshops or studios.

9.6 Resources

As outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement, the partner institution is responsible for providing the necessary physical and human resources for the operation of the programme(s), subject, where appropriate, to the approval of the University (except those agreed as part of the financial agreement and unless otherwise agreed by both parties). These include:

- Ensuring students receive information provided by the University
- Ensuring students handbooks and other information are produced in line with University guidance and distributed to students
- Ensuring learning and assessment materials for staff and students are accessed in a timely manner
- Making appropriate arrangements for the assessment of need, eligibility and provision of student support mechanisms, including but not limited to: learning support, counselling, disability, accommodation, careers guidance and finance.

Partner institutions are responsible for providing and managing the financial and human resources needed to maintain and enhance the quality of students' experience, including the appointment of suitably qualified staff, and the induction and appraisal of staff.

In terms of materials teaching materials:

- For validation programmes the University will not normally provide any materials, as the curriculum is designed by the partner
- For franchise partnerships, the University will provide the definitive programme document, although PTLs may also share other materials on request

The support to be provided in terms of teaching materials should be agreed at validation (and subject to financial agreement where applicable).

Partner institutions will also be responsible for any additional costs associated with licenses for learning and teaching materials provided by the University, such as *Turnitin* and library resources/packages.

A Service Level Agreement details the range of services the University offers for staff and students based at partner institutions.

9.6.1 Library

Although the core learning resources for the University's Programme of Study are to be provided by the partner institutions (as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement), where permissible under licensing agreements, the University Library provides access to additional electronic resources via the internet. Further information can be found at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/services/services-for-partner-students/>

10. CONTACTS

Partner institutions will have contact with many different sections of the University including Faculties, Academic Schools, the Registry and the Academic Office.

10.1 Partnership Co-ordinators

Each collaborative partnership has a Partnership Co-ordinator appointed by Senate to oversee the partnership at a strategic level, following partnership approval. There will be no more than one Partnership Co-ordinator for each partnership. The Partnership Co-ordinator's responsibilities normally include:

- Maintaining strategic oversight of the partnership on behalf of the University.
- Working, as appropriate, with the Deans of Faculty, Heads of School, Programme Directors(s) and Partnership Team Leaders to resolve any major issues that arise in the partnership.
- Reporting annually to Senate, via IACPC, on the operation of the partnership using the template provided, Appendix CP7.
- Serving in a 'facilitating' capacity at review events.
- Representing the University at key functions hosted by the partner institution.

Where a partnership is based on a single programme or several programmes in a cognate subject area, the Partnership Co-ordinator may be the Programme Director (see below).

10.2 Programme Directors

Each University-delivered programme of study is located in an Academic School and has a Programme Director, who is responsible for the operational management and delivery of the programme, under the line management of the Head of School. Where the programme is also delivered in collaboration with a partner institution, the Programme Director's responsibilities, in liaison with the PTL, will normally include:

- Ensuring that the partner institution collaborative proposal and documentation are of an appropriate quality and consistent with University requirements
- Disseminating information to the parties involved at the partner institution and the University, and liaising with senior managers and other key staff as appropriate
- Approving, in consultation with appropriate members of University staff including subject specialists, the appointment of new staff by the partner institution to teach on the collaborative programme
- Serving in a 'facilitating' capacity at validation/review events
- Maintaining oversight, at programme level, of the management and delivery of the provision and providing guidance to the partner institution and PTL as required
- Working with the partner institution to ensure that the University's quality assurance requirements are met, including the requirements relating to annual review.

Where a partnership is based on a single programme or several programmes in a cognate subject area, the Programme Director may also serve as the Partnership Co-ordinator (see above).

Where the programme is only delivered by a partner institution the above will normally be undertaken by the Partnership Co-ordinator in liaison with the Partnership Team Leader and the Head of School.

10.3 Partnership Team Leaders (PTLs)

PTLs are responsible for ensuring that standards are consistent with the level of award proposed and helping to maintain and enhance the quality of the collaborative provision. It is expected that PTLs will have regular contact with and visit partners, to ensure consistency between the respective deliveries of the awards. Responsibilities of PTLs cover a number of different functions as follows:

Developmental functions:

- Providing academic advice and a point of contact to facilitate continuing development of the programme or provision and/or the introduction of new programmes.
- Encouraging and providing staff development as appropriate.
- Encouraging scholarly activity and supporting the partner institution to develop in such a way that they provide a suitable learning environment for the level of studies undertaken.
- Supporting the partner institution in producing appropriate documentation for University committees and administrative units.

Monitoring functions:

- Monitoring delivery of the programme of study as approved at validation.
- Monitoring the arrangements made for the admission of students and the application of the approved entry requirements.
- Checking the accuracy of programme information provided for applicants and students.
- Monitoring the adequacy of resources – both human and physical – available to provide an appropriate level of underpinning for programmes of study.
- Where partnerships include the provision of postgraduate research degrees, monitoring all supervisory arrangements, the supervisory capacity of the partner institution, composition of supervisory teams, the research environment and the assessment of student progress and performance.
- Holding periodic meetings with students.
- Reporting to the relevant Partnership Co-ordinators and Programme Directors, Faculty Board and IACPC using the template, Appendix CP8.

Assessment functions:

- Where appropriate, working with the partner institution to identify and nominate external examiners and, in the case of research degree examinations, examining boards, for approval by the University.
- Reviewing and providing written comments on draft assessments, including examination papers.
- Checking that marking responsibilities have been assigned.
- Attending Examining Board meetings and, in the case of research degree provision, annual review meetings, and monitoring the outcomes.
- Ensuring that student performance is assessed against established criteria to ensure fairness and consistency in the assessment process.

To undertake these functions, PTLs normally undertake two formal visits per year to the partner institution. Where examining boards for taught programmes of study are held at the partner institution, at least one of the visits will take place at the time of an examining board meeting. A provisional schedule of visits (or, where appropriate, other interactions) for each PTL will be approved by the IACPC at the beginning of the academic year. A record of each visit is kept using the template provided in Appendix CP8, which is then forwarded to the relevant Partnership Co-

ordinators and Programme Directors, IACPC (and RDC where appropriate) and the relevant Faculty Board for consideration. A copy is also sent to the partner institution.

Where there are programme(s) delivered at more than one location within a single partnership, the required PTL visits may be varied to reflect this, with the approval of IACPC. Variations might include one or more of the following: one visit per location within an academic year (these should cover all the programmes delivered at a centre wherever possible); visits undertaken by other members of Faculty staff; meetings with staff from one location undertaken as part of a visit to another of the institution's locations; reports of communications (emails; voice/video calls etc.) forming the basis of the report.

Partnership Team Leaders are normally assigned to a programme for a maximum period of three years. Extensions beyond this period require the approval of IACPC.

10.4 Academic Office

The Academic Office provides an overview of quality assurance for partnerships via, among other things, the monitoring of PTL visit reports and the management of interim reviews and partnership reviews. The office also supports partnerships through processes such as approval, programme monitoring and review, (re)validation, modifications to programmes, external examiner approval, dissemination of regulations and procedures, servicing and contributing to the IACPC.

The principal Academic Office contacts are:

Mrs Elisa Tavares Llewellyn, Head of Collaborative Partnerships

Tel: 01792 481095

E-mail: elisa.tavares.llewellyn@uwtsd.ac.uk

Mr Gwion Ramage, Senior Administrative Officer (Collaborative Partnerships)

Tel: 01267 676653

E-mail: g.ramage@uwtsd.ac.uk

10.5 Registry

The Registry provides support in the area of student enrolment/registration, examinations and examining boards.

The principal Registry contact is:

Miss Nicola Williams, Registry Services Officer

Tel: 01267 225145

E-mail: n.williams@uwtsd.ac.uk

10.6 Faculties

In addition, support for partnerships is also provided by a range of other officers and departments within the University. For contact details of staff within the Faculties, as well as for those of your relevant Partnership Co-ordinator, Programme Director and PTL, please contact Academic Office staff in the first instance.

10.7 IT

The IT department can provide general information and advice on accessing the University's IT systems.

Please contact the IT Service Desk on ITServiceDesk@uwtsd.ac.uk or 0300 500 5055

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