

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

Introduction

1. This section of the Quality Manual applies to collaborative provision. The QAA's Advice and Guidance on Partnerships defines collaborative provision as "provision that leads to the award of academic credit and that is delivered, assessed or supported in partnership between two or more organisations". This definition therefore encompasses any activity whereby the achievement of the learning outcomes for the module or programme is dependent upon the arrangement made with another delivery organisation or support provider. It also encompasses short courses that lead to the award of academic credit.
2. As a joint venture, the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education ('FHSCE') is not deemed to be a collaborative partner in the context of this section of the Quality Manual. However, FHSCE programmes leading to awards of St George's offered in partnership with external providers are in scope.
3. This section does not include collaborative arrangements related to the supervision of research students. These arrangements are covered in the regulations, codes of practice and procedures issued by the Research Degrees Committee.
4. SGUL has published an overarching Partnerships Policy which is intended to confirm that proposed partnerships are compatible with SGUL's Strategic Plan. This section of the Quality Manual must be read in conjunction with the Partnerships Policy. The Policy is available from the Quality and Partnerships Directorate.

Purpose

5. The QAA's Advice and Guidance on Partnerships states that the fundamental principle underpinning all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others is that the degree-awarding body has ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, regardless of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them.
6. The principal responsibility of the degree-awarding body is for the academic standards of any awards granted in its name (whether these are in the form of academic credit or qualifications), as well as for the accuracy of any formal transcript or record of achievement confirming these. The degree-awarding body also has ultimate responsibility for the quality of learning opportunities provided, even though aspects of their delivery and quality assurance may be delegated to another organisation. The procedures in this section of the Quality Manual provide the means by which SGUL fulfils these responsibilities. They also provide the means by which SGUL ensures that all parties have an explicit and unambiguous understanding of their respective responsibilities.
7. Collaborative arrangements vary in terms of scale and purpose. The procedures set out in this section of the Quality Manual are intended to be adaptable so that they are tailored and proportionate to the risks presented by each activity. In particular, the due diligence enquiries and the formal agreements adopted are intended to be proportionate to the volume, complexity and nature of the activity, to the type of delivery organisation or support provider involved, and to the

associated risks. For example, time-limited student placements are likely to be less complex and to present less risk than validation and franchise arrangements.

8. With this as context, this section includes:
 - 8.1. Definitions of collaborative provision
 - 8.2. Principles underpinning collaborative activity
 - 8.3. Processes for reviewing, considering and approving new collaborative proposals
 - 8.4. Published information
 - 8.5. Processes for the annual monitoring of approved collaborative arrangements
 - 8.6. Periodic and other review processes related to collaborative arrangements
 - 8.7. The suspension of recruitment and the termination of an agreement.

9. This section also includes:
 - 9.1. Approval processes in relation to articulation agreements
 - 9.2. Arrangements for placement learning

Legacy arrangements

10. A small number of collaborative partnerships were initiated prior to development of the procedures documented in this section of the Quality Manual. These partnerships will be subject in full to the monitoring and review processes documented in this section of the Quality Manual. Legacy arrangements will be reviewed to assess alignment with these procedures.

Definitions

11. The following are definitions of the common types of collaborative partnerships:
 - a) **Validation:** a programme that has been designed, delivered and assessed by another delivery organisation or support provider leads to an award of SGUL. In this case, SGUL puts in place quality assurance arrangements to establish that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by SGUL for its academic awards. These quality assurance arrangements also establish that the learning opportunities available to students meet SGUL expectations.

 - b) **Franchise:** Under a franchise arrangement, a programme (or part of a programme) that has been designed by SGUL is delivered by another delivery organisation or support provider. In this case, SGUL will determine which elements of the programme can be delivered by the delivery organisation or support provider and the degree of autonomy afforded to the partner. Students admitted under a franchise arrangement will receive a St George's academic award or transcript.

 - c) **Joint degrees*:** This is an arrangement under which two or more awarding institutions together provide a programme that leads to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants. A single certificate or document (signed by the relevant authorities) confirms the successful completion of the jointly delivered programme. The partners have a joint responsibility for the award including curriculum, quality assurance and the student experience.

 - d) **Double degrees*:** This is an arrangement involving two bodies with degree awarding powers. Students complete a single programme of study that is wholly joint and upon completion

students are awarded two separate awards conferred by each degree-awarding body involved. The arrangement is comparable to an arrangement leading to a joint degree. Students receive separate awards because there are legal obstacles or issues of recognition that prevent the award of a single certificate. The programme is typically validated separately by SGUL and the partner and SGUL is responsible for quality assurance and the standards of its award. The certificate and/or transcript or record of achievement will refer to the existence of the other degree awarding body.

e) **Dual degrees***: This is an arrangement where a student follows a programme jointly conceived by two partners with degree awarding powers. The student does not however need to satisfy the requirements of all partners to achieve an award. An example of provision of this kind is one in which two degree-awarding bodies jointly designing a programme of study comprising a joint initial curriculum, followed by two separate blocks taken consecutively at each partner in turn, leading to two separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies. Students who successfully complete both programmes receive separate certificates, one for each qualification, granted by each of the awarding bodies. Each degree awarding body is responsible for their own award, but the two components form a single package, and the overall arrangement is a joint enterprise. A distinguishing feature of this type of arrangement is that the overall study period and volume of learning is longer than either of the individual awards separately.

f) **Joint delivery***: This an arrangement where two or more institutions work together in the design, delivery and assessment of a programme. Students who successfully complete the programme receive a single award. The awarding body will have oversight responsibility for quality of the programme and the standard of the award. In developing a jointly delivered programme, the institutions will determine the institution that will confer awards. SGUL's agreement with Kings College London with respect to the MSc Genomic Medicine is an example of a jointly delivered programme.

*The QAA's [Characteristics Statement](#) on Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body describe joint, dual and double awards in more detail.

g) **Articulation Agreement**: An Articulation Agreement allows students who meet specified academic criteria on a programme offered by another delivery organisation or support provider to be admitted to a subsequent stage of a St George's programme. Students who achieve the specified academic criteria have the right to enrol on the articulated programme. An example of an articulation agreement is one in which students who have completed a programme offered by another delivery organisation are admitted to T year of the MBBS programme if they additionally meet academic criteria specified by SGUL.

h) **Flying Faculty**: An arrangement whereby a programme is delivered in a location away from SGUL by staff from the University, who also carry out assessment. Support for students (including the provision of placements) may be provided by local staff.

i) **Progression Agreement**: Arrangements whereby students who have completed a programme at one organisation successfully may be considered for entry (on an individual basis) either to the beginning, or to an advanced stage, of a programme offered by SGUL.

- j) **Placement Learning:** The learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the institution, where the learning outcomes are intended as an integral part of a programme of study.
- k) **Module recognition:** A module (or modules) designed, delivered and assessed by another delivery organisation is recognised by SGUL. Recognition allows students registered for an SGUL award to undertake modules offered by the delivery organisation and count the credit towards the requirements of the SGUL award. Modules designed by SGUL can also be delivered by another delivery organisation under a similar arrangement.
- l) **Joint or co-supervision of projects:** Arrangements of this kind allow students enrolled on taught programmes to carry out a project off-site. In these arrangements, co or joint supervisory arrangements with a delivery organisation or support provider may be established to ensure that students are able to complete their projects satisfactorily.

Study abroad (Outbound Students)

- 12. Study abroad programmes for outbound students allow students registered for an SGUL programme to undertake a period of study at a university or higher education provider outside of the UK. In most cases, the student will complete taught module(s), project or placement that is eligible for the award of academic credit. The study abroad programme will not usually extend the duration of the student's programme of study and in most cases any credit awarded may be used to meet the academic requirements of the SGUL award. In some cases, SGUL and the international provider may have a reciprocal arrangement that allows them to exchange students.

Study abroad (Incoming Students)

- 13. Study abroad programmes for incoming students allow students registered for the award at a university or higher education provider outside of the UK to undertake a period of study at SGUL. In most cases, the student will complete taught module(s), project or placement that is eligible for the award of academic credit. The extent to which any credit award may be used by SGUL to meet the academic requirements of the international university or higher education provider is a matter for that provider. In some cases, SGUL and the international provider may have a reciprocal arrangement or bilateral agreement, that allows them to exchange students.
- 14. For study abroad programmes, the mechanism needed to approve a partner site will be proportionate to the scale of the proposed programme. In most cases, mobility will be between established universities under the terms of an Erasmus +, equivalent programme and where it may be established that such partnerships or collaborative provisions require a bilateral agreement. Formal approval and due diligence processes are only required in case of bilateral agreements. If this is the case, formal approval and due diligence of the university partner sending or receiving students will not normally be required.

Intercalation

- 15. Opportunities for medical students to intercalate outside of SGUL are not covered within this section of the Quality Manual. Individual applications from students wishing to intercalate will be considered by the MBBS course director (or nominee) and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The criteria to be considered when an individual application is received will usually be written into the MBBS programme regulations.

- 16.** Opportunities for medical students from other medical schools to intercalate at SGUL are not covered within this section of the Quality Manual. Individual applications from external students wishing to intercalate at SGUL will be considered by the intercalated BSc course director (or nominee) and are considered on a case-by-case basis. The criteria to be considered when an individual application is received will usually be written into the intercalated BSc programme regulations.

Principles underpinning the consideration of collaborative opportunities

- 17.** The procedures set out in this section of the Quality Manual align with the following principles:
- a) Proposals must align with SGUL’s strategic priorities.
 - b) SGUL will only develop partnerships in areas where it has academic and pedagogic expertise.
 - c) Programmes of study leading to an award of the SGUL will be delivered and assessed in English (see paragraph 18).
 - d) Decisions on the whether to proceed with a partnership must be informed by a proper and evidence-based consideration of all risks.
 - e) Processes and the implementation of processes will be proportionate to the risks presented by a partnership.
 - f) Allocation of responsibilities for decision-making at each stage in the approval process must be mindful of any conflict(s) of interest. Staff with an actual or potential conflict of interest will be expected to recuse themselves from decision-making roles.
 - g) SGUL will ensure that all public information, publicity material and promotional activity relating to provision delivered by its partners which leads to an SGUL award are clear, comprehensive and accurate.
 - h) Ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, regardless of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them remains with SGUL.
 - i) SGUL will maintain full records of all partnership activity - from inception to dissolution - for monitoring purposes.
- 18.** SGUL may from time to time enter into agreements that allow students to undertake clinical placements in locations where English is not the primary or sole language. If this is the case, students must have access to an equitable learning experience so that the capacity to interact with patients and carers is not inhibited by language difference. Where it arises, this issue will be considered at all stages of the approval process.

Initial stage

- 19.** As soon as an Institute, Faculty, Department or School identifies an opportunity for a new venture with a prospective collaborative partner, a member of staff to act as “academic lead” will be identified. The academic lead should be involved in the early negotiations between the Institute and the prospective partner. The Institute or sponsoring school should notify the Quality and Partnerships Directorate of the potential development at the earliest opportunity so that advice and guidance can be provided.

20. Initial discussions with the prospective partner should address the status of the partner, SGUL's role in the proposed arrangement, financial arrangements and operational and resource considerations. The prospective partner can be provided with the Institutional Agreement template which indicates the normal contractual obligations associated with Collaborative Provision.
21. The member of Institute and/or the academic lead will need to develop an understanding of the potential partner at the initial stage to better understand the prospective partner's context and make an initial assessment of risk. An initial exploratory visit may be useful at this stage. However, Institutes, Faculties and Schools must be mindful of the direct and opportunity costs involved in a visit and, if a visit is scheduled, avoid developing relationships that may raise expectations and create potential conflicts of interest.
22. The Quality and Partnerships Directorate will advise on the approval pathway for the proposed collaborative partnership. The process will be proportionate to the scale of the partnership and the risks it might present.

Approval process – initiation of process

23. If following discussions at the initial stage, the Institute, School or Faculty decides to proceed with the proposed collaborative partnership, the academic lead will present the proposal to the Curriculum Advisory Group for discussion in accordance with the procedure for approving any programme.
24. Following the presentation to the CAG, the Collaborative Provision (Appendix E1) checklist must be completed. Approval of the E1 form rests with ESSC. The E1 form will be presented to the ESSC alongside Part 1 of the Programme Proposal Form (A2). The two-part Programme Proposal Form and the arrangements for its completion and approval are set out in the section of the Quality Manual related to validation (section A). Further development work should not proceed until the E1 and A2 forms have been approved by ESSC. ESSC can refer the proposal for consideration at the relevant monitoring committee (UPC or TPCC) and/or QAEC prior to its consideration at ESSC.
25. For programmes that involve collaboration with an international (non-UK) partner, the advice of the International Board may also be sought prior to consideration by ESSC.
26. The academic lead will be nominated by the Institute, School or Faculty at this point. ESSC will consider the suitability and capacity of the nominee and any development or support needs such as mentoring or access to specialist advice. The proposal cannot proceed unless an academic lead has been identified by the sponsoring institute or school. It will be the responsibility of the academic lead to ensure that the subsequent stages of the process are initiated including the development of validation documents.
27. In reviewing proposals, ESSC will consider strategic issues:

Strategic

- To what extent does the opportunity fit with SGUL's strategic plan and the Institute's plans?
- To what extent does the opportunity fit with SGUL's existing programme/research portfolio – does the opportunity make academic 'sense'? Could we effectively be competing against ourselves and/or duplicating existing provision/best practice?

The Opportunity

- What is the status of the potential partner – their reputation, standing, involvement with existing or developing networks, position of key links within their own organisation?
- Is the opportunity viable in the medium to long term – is it scalable? Could it realistically be threatened by external forces, such as change of governments and/or change in policy, and how might we mitigate against such risks?
- What is the market and what evidence is available to confirm the size/depth of the market? The reliability of the evidence of the market will be a key in determining approval.
- Does the opportunity provide significant scope to enhance the student experience and/or provide significant staff development opportunities, or is there potential to impact negatively on existing students on other St George's courses?

Resource

- What is the resource implication and does SGUL (and partners) have the capacity to take advantage of this opportunity, or can extra capacity (subject to business case) be easily procured? What is the evidence to support this analysis? See also paragraph 48.
- What are the potential development costs – is this primarily new activity?
- Are the full costs of the arrangement likely to be covered by consequent income?
- What are the likely financial benefits to SGUL relative to financial risk of the opportunity?

Partners

- What potential does this opportunity bring to include or enable further collaborations?
- Could there be any adverse effects on, or risks in respect of, our current partnerships as a result of developing this opportunity?
- Is there any reputational risk to SGUL through collaboration with the proposed new partner?

Approval process – initial proposal form, risk management and the due diligence process

28. Following strategic ESSC approval, Part 2 of the Programme Proposal Form will be completed and the due diligence process will commence. The Programme Proposal Form and the arrangements for its completion and approval are set out in the section of the Quality Manual related to validation (section A). Approval of the second part of the Programme Proposal Form rests with QAEC.
29. A risk register for the collaborative proposal will be developed in accordance with SGUL's risk management principles, frameworks and practices (as stipulated by the Risk Audit and Efficiency Committee). The sponsoring institute/school will therefore prepare a risk register for the collaboration and incorporate it within local risk registers. The sponsoring institute/school will include the risk register when business case approval is sought and append it to validation documents. Arrangements for development of the business case and the preparation of validation documents are set out in the section of the Quality Manual related to validation (section A).
30. The risk register will be updated regularly during the development phase. It is likely that the risk register will continue to be updated and considered by the appropriate co-ordination / implementation group during the initial delivery period of the programme. The risk register can be closed and integrated into management risk registers once the first cohort has completed.

31. Following strategic approval at ESSC, the Collaborative Provision: Due Diligence Checklist (Appendix E2) must be completed. This E2 checklist provides a template for consideration of the standing of the potential partner, in legal, regulatory, financial, accreditation and reputational terms.
32. Responsibility for the oversight of the full due diligence will normally rest with Quality and Partnerships Directorate. This responsibility includes the collection of relevant due diligence evidence from the prospective partner.
33. Consideration of the supporting evidence and preparation of a due diligence report will then be coordinated by the due diligence lead in Quality and Partnerships Directorate in liaison with *inter alia* GLAS, the Finance Department and others as appropriate. Due Diligence is a risk-based process, and evidence will be considered within the context of the development as defined in the E1 form.
34. The due diligence report is submitted to ESSC. If, in light of the due diligence report, ESSC endorses the proposed partnership, the proposal can proceed to the subsequent stages of the approval process. Alternatively, where ESSC perceives there to be a high risk in relation to the proposal, it may require further investigations, and, in some cases, may require a visit to the proposed partner to investigate particular issues. If this is the case, ESSC will specify the purpose and format of any visit. Due diligence visits initiated by ESSC stage are expected to be infrequent.
35. If, in light of the due diligence report and evidence gained in a subsequent visit, ESSC does not endorse the proposed partnership, all development work will cease. ESSC will also determine whether if, and in what circumstances, the proposal may be reconsidered at a later date.
36. The collaborative partner may have its own due diligence process. SGUL will comply with those processes by responding to all reasonable requests for evidence. The Quality and Partnerships Directorate will coordinate SGUL's engagement with a prospective partner's due diligence process.

Approval process – business case development and programme approval

37. Following the completion of the due diligence process (paragraph 34 refers), the subsequent stages of the approval process will commence. These are academic approval at QAEC, the approval of the business case and the development of validation documents. These stages are described in detail in section A of the Quality Manual.
38. Liaison arrangements for programmes offered with collaborative partners must be described in the mandatory Liaison Document (E3) which is presented at validation. It is the responsibility of the academic lead to develop the Liaison Document having taken advice from relevant professional support services staff. Further information on producing Liaison Documents is provided in a detailed guidance note.
39. The Liaison Document is constructed to aid drafting of the legal agreement, detailed financial business case and for information for validation. When amended it will stand as the key responsibilities document maintained by SGUL and the partner that informs staff about the collaboration.

40. The Collaborative Provision: Allocation of Responsibilities Template (E4) has been developed to complement the Liaison Document and sets out for each individual student-related administrative or other professional services process which individual or team is responsible in either SGUL or the partner organisation. It is an operational document that liaison administrators will manage and oversee. It may also feed into the legal document or the financial business case, but would usually be completed once the business case had been approved. Liaison is one of the key costs that SGUL will incur in managing a partnership. The Liaison Document and the E4 form enable the full costs of liaison to be calculated.

Contractual and funding arrangements

41. Following institutional approval (paragraph 34 refers), an Institutional Agreement must be signed before the programme commences. The Institutional Agreement places legal obligations on both parties and will only be signed when all conditions of approval have been met. Institutional Agreements are established for an agreed period of time, but normally no longer than five years. Variations from the standard five year duration require exceptional approval from ESSC.

42. The same Institutional Agreement template is used for all partnerships, but some clauses will vary depending on the scale and complexity of the partnership and the underpinning funding arrangements.

43. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) is a formal agreement between two or more parties. MoUs are an expression of the commitment of the parties to work together on a project, activity or endeavour. An MoU is a formal document and, as such, it expresses the commitment of the parties to work together to further the objectives of the project or activity in a serious and mutually respectful way. An MoU, in contrast to an Institutional Agreement, is not a legally binding document and does not afford the same level of protection provided by an Institutional Agreement. For the majority of the collaborative models identified in this procedure, an MoU would be inappropriate because it does not guarantee that student interests will be protected and academic standards maintained in all cases. Many international partners do attach importance to an MoU however. At the discretion of the Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships, SGUL will sign an MoU with a partner where it is mutually beneficial to do so.

44. In most cases, SGUL receives a fee from the partner (usually per capita) that reflects the direct and indirect costs incurred by SGUL in managing the partnership. If other models are considered (for example in relation to the apportionate of funding from HEFCE) approval may be required from the Funding Council before the Partnership commences. The advice of the Finance Department, Registry and the Planning Office may be sought with regard to funding models.

45. The Institutional Agreement includes four schedules:

- **Schedule 1** which lists the programmes and modules covered by the Agreement
- **Schedule 2** which deals with administrative arrangements
- **Schedule 3** which deals with financial arrangements
- **Schedule 4** which deals with Intellectual Property Rights.

46. The responsibility for agreeing the financial terms of the agreement will rest with the relevant Institute Director in consultation with the Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships, the Director

of GLAS, the Head of Planning, and the Finance Director. The detailed financial arrangements for the programmes detailed in Schedule 3 will be subject to annual review, via the Finance Board, to agree recruitment targets and other necessary adjustments. The Director of Finance will determine the level of reporting to Finance Committee that is appropriate under SGUL’s Financial Regulations.

- 47. Signed copies of Institutional Agreements will be held by GLAS and by the partner. The Vice-Chancellor will sign agreements on behalf of SGUL.

Availability of SGUL services and resources for different types of collaborative partner

- 48. For many of the collaboration models defined in paragraph 11, students will not usually have access to SGUL’s physical resources. The services provided by SGUL teams and personnel will not usually be available to collaborative partners and students enrolled under a collaborative partnership. For the most part, the collaborative partner will have the resources and the capacity to provide the services needed to deliver the programme successfully. The resource base and partner’s capacity to provide services to effectively deliver the programme will be tested at each stage of the approval process.
- 49. Students who are completing modules or programmes of study at SGUL under an Erasmus + programme or as a consequence of an articulation or progression agreement will usually have access to the majority of SGUL’s educational resources and support services although some of these services and resources (e.g. access to Halls of Residence) may be negotiated.
- 50. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 48, possible access to SGUL’s services and resources can be explored at the initial stage of the approval process. A formal proposal for access to resources and services must be costed and included in the business case presented to ESSC. The Finance Department will, following consultation with the manager of the resource and service, provide advice on costing as part of the business development process.
- 51. The Institutional Agreement and supporting schedules will record details of any agreements regarding resources and services. The following table provides an indication of the resources and services that can be discussed:

Resources	Resource/service lead for consultation purposes	Commentary
VLE		
Support with visa applications		
Computing facilities		
Library lending facilities		
E-resources		
Halls of Residence		
Support for students with disabilities		
Careers Service		
Counselling		
Academic Skills Support		
Marketing and promotional activities		
Applicant enquiries		

Application processing		
Clearing		
Membership of the Students Union		

Note: paragraphs 48 et al are intended to signal that access to generic resources and services cannot be assumed and needs to be discussed, costed and agreed with the relevant staff. This table is provisional and may be added to in the consultation stage.

Collaborative Provision Register

- 52.** St George’s maintains a Collaborative Provision Register that records all collaborative arrangements. The Register is maintained for internal purposes and is used to track partnership and collaborative activity across the institution, help plan quality assurance processes, manage contractual arrangements and ensure SGUL meets its reporting requirement to external bodies. The Quality and Partnerships Directorate will maintain the register.
- 53.** The Collaborative Provision Register will be reviewed on an annual basis by QAEC.

Published Information

- 54.** SGUL has a responsibility to ensure the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to provision delivered by its partners which leads to a St George’s award.
- 55.** Programme specifications, module descriptors and student handbooks for collaborative provision are considered as part of the validation process and in the context of the requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and relevant legislation (See section A). The requirements of the CMA and relevant legislation apply irrespective of whether delivery is in the UK or overseas.
- 56.** The Liaison Document must set out the arrangements for checking the accuracy of all publicity information in relation to the programme.
- 57.** QPD will conduct a periodic audit of partner websites to ensure the accuracy of published information, including information relating to professional accreditation. A summary of this audit is submitted to QAEC. Where errors or omissions are found, the Institute, Faculty or school associated with the partner link will be notified and required to work with the partner to rectify the problem. If the issue remains unresolved, the Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships will be notified and will write to the partner requesting immediate action.

Processes for the annual monitoring of approved collaborative arrangements

58. Liaison arrangements for programmes offered with collaborative partners must be described in the Liaison Document which is presented at validation. In principle, SGUL's quality assurance and enhancement processes apply equally to provision offered in partnership with an external provider. There may, however, be instances where SGUL's quality assurance and enhancement processes have been adapted to the local context. Any adaptation to the application of SGUL's quality assurance and enhancement processes at a collaborative partner must be articulated in the Liaison Document and considered at validation. These adaptations will be rare.
59. SGUL's annual programme monitoring process applies in full to all collaborative provision. The annual programme monitoring process is described in detail in Section B of this Manual. In summary, an Annual Programme Monitoring Report form must be completed and submitted for monitoring committee approval in the usual way. The APMR will normally be written by partner staff with guidance from the Academic Liaison Tutor. The Academic Liaison Tutor will have the opportunity to comment on the APMR prior to its submission. It is also open to the Academic Liaison Tutor to present a separate report if s/he wishes offering an Institute, Faculty or School perspective in the operational arrangements for the programme.
60. For franchised and validated provision, a Project Board, as defined in the Institutional Agreement should be established to review the operation of the partnership. The Project Board will meet annually, although more frequent meetings may be scheduled. See guidance note for indicative Terms of Reference membership and standard agenda items for the Project Board meeting. The Project Board is a high-level meeting which should take a holistic view of the operation of the partnership each year, considering issues such as resourcing, staff development, quality assurance, financial issues and plans for future developments. Project Boards are a formal part of the governance structure and the minutes of Project Boards should provide a full and accurate reflection of the meeting and provide an audit trail of any significant issues raised throughout the year, and actions taken in response. Project Board minutes will be appended to the Annual Programme Monitoring Report as part of the annual programme monitoring process.
61. In addition to their consideration in the annual programme monitoring process, Project Board minutes will also be available to QAEC.
62. **Additional annualised activity specific to collaborative provision are:**
 - 62.1. The annual review of financial arrangements carried out via the Executive Committee (see paragraph 46).
 - 62.2. The review and reissue of the Liaison Document. The arrangements for the review and reissue of the Liaison Document will be set out within the Liaison Document.

Periodic and Partner Review.

63. SGUL's periodic review process applies in full to all collaborative provision. The periodic review process is described in section C of this Manual.
64. The periodic review schedule is published by QAEC. Before a periodic review is scheduled, the Institute, Faculty or sponsoring school will conduct a partnership review to determine whether the

programme continues to meet the strategic and operational needs of both parties. The partnership review will normally be conducted in the year preceding the periodic review.

65. The partnership review will consider:
 - 65.1. Whether the collaboration remains aligned with SGUL's strategy and mission and the strategy and mission of the partner;
 - 65.2. Whether the collaboration remains appropriate in the context of the range of commitments of both parties;
 - 65.3. Whether the business case remains valid; and
 - 65.4. Whether additional risks have emerged since the partnership was initiated for example in relation to changes in government policy, changes to funding arrangements or concerns contained in PSRB reports.
66. If the Institute, Faculty, sponsoring school or partner agree collectively that the programme should be discontinued, the programme closure process will be initiated. The process is described briefly in paragraph 103 and in more detail in Section A of this Manual.
67. There may be occasions when the parties take a different view on whether a partnership should continue. The parties would, through the Project Board, attempt to resolve any differences of view. Ultimately, if a party determines that the factors outlined in paragraph 65 no longer apply, it is open to the party to invoke the termination clause in the institutional agreement.
68. The Partner Review Process is described in detail in the attached procedural note.
69. If the Institute, Faculty, sponsoring school or partner agrees to seek approval for the extension of the partnership, a periodic review will be scheduled. In addition to the periodic review, the Institute, Faculty or sponsoring school will ask for the due diligence checks to be carried out to allow the partnership to be extended. As part of the renewal of due diligence, additional evidence will be collected to determine whether the partner is able to meet its continued obligations. The due diligence approval process is described in paragraph 34.
70. If the Institute, Faculty, sponsoring school or partner agrees to seek approval for the extension of the partnership, a formal review of the Institutional Agreement will be initiated to determine whether both parties have met their obligations under the agreement. This review will be conducted irrespective of the duration of the agreement or the provisions for review contained in the agreement. The review will be carried out by QPD and GLAS.
71. A flowchart setting out the inter-relationships between partnership review, due diligence renewal, the review of the institutional agreement and the periodic review process is included at the end of this section of the Quality Manual.

Approval processes in relation to articulation agreements

72. Articulation Agreements are formal arrangements between SGUL and a partner that enable students who meet agreed criteria to be admitted to an SGUL programme and to be considered exempt from some of the requirements of the SGUL programme. In most cases, students will have completed a programme of study offered by an external provider. Through an Articulation Agreement, SGUL has determined that the programme is equivalent in terms of content, level and

duration to elements of the SGUL programme for which exemption is sought. Thus SGUL is recognising the prior learning (RPL) of a group of students through an allocation of specific credit. Section K of this Manual sets out SGUL's policy and procedural frameworks that support RPL.

73. Under an Articulation Agreement:

- 73.1. Articulation criteria including academic attainment criteria are agreed in advance by SGUL and the articulation partner. For SGUL, the course director (or nominee) will propose the academic attainment criteria;
- 73.2. Specific credit is recognised for all applicants who meet the agreed criteria;
- 73.3. The numbers of applicants who articulate may vary subject to set internal targets, teaching capacity and other related issues;
- 73.4. The partner is permitted, with SGUL agreement, to market the articulation route onto the SGUL qualification programme.

74. Articulation agreements will be reviewed by ESSC from time to time. The review will consider inter alia the number of students eligible to articulate year on year, track progress of students, and agree that criteria are still valid. The review arrangement will be written into Institutional Agreements.

75. Articulation Agreements are defined as collaborative arrangements for the purposes of this section of the Quality Manual and subject to its procedural arrangements outlined.

76. Progression agreements, accords and compacts, which facilitate entry onto a programme are not governed by these procedures. Agreements of this kind fall within the scope of the SGUL and programme-based admissions policies.

77. Where specific credit is recognised for individual applicants, the RPL processes set out in Section K of this Manual will apply.

Process (Articulation Agreements)

78. Initial discussions between the Institute, Faculty or school and the potential partner establish that an Articulation Agreement is a useful instrument for opening up learning opportunities for students. If both parties determine that an Articulation Agreement is useful, the following process will apply. In essence, co-signatories to Articulation Agreements are formal partners of St George's and require approval by means of the process outlined in paragraph 19 and subsequent paragraphs in terms of due diligence and partner approval. Through the due diligence and partner approval processes, the financial implications of the Articulation Agreement will be determined.

79. When the proposed partner has been approved, the academic lead will:

- a) Carry out a curriculum mapping exercise to establish whether the partner's curriculum, learning outcomes, level and volume of learning are equivalent to the SGUL programme for which articulation is sought.
- b) Review the assessment strategy for the partner's programme to determine whether the learning outcomes are reliably assessed.
- c) Review a sample of student work (anonymised as appropriate) sufficient to make a judgement on academic standards, the use assessment criteria and marking schemes, the application of regulations and the standards achieved by students.

- d) Collect details of the typical qualifications and experience of assessors and information on the procedures that ensure the quality control of assessment.
- e) Consider the approach to teaching and learning and to student support to determine whether the transition to study at St George's can be managed effectively.

80. Approval of the intention to enter into an Articulation Agreement rests with the ESSC. ESSC will usually consult with QAEC and RAPG (with additional consultation with the course and monitoring committee if required). If, following the evidence-gathering process outlined in paragraph 79, the sponsoring Institute, Faculty or school wishes to proceed with a proposal, a report to the (approving committee) setting out as a minimum will be prepared:

- 80.1. A summary of the evidence collected and the analysis and interpretation of that evidence by the academic lead.
- 80.2. The maximum number of students to be admitted to the SGUL programme and the part of the programme to which students will be admitted.
- 80.3. If the number of suitably qualified applicants exceeds the number of available places, the selection methods that will be used.
- 80.4. Additional support available/required to be available to students to facilitate transition to study at SGUL.
- 80.5. For ongoing quality monitoring processes to ensure that suitably qualified students benefit from the Articulation arrangements. These arrangements might include partner visits; access to samples of student work; and attendance at Assessment Boards or their equivalent.
- 80.6. Processes for tracking the progress and performance of students on an SGUL programme who have been admitted under the articulation agreement. Arrangements for the review of Articulation Agreement.

81. Following ESSC approval, QPD will prepare a formal agreement for signature by both parties. When the Articulation Agreement has been signed, students may be admitted to SGUL under the terms of the Agreement.

Arrangements for placement learning

82. This part of section E covers the processes and procedures designed to learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the institution, where the learning outcomes are an integral part of a programme of study. At St George's, placement learning most commonly refers to clinical attachments and practice placements undertaken by students on healthcare programmes. However, placement learning also encompasses learning undertaken in laboratories and in a professional or industry setting in the UK or overseas. Placement learning may be paid or unpaid and may be organised by SGUL or by the students themselves subject to approval by SGUL.

83. For the purposes of this section of the handbook, placement learning does not refer to learning that is not planned as part of a programme of study, such as part-time work, term-time or vacation work, internships or shadowing which students have arranged themselves, perhaps with support from the University.

Assessing the suitability of a placement site

84. Institutes and schools define procedures for how placements are secured and allocated and for ensuring that the placement provider is suitable. Procedures should take account of:

- 84.1. Whether due diligence processes are needed to establish the status of the placement provider. For most healthcare placements in the UK, due diligence will not be required;
 - 84.2. the opportunities for students to meet successfully the learning outcomes of the placement activity;
 - 84.3. health and safety requirements;
 - 84.4. PSRB requirements governing the suitability of placements and the staff involved in supporting student learning;
 - 84.5. Arrangements for student support during the placement;
any reasonable and anticipatory adjustments for students with a disability or specific learning needs.
- 85.** Institutes and schools are advised to develop an audit tool to help them assess the suitability of a potential new placement. A standard template for local adaptation will be developed to facilitate the evaluation of the proposed placement site. Standard template letters that confirm the placement learning arrangements with providers sent prior to commencement of the placement might also be helpful.
- 86.** Institutes and schools should maintain a register of placement providers.
- 87.** Institutes and schools should define the circumstances in which a placement provider would be de-selected.
- 88.** These procedures do not require institutional agreements (or their equivalent) to be in place between SGUL and the placement provider. Arrangements for placements are managed at the programme level through individual departments or centres. However, comprehensive documentation must be in place (e.g. in the form of placement agreements, SLAs, handbooks) that set out clearly the responsibilities of SGUL and the placement provider.

Documenting placement learning activity

- 89.** Material available to applicants will describe the opportunities for placement learning. This should make clear whether the placement experience is a compulsory component of the programme. Where this relates to professional training (linked to a sandwich award), applicant information will explain the implications of not securing a placement and the opportunities for transfer to alternative programmes.
- 90.** Students should have access to appropriate information, advice and guidance about applying for and securing placement learning opportunities. This should include:
- Information, support and guidance on applying for placement opportunities;
 - financial arrangements, including tuition fees and access to financial support;
 - the requirements for Disclosure and Barring checks (or their equivalent);
 - the requirements for Occupational Health clearance, advice and, where appropriate, information-sharing and consent for the same;
 - the arrangements for students with a disability or specific learning difficulty;
 - the availability of additional language or skills preparation; and

- Insurance arrangements – including the extent of insurance cover provided by the University and whether personal insurance is required.

91. Where placement learning forms an integral part of a programme of study, its contribution to the overall aims of the programme and the intended learning outcomes will be described in the programme specification and any accompanying module documentation. The programme specification will identify how the placement will be assessed and the implications for non-completion or failure of the placement.

Information for students

- 92.** Students undertaking placement learning will be provided with a placement learning guide (or its equivalent) which should include:
- a) information on the nature and extent of the placement learning experience and its relationship to other aspects of the student’s programme;
 - b) the assessment methods to be used;
 - c) the means of recording the achievement of specific learning outcomes, required tasks and progress;
 - d) the assessment arrangement including any submission deadlines, opportunities for formative assessment, grading criteria, opportunities for feedback and retrieval and the consequences of failures;
 - e) details of the support services, both academic and other, that students can expect whilst on placement;
 - f) information on the rights of students to any intellectual property they might develop as part of the placement experience;
 - g) information on complaints procedures and the mechanisms for investigation;
 - h) information on public interest disclosure and mechanisms for investigation;
 - i) the arrangements for staying in contact with the University and specifically the arrangements, if there is a problem;
 - j) the need to comply with PSRB requirements, if appropriate;
 - k) the methods for gathering student feedback;
 - l) induction arrangements;
 - m) any specific health and safety issues and requirements;
 - n) guidance regarding legal or ethical considerations.

Information for placement providers

- 93.** Institutes, Faculties and schools will ensure that placement providers are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Guidance should include:
- a) the provision of learning opportunities and access to resources;
 - b) their role in relation to the mentoring of students, and if applicable, the assessment of students;
 - c) expectations relating to the application of legislation, specifically health and safety and equality and diversity;
 - d) the induction of students to the workplace;
 - e) the insurance of students whilst in the workplace;
 - f) information on complaints procedures and the methods for investigation;
 - g) information on public interest disclosure and mechanisms for investigation;

- h) any reasonable adjustments for disabled students and those with specific learning difficulties;
- i) the arrangements for tutor visits to the workplace;
- j) the arrangements for gathering and responding to feedback on placement activity;
- k) the arrangements for staying in contact with SGUL and specifically the arrangements should there be a problem that may impede successful completion of the placement.

Monitoring of placement learning

- 94. Where placement learning is an integral part of a programme of study, its place in the coherence of the programme, its aims, learning outcomes and assessment will be considered as part of the validation processes (see Section A).
- 95. Placement learning will be considered as part of the Periodic Review Process (see Section C).
- 96. The suitability of placement learning opportunities will be considered as part of the annual monitoring processes. Issues relating to placement learning will be highlighted to the relevant Course Committee.
- 97. The institute or sponsoring school will ensure that mechanisms are in place to gather feedback from students (both during and at the end of their placement), placement providers (with respect to their interaction with SGUL and its staff as well as the conduct of students) and SGUL staff. The mechanisms must explain how feedback is disseminated to all stakeholders and the arrangements for closing feedback loops.

Suspending Recruitment

- 98. The Institute, the sponsoring school, Faculty or the partner may decide that it wishes to suspend recruitment to a programme, most commonly due to lack of demand. Any decision to suspend recruitment to a programme will be informed by SGUL's Student Protection Plan and must be ratified by ESSC. In considering an application to suspend recruitment, ESSC will consider the arrangements in place to protect the interests of students currently on the programme and the strategy for relaunching the programme.
- 99. The programme will remain in validation to enable the medium to long-term future of the programme to be considered. The suspension will not however extend the approval period for the programme. Thus, if the approval period has two years to run, the suspension cannot exceed two years. The Institute or the sponsoring school must notify QPD when an intention to suspend recruitment has been taken for internal financial and academic planning purposes.
- 100. Following ESSC approval, QPD will ensure that relevant stakeholders are informed and decisions reported within SGUL's governance structures.
- 101. The suspension of the programme will be recorded on the collaborative register to enable QAEC to monitor the status of the programme.
- 102. The maximum length of time that recruitment can be suspended is three years. If the period of suspension is more than three years, the programme will no longer be in validation and the Institute, Faculty or the sponsoring school will be required to complete programme closure forms in

accordance with the procedure set out in Section A of the Quality Manual. If the Institute, Faculty, the sponsoring school or partner wishes to commence recruitment to the field after more than three years of continuous non-recruitment, it will be treated as a new programme and the usual validation process will apply. When a programme ceases to recruit students, for whatever reason, SGUL will be responsible for ensuring that adequate standards are maintained for any students remaining on the programme, or enabling students to transfer to a suitable alternative programme or course elsewhere.

Terminating a programme

- 103.** From time to time, it may be necessary to end a collaborative programme (the notice period will be indicated in the Institutional Agreement). If this is the case, the programme closure form must be completed and sent to QPD for submission to ESSC and Senate. The programme closure form must provide details of the way in which the interests of students remaining on the programme will be protected as the programme is “taught out”. The Academic Lead for Quality and Partnerships must be consulted prior to submitting the programme closure form to ESSC and Senate to confirm that the programme closure process is being managed effectively by the Institute, Faculty or sponsoring school.
- 104.** The decision to terminate a programme will be recorded on the collaborative register to enable QAEC to monitor the “teach out” of the programme.
- 105.** Where there are students remaining on the programme offered by the partner, following ESSC and Senate approval of the partnership closure, the director of the Institute or Faculty or the Head of the sponsoring school will write to the collaborative partner formalising the end of the partnership and confirming the arrangements for supporting the remaining students.
- 106.** When all remaining students have completed the programme, a letter confirming the end of the partnership is to be sent from the Vice-Chancellor to the CEO or equivalent of the partner.

Forms and guidance notes

- 107.** The following forms and guidance notes are available from QPD:

- Appendix E1 Collaborative Provision Checklist
- Appendix E2 Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Checklist
- Appendix E3 Collaborative Provision Liaison Document
- Appendix E4 Collaborative Provision Allocation of Responsibilities Checklist

Partner Review Flowchart

The inter-relationships between partnership review, due diligence renewal, the review of the institutional agreement and the periodic review process are set out in the flowchart below:

