ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS HANDBOOK

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1   Background to Academic Partnerships and Purpose of Handbook

1.1.1. Academic partnerships are formal arrangements in which two or more institutions or organisations work together to provide teaching, supervision, support and/or facilities for students as a formal element of a degree or programme.

1.1.2. This handbook is applicable to UG, PGT, and PGR partnerships.

1.1.3. Academic partnerships can be high risk activities. The processes and procedures required to set up and operate successful academic partnership activities are outlined here.

1.1.4. The University of Exeter is responsible for the standard and quality of the awards made in its name and the quality of the programmes that lead to those awards. The University also holds ultimate responsibility for the way in which it manages its higher education provision with others and conforms to the Office for Students's (OfS) regulatory requirements.

1.1.5. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide for the approval, operation, and contractual framework for Academic Partnerships with other institutions, and provide a quality assurance framework for academic partnership appraisal, governance and risk management that will enable colleagues to focus efforts on the most valuable academic partnerships.

1.1.6. The University values the establishment of key, high-quality academic partnerships that clearly support the University's Global, Research or Education Strategies as well as each Faculty's Global Plans. Academic partnerships can create routes for international research collaborations, promote international student recruitment, provide enhanced student experiences through exchanges, potentially enhance employability prospects, assist in internationalising the curriculum, facilitate shared research through split site provision, strengthen research developments and funding opportunities, and fundamentally enhance reputation and the University 'brand'. National partnerships via Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) funded through Research Councils are crucial to the University's Research and Impact Strategy.

1.2   Principles of Strategic Development

1.2.1 The principles underpinning the strategic development of academic partnerships are that:

a.   academic partnerships should only be entered into where they clearly contribute to the strategic development and goals of the Faculty and University;

b.   quality of provision and student experience of academic partnerships are regularly monitored and protected;

c.   systems and processes should be proportionate to the risk.

d.   NOTE: All staff involved in partnership activity should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to maintaining records of gifts and hospitality. The University's policy and code of practice, and further information on the Bribery Act 2010, can be found on HR's web pages here Code of Practice on Bribery

1.3   Principles of Partnership Implementation

1.3.1 The principles underpinning the implementation of academic partnerships are that:

a.   sense of ownership, academic expertise, and administrative professionalism of staff based in Faculties is fundamental to the success of an academic partnership, including any review/renewal of a partnership by a Faculty; and

b.   standard University Codes of Conduct also apply to Academic Partnership activity. As such, before engaging in any type of academic partnership, employees have a duty to ensure that their conduct does not create suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and their private interest. Their actions must not be influenced by a benefit (e.g., a gift or hospitality) to favour an organisation, and their actions must not induce or reward someone to perform a role or function improperly.

1.4   Additional Information and Resources

1.4.1 The Education Policy, Quality and Standards Team maintain a formal Register of Agreements for all Academic Partnerships, recording the main details of each partnership with links to the formal Legal Agreements.