

Thematic Report on Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) Reports 2013-16: Managing Collaborative Activity

Overview

In this report we highlight good practice and areas for development as featured in the ELIR Outcome and Technical Reports 2013-16. The key findings emerging from Outcome Reports in relation to **managing collaborative activity** were:

Activity to promote good practice

- At Abertay University there is a strategy for providing effective support to students entering from its partner colleges, demonstrated through its progression data and collaborative approaches to curriculum development and delivery.
- The University of Edinburgh has a strong commitment to internationalising the student experience and promoting student mobility through a variety of flexible study abroad opportunities.
- Edinburgh Napier University staff are proactive in their engagement with, and support for, colleagues in international partners to the benefit of the students.
- Glasgow Caledonian University plans to implement the Collaborative Online International Learning approach to 'internationalisation at home'.
- Glasgow School of Art has a programme of student exchanges, involving a wide range of international partner institutions.
- Glasgow School of Art's partnership with the Singapore Institute of Technology delivers selected School of Design programmes in Singapore. The Overseas Immersion Programme involves Singapore-based students spending three weeks in Glasgow.
- Glasgow School of Art has developed a Collaborative provision policy that provides an effective framework to grow its international partnership activity.
- The University of Glasgow's Overseas Immersion Programme enhances the learning experience of international students on collaborative programmes with academic and cultural elements.
- Heriot-Watt University is implementing a strategic vision to become a genuinely international institution, operating effectively as one institution worldwide where students can access University study flexibly in multiple locations.
- Queen Margaret University maintains careful oversight of its collaborative provision through effective quality assurance processes and detailed risk assessment arrangements.
- Robert Gordon University has a strong commitment and effective approach to widening participation, as demonstrated by proactive outreach strategies and collaborative initiatives that are specifically designed to support non-traditional students.
- The University of St Andrews has a successful approach to promoting and supporting student mobility including agreements in place with a wide range of partner institutions.
- At the University of Strathclyde priority is given to promoting and supporting student mobility.

Areas of development

- Edinburgh Napier University should continue to progress existing plans to develop new models for managing transnational education and should continue to explore staffing models, opportunities for student representation, and student support.
- For Heriot-Watt University, in respect of its Dubai campus, the University should make progress to improve the learning environment and learning support provision, giving appropriate consideration to student views. The University should also progress plans to create representative structures for students studying with an Approved Learning Partner. It should consider recording the name of partner organisations and location of study on student award certificates.
- The University of the Highlands and Islands is encouraged to progress the intention to develop a University strategy for developing collaborative links including articulating priorities for the development of international academic partnerships.
- The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland should continue to develop arrangements to facilitate and promote student and staff mobility, including ensuring the benefits of mobility are recognised and highlighted across the Conservatoire.
- Robert Gordon University should continue to develop the operational infrastructure and strategic approach to the management and oversight of collaborative activity.
- Scotland's Rural College should ensure current formal written agreements are in place for all collaborative activity in order that students, the College and partner organisations are clear about the nature of the agreements and the expectations associated with them. There would be benefit in establishing a strategic College approach to collaboration.
- The University of Stirling should progress with plans to implement a revised approach to managing collaborative activity, including introducing formal, systematic arrangements for approving and reapproving collaborative provision, including explicit institutional oversight of this activity within the institution-level committee structure.
- The University of St Andrews should ensure there is clear academic oversight of collaborative activity, including securing the systematic engagement of academic staff in the arrangements for monitoring student performance as well as reflecting on the wider student learning experience.
- The University of the West of Scotland should ensure that robust processes are in place for evaluating, monitoring and reviewing the planned expansion for international expansion in collaborative provision and its impact on the student learning experience, both for existing and new students. The University should also review the processes in place for overseeing student exchange programmes.

Introduction

As part of the ELIR 3 method, QAA Scotland produces regular Thematic Reports to support learning from the outcomes of individual ELIR reports. The purpose of the Thematic Reports is to inform future development work in the sector and, in particular, to inform future QAA activity including work carried out in collaboration with the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC).

Scope and structure of this report

This report identifies material relating to managing collaborative provision contained within the ELIR reports for all 18 Scottish higher education institutions reviewed in the ELIR 3 cycle (2013-16). The institutions included in this report are: the University of Aberdeen; Abertay University; the University of Dundee; the University of Edinburgh; Edinburgh Napier University; Glasgow School of Art; Glasgow Caledonian University; the University of Glasgow; Heriot-Watt University; the University of the Highlands and Islands; Queen Margaret University; Robert Gordon University; the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland; Scotland's Rural College; the University of St Andrews; the University of Stirling; the University of Strathclyde and the University of the West of Scotland.

This report summarises examples of positive practice and areas for development as highlighted in the ELIR Outcome Reports (see pages 1-2), and the more detailed findings included within the ELIR Technical Reports (see below). It is possible that additional practice takes place in these 18 institutions, but only those elements of practice included within the ELIR reports is included here. The report then outlines briefly the next steps in the ELIR process following the publication of the reports.

The annex includes references to managing collaborative provision within the ELIR Technical Reports. The paragraph numbers used in the annex are taken directly from the original reports.

For the purposes of this report the term 'collaborative activity' has been defined as detailed in [Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others](#) of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code): '[the] management of all learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award or academic credit or qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body.' This applies to collaborative provision between Scottish higher education institutions, other UK-based institutions and transnational institutions.

Further information on managing collaborative activity in the Scottish higher education sector can be found in the online resources of the 2015-16 QAA Focus On project at www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/focus-on/collaborative-activity.

Areas highlighted in the ELIR Thematic Reports

In ELIR 3, each Outcome Report sets out the ELIR team's views of positive practice and areas for development at the institution. These key findings in relation to managing collaborative activity are summarised on pages 1-2 of this report. This section identifies current interesting practice at the 18 institutions as identified in the longer ELIR Technical Reports.

Activity to promote good practice

Strategic approach

Nearly all of the ELIR reports recognise that many institutions have developed strategies and policies on developing collaborative activity and increasing international student recruitment. The following content highlights some notable examples.

The University of Aberdeen has a strategic objective to continue promoting partnership working and to engage fully with its regional, national and international partners, including its 2+2 programmes with Chinese universities. Abertay University's Internationalisation Strategy is focused on inward and outward mobility, aiming to attract students and staff from overseas, and to provide and promote opportunities to Abertay staff and students to participate in mobility programmes such as Erasmus+, student exchange and study abroad, with the aim of enriching the cultural experience of local students. The University of Dundee's 2017 strategic plan aims to increase the number of postgraduate students studying with the University, particularly through the development of sustainable high-level international partnerships.

The University of Edinburgh's strategic goals with respect to internationalisation, global impact and partnership are set out in the University Strategic Plan 2012-16, which also contains a number of key matrices related to internationalisation. The University has set a target to create at least 800 new opportunities for students to gain an international experience; its Vision 2025 sets out an ambition for every student to have an international experience. The University is also investing in scholarships to support students from a widening participation background to go abroad, with the Widening Horizons Programme providing funding to give widening participation students an immersive study abroad experience in their first year.

Edinburgh Napier University's new Strategic Plan 2020 contains an Internationalisation Strategy that details the University's plan to grow transnational education (TNE). Glasgow Caledonian University's internationalisation strategy aims to strengthen its existing partnerships, grow student exchange activity and establish more research collaborations, aiming to deliver excellence, competitiveness and cultural diversity through its collaboration with partners in Scotland and around the world. Underpinning the University's aim to increase the number of articulating students are the College Connect Strategy (2013-20) and College University Subject Partnerships (CUSPs), which are subject-level areas of activity built on existing working partnerships between the college and university sector to create sustainable infrastructure for articulation. CUSPs were highlighted as a model of good practice by the Scottish Funding Council in 2012.

The University of Glasgow's internationalisation strategy focuses on collaborating with overseas institutions on the delivery of TNE with a small number of international partners. While the University of the Highlands and Islands does not have an explicit collaborative strategy, collaboration is a core value of the University and applies to both internal and external partnerships and ways of working. Heriot-Watt University's International Strategy sets out plans to double the scale of its international activities by 2018 and grow the

international student population by around 40 per cent, by increasing student numbers in Dubai and Malaysia.

At Robert Gordon University one of the main developments in collaborative activity since the 2012 ELIR is a strategic partnership between the Institution and Navitas UK Holdings Ltd to establish an associated college, the International College at Robert Gordon University (ICRGU), on the University campus. ICRGU was established in 2011 to provide dedicated articulation pathways for international students (from outside the European Union) to enter specific University courses, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, as part of a strategic move to refine its collaborative partnerships, indicated it intends to edit and update its collaborative agreements. One of Robert Gordon University's strategic aims is to develop further partnerships links with a small number of universities. While the University doesn't have an explicit Internationalisation Strategy, the ELIR team learned that the Institution's approach to internationalisation is embedded in other institutional strategies and operational plans including the current Strategic Plan. The University of St Andrews' Strategic Plan sets out to increase overseas undergraduate student numbers and places a focus on student mobility and international collaborative provision. The University of Stirling's Internationalisation Strategy 2014-19 highlights collaboration through strategic partnerships.

The University of Strathclyde has developed its internationalisation strategy and plans to expand international articulation routes, including provision of facilitated entry to year three of undergraduate programmes for students from partner institutions in countries such as China, India, Malaysia and Pakistan. The University of the West of Scotland has a corporate strategy and a 'Global Reach' Enabling Plan, which sets challenging targets for the expansion of TNE with 3,000 students enrolling by 2019-20, while the University is also considering setting up a campus in Dubai.

Due diligence arrangements

Indicator 6 of the Quality Code, *Chapter B10* asks institutions to carry out appropriate and proportionate due diligence procedures to investigate proposed arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with an organisation other than the degree-awarding body. The ELIR Technical Reports indicate there is a range of practice across the sector and highlights how institutions manage their collaborations.

The University of Aberdeen's collaborative provision partnerships proposals are required to describe the partner's capability to provide and assure a student learning experience comparable to that of the University. Institutional oversight of collaborative activities at Abertay University is managed through a joint management forum whose membership includes the Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement, the Academic Quality Manager and the Director of Student Services - a representative from the Registry and the International Office provides central monitoring of partnerships, with school involvement through annual monitoring. The University Executive formally approves all partnerships and the International Office. At the University of Dundee, the Director of Legal Services and the Director of Quality Assurance provide tailored advice on the legal and quality assurance aspects of new collaborative proposals on a case-by-case basis.

The University of Edinburgh ensures that appropriate scrutiny, review, approval and risk assessment is undertaken for all collaborative proposals, including clear memorandum agreements, transparent due diligence processes, and clear guidelines on the types of agreements the University will consider. Due diligence is scrutinised by college and school-level committees, and by the College Registrar. At the Glasgow School of Art proposals require a business case and academic rationale, which may be considered

by the Board of Governors where there are strategic, legal, and financial or governance implications.

At the University of the Highlands and Islands, the External Partnerships Steering Committee advises the Academic Council on all aspects of external collaborative partnerships and provision within the UK and overseas, excluding research-focused collaborations. The Collaborative Handbook provides a detailed due diligence template including explicit reference to the Quality Code. Reports on international institutions require information on the political, ethical, cultural and higher education environment within which the partner will be operating. Committee approval of the due diligence report leads to the signing of a formal non-binding Memorandum of Understanding.

Managing and securing academic standards

The ELIR Technical Reports confirmed that all 18 institutions have effective arrangements in place to manage and secure the academic standards of their collaborative activity, with a number developing and using mechanisms such as handbooks, frameworks and policies.

The University of Aberdeen's arrangements for securing academic standards are detailed in the University's Academic Quality Handbook and meet the Expectations of the Quality Code, *Chapter B10*. Abertay University confirmed that its collaborative activity is also delivered in line with *Chapter B10*. Key features of the quality arrangements include: a Memorandum of Agreement with each partner; the University Collaborative Procedures Handbook; procedures manuals for each partnership; associate lectureships and associate student status being offered to those studying on an Abertay programme at a partner institution; annual monitoring visits and reporting; quality review of collaborative programmes being integrated within 'parent' programmes; staff contributing to the delivery of the University's programmes needing to be approved by the University; and college partner staff being encouraged to hold an appropriate teaching qualification.

The University of Dundee's policy statement states that the University will only validate external provision that is equivalent to the University's own provision in terms of both standards and quality. The University of Edinburgh's academic standards and academic governance mechanisms are set out in its collaborative provision policies, which are aligned to the Quality Code, *Chapter B10*. Edinburgh Napier University's arrangements for securing the academic standards of its provision are set out in its Quality Framework 2014-15, which details the processes for designing, developing, approving and monitoring and review of all taught provision delivered in partnership.

Glasgow Caledonian University's approach to monitoring its collaborative arrangements is set out in its Liaison Handbook, with clear rules and regulations for supporting quality assurance including expectations of each partner and the University. The University of Glasgow's collaborative provision is governed by the University's Framework for Academic Collaboration and the Code of Practice for Validated Provision, with academic standards set and monitored through the University's quality assurance systems. Heriot-Watt University has developed a Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location and Multi-Mode Programmes, to ensure all programmes of study are identical in terms of: award/programme titles; outcomes; core knowledge, skills and competencies; and mandatory courses.

The University of the Highlands and Islands' arrangements for the development and oversight of collaborative activity are explained in its Collaborations Handbook, which is mapped against the Quality Code, *Chapter B10* and sets out the principles and procedures associated with the proposal, approval and monitoring of collaborative partnerships. The Handbook includes information on assessment; examinations and the roles of external examiners; staff and student representation and feedback; publicity and marketing; and academic misconduct, appeals and complaints. The ELIR Technical Report states that the

Handbook is an example of a high quality document, offering clear guidance and clarification of responsibilities to staff involved with the University's collaborative provision. Following its partnership approval processes, the University of the Highlands and Islands applies the same quality assurance framework for collaborative provision that it has in place for awards delivered exclusively by the University. However, given the added risk involved in collaboration with new partners, the University's External Partnership Steering Committee receives additional reports after the first three and six months of initial programme delivery in addition to its usual planning and approval arrangements.

At Robert Gordon University all academic collaborations are subject to formal approval, monitoring and review. The approval process typically involves two stages: initial approval 'in principle' and formal approval. Proposals are initiated from the school/faculty and an Academic Collaboration Proposal pro forma, plus a Risk Assessment Matrix, is prepared for consideration by the University Academic Development Committee. If the Committee approves the proposal in principle, a Course Development Consultant is appointed by the University to assist the partner institution in preparing for a validation visit, which is undertaken in accordance with the University Academic Quality Handbook Procedures and involves a validation event. A validation report is prepared and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee reviews and confirms the final decision from the validation event, reporting the decision to the Academic Council for review and onward reporting to the Board of Governors.

The University of the West of Scotland's arrangements for establishing, monitoring and reviewing collaborative provision are set out in the University's Quality Handbook, with oversight of the provision provided through the Collaborative Forum.

Review, monitoring and evaluation processes

The Technical Reports indicate institutions use a variety of methods to review, monitor and evaluate collaborative activity arrangements.

The University of Aberdeen requires all validated and accredited partners to submit an annual report, including commentary on a range of issues relating to the student experience, for consideration by the University's Quality Assurance Committee, which maintains oversight of all collaborative partners. The University's Technical Report noted that the University had evaluated and reflected on its experiences of managing existing collaborative arrangements and used this information in the development of its new collaborative procedures. At Abertay University the International Office provides central monitoring of partnerships with school involvement through annual monitoring. The 2012 ELIR identified the University's Strategic Partnership Review process, used with the then Adam Smith College, as positive practice. Since then, the University has applied this approach to reviewing all of its strategic partnerships. The Strategic Partnership Review process links to the quality review processes adopted for the 'home' programmes. External examiners are appointed by Abertay University to provide externality to its collaborative provision, confirming that programmes are subject to the same oversight as those delivered in Dundee and that the academic standards are comparable.

The University of Dundee monitors its collaborative provision through annual monitoring and periodic review processes, and the external examiner system, to ensure a comparable student experience. In addition, the University's revised procedures for the annual review of taught provision requires the effectiveness of the collaborative arrangement to be considered as part of the annual programme quality enhancement report. At the University of Edinburgh collaborative programmes are subject to annual monitoring and review in the same way as other University programmes and are included in standard internal review processes. Programme monitoring is undertaken at school level, with reporting upwards to colleges,

which in turn report to the University's Senate Quality Assurance Committee. The Committee has oversight of collaborative programmes through both internal review reporting and annual college Quality Assurance and Enhancement Reports.

Edinburgh Napier University monitors its collaborative provision as part of its annual monitoring review. Glasgow Caledonian University's approach to monitoring collaborative arrangements is set out in its Liaison Handbook. An internal review of international partnerships was conducted in 2012-13 following the launch of its Internationalisation Strategy 2012-15, with a number of recommendations successfully confirmed as actioned by a follow-up to this audit in January 2015. The University has also developed a Partnership Engagement Plan template to support the monitoring of collaborative activities.

Quality assurance structures from the University's Glasgow campus are replicated in its branch campuses in London and New York. The University underwent a QAA [Thematic Review](#) (PDF, 173KB) of its London campuses in July 2014, which it is currently taking actions in response to. At the time of the ELIR, the University indicated that it planned to carry out a Thematic Review of its INTO University Partnerships.

Collaborative provision at the University of Glasgow is governed by the University's Framework for Academic Collaboration and the Code of Practice for Validated Provision, with academic standards set and monitored through University quality assurance systems. The University's collaborative programmes are overseen by a joint management board, which is responsible for annual reporting through the relevant College Learning and Teaching Committee to the Academic Standards Committee. Heriot-Watt University has a common academic management structure in place to oversee its global provision and study modes, and Academic Councils have been introduced at its Dubai and Malaysia campuses. The University reviews its provision annually periodically through Academic Review, Academic-Related Review and Internal Audit, which are informed by the outcomes of annual monitoring. Partner institutions and schools work collaboratively to produce Partner Annual Monitoring and Review reports.

Following partnership approval processes, the University of the Highlands and Islands applies the same ongoing monitoring and review arrangements as it has in place for awards delivered exclusively by the University, supplemented by additional reports after the first three and six months of operation. The University monitoring reports focus on all programmes wherever they are delivered, with the University monitoring the academic standards of a partner's provision by viewing student performance data disaggregated by location. External examiners are appointed to University programmes irrespective of the delivery location, and assessment boards receive data based on the programme as a whole. Queen Margaret University has a dedicated working group set up to review collaborative practice. Actions resulting from the group's work include clarification of moderation regulations, risk assessment, better communication links with partners, and coordination of support for external examiners. The University reviews its collaborative practice against the Quality Code and all collaborative provision documentation makes reference to the Handbook for Practitioners of the Council of Validating Universities.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, following a national review of teacher education, undertook a significant review of its BEd programme, which is delivered jointly with the University of Glasgow. Subsequently, the programme was restructured and aligned with the principles of the Conservatoire's Curriculum Reform project. The Conservatoire's partnership with the University of St Andrews is overseen by a joint board that holds an annual validation review meeting to evaluate the effectiveness of these collaborative arrangements. At Robert Gordon University ongoing monitoring and review of collaborative provision is embedded within the normal University quality assurance processes. All collaborative activity for taught credit provision is reviewed as part of the University's periodic Institution-Led Subject Reviews process and is also included in the course re-approval element of this activity.

As part of the review process, the University may determine that an ad hoc visit is required to any collaborative partner. The University maintains a register of all institutional partnership links involving taught credit-rated provision. Institutional approval and oversight of collaborative activities, apart from the International College at Robert Gordon University, are managed through the University Academic Development Committee and through the regular institutional appraisal and subject review processes. The collaboration with the International College is managed through a Joint Strategic Partnership Management Board, reflecting the nature and scale of this collaboration.

The Technical Report for the University of St Andrews noted that the University had reviewed the effectiveness of its collaborative agreement to validate and award research degrees for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, considering the effectiveness of the reporting links between the two institutions. The University has developed a new framework to monitoring and review collaborative programmes, which is a five-step process involving: approval, implementation, first review, annual monitoring and review, and agreement and renewal review. In addition, the University has a Collaborations and Study Abroad team that oversee 42 school undergraduate programmes and 13 St Andrews Abroad Programmes. The University of Stirling carries out the ongoing monitoring of its collaborative programmes through external examiner reports, module review and annual programme review. The University of Strathclyde has undertaken a sequence of collaborative provision audits that brought about the development of a revised University policy and the code of practice on collaborative provision. The University considers collaborative activity in annual reporting supporting institutional oversight and sharing approaches. The Technical Report also noted that the University of Strathclyde aims to learn from engagement with external partners in work involving placement and exchange activity, evidenced by ongoing analysis of student participation in the ERAMUS programme.

The University of the West of Scotland reviewed its international activity in 2013 to promote and facilitate its plans for rapid expansion of TNE, establishing an International Centre and appointed senior staff to lead the activity. The University completed an international benchmarking exercise with the University of Tasmania to support its plans for expansion of its international activity. Guidance on the University's arrangements for establishing, monitoring and reviewing collaborative provision is set out in a chapter of the Quality Handbook, while oversight of the development, management and enhancement of the quality and standard of collaborative provision is provided through the University's Collaborative Forum. The University's ELIR Technical Report deemed the recently completed approval and review processes for collaborative provision to be thorough, with robust action plans for improvement and Joint Programme Panels and Student-Staff Liaison Groups effective for considering student and staff opinion.

Effective communication and engagement with collaborative partners

A number of the reports indicate that institutions are proactively communicating and engaging with partner institutions.

Abertay University's Technical Report recognised that there are effective communication arrangements in place between Abertay and its main collaborative partner, SEGi University and Colleges, including: regular visits of staff between the two institutions, videoconferencing between Abertay and SEGi staff and students, and workshops on enhancing teaching and learning during the visits to the Malaysian campus. Students in Abertay and Malaysia are encouraged to set each other quizzes in order to develop an understanding of their different cultural and educational contexts. The report notes that through liaison with University school-based staff, SEGi colleagues have been informed of new initiatives including curriculum reform taking place at the University. It goes on to state that the international collaboration with SEGi is indicative of a successful approach to managing collaborative

activity based on a long-standing evolving relationship based on mutual trust and understanding, which allows changes to be easily communicated. Staff at Edinburgh Napier University's campuses in Edinburgh are in regular contact by email, video conference and telephone to discuss general management of provision with partner staff.

Glasgow School of Art's Technical Report notes that it effectively promotes a programme of student exchanges, involving a wide-range of international partner institutions. Information for students about opportunities to undertake student exchanges is clear and concise. Heriot-Watt University implemented a new academic management structure with a view to creating better alignment across campuses. Staff advised that as a result of this there was better communication between staff across campus locations. It is also noted there was strong evidence of active engagement of University staff with partner institutions. The structure of the University of the Highlands and Islands, which is a regional federal-collegiate partnership, ensures that staff are accustomed to working with colleagues in a number of different organisations and at a distance, and each collaborative programme appoints a lead person who has day-to-day responsibility for links with the partner. University staff visit partners to engage with students and to meet partner staff. The University also takes particular care to ensure that its students on collaborative programmes are introduced to the relationship between the University and the partner at the outset during induction.

To aid staff involved in collaborative provision, Queen Margaret University collated its quality procedures into a collaborations manual, and strengthened this in 2012 by providing a module coordinator handbook for collaborative partners. The University also has a dedicated partners' area on its website and provides twice-yearly partners' newsletters, highlighting positive practice, staff development opportunities and learning technology developments at the Edinburgh campus. For collaborative arrangements involving validated courses offered by Robert Gordon University, a University Moderator is appointed to each collaborative partnership and is responsible for overseeing the administration, general operation and monitoring of the collaboration. The Moderator also fulfils a quality enhancement role, preparing an annual report, including feedback and observations on the student experience, which contributes to the annual appraisal process. The University of Strathclyde has a range of activities to communicate information about collaborative programmes to staff and students, which is most extensively used in the Faculty of Engineering. The University of the West of Scotland communicates with students at partner institutions through student representation and liaison groups. Staff communication is supported through joint Programme Panels and Collaborative Contract meetings.

Support for students studying with collaborative partners: associate student status

From the ELIR reports it is clear that institutions adopt a range of practice to support students involved in collaborative partnership provision. One increasingly common approach is to provide students with what is often referred to as 'associate student' status, enabling students from partner institutions that aren't full students of that institution to access resources from each institution involved.

The Technical Report for Abertay University identified the University's deliberate and sustainable strategy for providing effective support to students entering from its partner colleges, as representing positive practice. The University offers a range of activities and services specifically designed to aid the transition of non-traditional students including the Abertay Associate Student Scheme. Edinburgh Napier University has developed an Associate Student Scheme, which is run in collaboration with local colleges and used to support its approach to articulation. The University offers a range of pre-entry interventions to support students entering through a formal college articulation route, including drop-in lectures, campus visits and the use of social media, and has approved a protocol

on the provision of disability and inclusion support to students studying remotely at partner institutions.

At Heriot-Watt University students enrolled via Approved Learning Partners (ALPs) are designated as Heriot-Watt University students and are usually able to access its learning and support resources. The University has a wide range of opportunities to suit the needs of a diverse student population and the flexible provision of learning opportunities was stated in the Technical Report as representing positive practice.

The North East Articulation Hub initiative, funded by the Scottish Funding Council, is a partnership between Robert Gordon University and North East Scotland College (NESCOL) to promote and support enhancement through activities for students at the discipline level. Activities undertaken by course teams have included familiarisation visits to reciprocal colleges; information sessions about accessing the University; the development of degree preparation programmes, which are coordinated by University's Department of Learning, Teaching and Access but delivered by course leaders; and the Associate Student Scheme, which is available to all students studying on a Higher National Diploma programme at a partner college, and is designed to assist prospective articulating students to become familiar with the University prior to entry. A key feature of the collaboration is the use of guaranteed places, so that a student commencing a qualification at NESCOL can understand the requirements for articulation to the University. During the ELIR, students commented favourably on the transitional arrangements in place for students on the NESCOL pathway.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, in its partnerships with the University of Glasgow and the University of St Andrews, gives joint matriculation status to students involved in collaborative programmes. This approach enables students to access resources at both institutions and has received positive feedback from the students. Working in partnership, Stirling University and Forth Valley College have developed four programmes on a fully integrated model where the programmes are jointly designed, developed and delivered by the College, University and industry partners. Students enrol at both Forth Valley College and Stirling University and are encouraged to make use of learning and student support facilities on both campuses. The ELIR team noted the careful planning that had gone into this activity and the strong desire to ensure a smooth transition for students. The University of the West of Scotland grants associate student status to students studying on franchised programmes at partner colleges, which gives them access to the University's facilities.

Further approaches to support students

Abertay University offers activities and services specifically designed to aid the transition of non-traditional students including pre-transitional and post-transitional support, with examples including: the college-based degree adviser system, and two summer preparation programmes, known as the University Preparation Programme and the Abertay College Transition Programme, which are bridging programmes for students entering the University from college. Once enrolled, ongoing post-transition support for articulating students is provided through the University's Support Enquiry Zone.

Glasgow Caledonian University has developed its College Connect Strategy, designed to support and enhance students articulating from colleges to University. The University has also established a joint venture between INTO University Partnerships to provide foundation certificate/diploma/graduate diplomas programmes and English language tuition to international students intending to progress to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. At the University of Edinburgh, the College of Humanities and Social Science offers a two-plus-two agreement with Donghua University in China. The University provides

support for English language to ensure that students are adequately prepared for the interview process to attend the final two years at Edinburgh.

The University of Glasgow has established the Overseas Immersion Programme to enhance the learning experience of all international students on collaborative programmes. It is a four-week intensive programme with academic and cultural elements that provides opportunities for Singapore-based students to work with academic staff on a project-based assignment.

The QAA Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight reports of the International College at Robert Gordon University (2012-14) highlight a number of areas of positive practice, including extracurricular activities for students, the introduction of a student buddy scheme, and effective use by the College of external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education. The University supports articulating students in a variety of ways, including one-to-one and small group support, a portfolio of generic skills workshops, and a variety of online self-study resources available via the University virtual learning environment. The ELIR team noted that the Department for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Access is leading the University's engagement with the current national Enhancement Theme on student transitions, which includes a set of activities specifically focused on college articulations. The University also offers a programme of induction for campus-based international students that covers academic and pastoral dimensions in recognition of the international student transition.

In 2013-14, Stirling University developed a partnership with INTO University Partnerships to create two INTO Stirling centres: one in Stirling and one in London. The Stirling centre, based on the main University campus, offers a range of foundation and diploma pathway programmes, including an English language course. The pathway programmes provide a direct route for students into years two and three of undergraduate degree programmes, and into Stirling master's degrees. Students in London use the University virtual learning environment as a key interface with Stirling-based staff.

The University of Strathclyde has effective arrangements in place to enhance the experience of students on collaborative programmes, and has a range of activities to communicate information about collaborative programmes to staff and students. The University recognises the challenges of integration and support for students admitted through these routes and has supported a number of practices, including induction, evening classes and intensive short courses, to improve the experience of this group of students.

Student representation and feedback

Institutions use a range of approaches, including student representation, to gather feedback from students on their experiences of collaborative provision.

The University of Dundee recognises that all students should be given appropriate opportunities to engage with the student representation system, irrespective of where they are studying. The University of Edinburgh aims to provide its students on collaborative programmes with a learning experience equivalent to that on campus in Edinburgh, and ensures that students are able to comment on their experience and engage in decision-making through student representation.

Heriot-Watt University's Technical Report notes that student feedback is routinely obtained from approved learning providers and that collaborative partners are adequately managed through the new Student Survey Framework. Queen Margaret University expects its partners to appoint student representatives and to operate formal mechanisms for gathering and responding to student feedback from module evaluation and annual monitoring of the programme. The Technical Report for the University of the West of Scotland noted the

Careful consideration given to student views, with joint Programme Panels for validated programmes gathering student views through staff-student liaison groups for collaborative programmes and also through module feedback.

Student and staff mobility

The Technical Reports show that student mobility, in particular, is well supported by a large number of institutions across the sector, with a variety of approaches adopted.

The University of Edinburgh's ambitions to grow, promote and enhance student mobility, is set out in the University Strategic Plan 2012-16 and Vision 2025. The University aims to achieve this through exploring new models of supporting student mobility and by developing more substantial relationships with a small number of strategic partners. The University is investing in scholarships such as the Principal's Go Abroad Fund and the Widening Horizons Programme. The University also supports opportunities for students to undertake a voluntary study abroad period in their third year of study and has 288 European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus) agreements in place in 41 countries. The International Office's International Programme supports an additional 40 partner institutions across North and South America and Asia.

Edinburgh Napier University participates fully in Key Action 1 of the new Erasmus+ programme. Since 2013, the University has established 57 agreements in 17 European countries, and it also has 23 non-European partners in six countries (US, Canada, China, Australia, New Zealand and Colombia), which allows for student and staff mobility. Glasgow Caledonian University offers a range of opportunities to students on most programmes to study abroad, with events in place to encourage students to take up study abroad. In discussion with the ELIR team, students highlighted many positive study abroad experiences. Glasgow School of Art offers a programme of student exchanges, involving a wide range of international partner institutions, which is promoted effectively and is an integral part of the student experience. Students from all undergraduate programmes and selected postgraduate programmes are eligible to take part in an exchange. Students noted that clear and accessible information about the opportunity to undertake a student exchange was embedded in Glasgow School of Art processes from interview onwards. Incoming exchange students have access to all support services at the University during their study period, as well as access to the virtual learning environment.

Heriot-Watt University has developed a policy on inter-campus exchange that demonstrates its commitment to facilitating exchange between its campuses through the alignment of curricula and learning outcomes, underpinned by the principles set out in its Multi-Code, with programmes run in multiple locations through multiple modes of study. This can facilitate easy switching between different modes of study and location depending on the programme, and on students' needs and circumstances. Robert Gordon University has seen a steady increase in the number of students participating in the Study Abroad Scheme. The University is actively seeking to increase study exchanges or work placement opportunities as part of its Employability Plus @ RGU strategy. The University provides targeted support to incoming and outbound study abroad students. Support available includes a wide range of information targeted at students, staff and parents. This information is supplemented with face-to-face pre-departure briefings providing practical information and a list of 'dos and don'ts'.

The University of St Andrews recognises student mobility and international collaboration as fundamental cornerstones of its strategic vision to expand the boundaries of international scholarship. Students undertaking study abroad programmes confirmed that they were well prepared for the experience and clear about who to approach with problems, including health, welfare and academic issues.

The ELIR team regarded student mobility at the University of Strathclyde as an area of positive practice, noting the University's support for outward student mobility and the innovative approaches to creating opportunities for all students to participate. The University takes a proactive approach to identifying and addressing potential barriers to mobility. For example, in some programmes where professional accreditation requirements might prevent students from gaining international experience, alternative measures have been put in place. The University has also provided support for students with significant additional requirements to participate in the ERASMUS exchange programme, including exchanges for deaf and blind students. As part of the University of the West of Scotland's Global Reach Enabling Plan, the University is committed to increasing opportunities for students to engage with modules to support student mobility.

Development opportunities for collaborative partner staff

A number of institutions offer development opportunities for staff in partner institutions that have supported increased partner staff engagement and enhanced collegiality.

Abertay University provides development opportunities for staff in partner colleges, including delivering briefings and awareness-raising sessions, and invites more locally based partner college staff to attend Teaching and Learning Enhancement seminars held in Dundee. The Technical Report notes that staff from Fife College were actively involved in the University's curriculum reform changes. Edinburgh Napier University staff travel to partner locations to deliver teaching and undertake meetings to support and deliver training to partner staff.

Heriot-Watt University provides staff training in relation to professional and leadership development including courses at its Dubai and Malaysia campuses. The University's Centre for Academic Leadership and Development provides some partner/programme specific development sessions for staff at partner organisations. In some cases, Approved Learning Partner Approved Tutors have visited Heriot-Watt's Scottish campuses to observe teaching or to participate in the programme with a view to teaching aspects of the programme in future cycles.

At Glasgow Caledonian University, staff from the University's School of Engineering and the Built Environment have delivered workshops on the University Strategy for Learning and the Student Experience Framework to colleagues at the Caledonian College of Engineering in Oman. Queen Margaret University offers partner staff support informally through academic link staff and delivers staff development through workshops on the Edinburgh campus or onsite at the partner institutions.

In the Scotland's Rural College Technical Report it was noted staff from Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh also has the opportunity to access College staff development. The University of Stirling's E-Learning Liaison and Development Team develops and delivers events through an E-Learning Forum and coordinates the Teaching Bites sessions aimed at sharing good practice, with these being accessible to staff teaching on remote campuses. The University of the West of Scotland offers support to staff from partner colleges to gain fellowship of the Higher Education Academy as part of their professional development.

Structures to support collaborative activity

A number of institutions have taken the approach of establishing committees and employing staff dedicated to oversee, manage, support and enhancing their collaborative activity.

At the University of Edinburgh collaborative activity is led by a Vice-Principal (International), who is supported by senior staff in each of the colleges, new deans of international for each

of the priority countries or regions, and internationalisation groups at school level. The Technical Report for Edinburgh Napier University notes a dedicated Collaborative Provision Committee (a subcommittee of the Academic Board) that is responsible for the institutional oversight of all articulation arrangements, receives an annual report on UK-based articulation activity in May-June each year, and notes all new overseas articulation proposals. Glasgow Caledonian University has an International Partnerships Office that plays a key role in international partnership development, negotiation and relationship management, and contributes to oversight activity.

The University of Glasgow's collaborative programmes are overseen by a joint management board, which is responsible for reporting annually through the relevant College Learning and Teaching Committee to the Academic Standards Committee. This approach utilises the University's embedded quality assurance processes but also provides specific oversight for particular collaborative arrangements. Queen Margaret University's Internationalisation Committee has recently been reviewed, with its remit split between two groups: the International Student Forum and the Collaborations Operations Group. Both report to the Student Experience Committee, which has oversight of all collaborative arrangements. The University has appointed a Collaborations Development Coordinator to oversee procedures and act as a central point of support for collaborative activity. The University has also established a joint board of studies for each collaborative programme.

The Technical Report for Robert Gordon University states that following an externally facilitated review and internal discussions in March 2016, the University had approved a revised structure of senior officer/executive roles within the institution. This included the new role of Vice-Principal for Commercial and Regional Engagement, which will include responsibility for regional and international collaborative partnerships. The University was considering the establishment of a 'partnership unit' to provide oversight of collaborative arrangements. For collaborative arrangements involving validated courses, a University Moderator is appointed to each collaborative partnership involving validated courses and that person is responsible for overseeing the administration, general operation and monitoring of the collaboration. The Moderator also fulfils a quality enhancement role, preparing an annual report, including feedback and observations on the student experience.

At the time of its ELIR, Stirling University had recently established an Institutional Partnership Development Committee to provide support and advice to staff developing and managing collaborative provision. The Committee reports to the Internationalisation Steering Group and to the Education and Student Experience Committee. The Internationalisation Steering Group is chaired by the Deputy Principal (Education and Students) and provides strategic oversight of the development of collaborations. In addition, the University has an International Affairs Team, of the Development and External Affairs Directorate, which is responsible for the coordination of collaborative activity. Within this team there are two dedicated International Partnership Managers who provide support to schools when developing collaborative arrangement proposals.

The University of the West of Scotland established an International Centre and appointed senior staff to lead and manage activity planned to expand the University's TNE provision. It also appointed Associate Deans International to progress the expansion of international activity in schools. Furthermore, there is a Collaborative Forum in place, responsible for the oversight of development, management and enhancement of the quality and standard of collaborative provision.

Use of technology and data

Many institutions have used technology, including virtual learning environments (VLEs) to support and enhance their collaborative activity.

The Technical Report for Abertay University notes the use of the VLE to promote a common learning experience between students based in Dundee and its partner SEGi University and Colleges. This approach was also noted as positive practice in the 2010 QAA report on transnational education provision in [Malaysia](#).¹ SEGi's adoption of the same VLE platform at the University at the end of 2015 will allow this work to be extended, providing an opportunity for cross-institutional student discussions and group work. There is also an intention to use the VLE to engage SEGi University and Colleges staff with continuing professional development.

Edinburgh Napier University is a member of the Edinburgh, Lothian, Fife and Borders Regional Articulation Hub, which has established a national articulation database and route finder search tool that aims to improve statistical reporting of articulating students to provide a regional and national context. The University has established a Coming from College resource, which can be accessed through the University's VLE, to support articulating students' integration into the University. At the time of the ELIR a number of enhancements to TNE provision were underway, including offering online versions of student development workshops and the approval of a protocol on the provision of disability and inclusion support to students studying remotely at partner institutions. Work was also underway to produce an e-services implementation plan to commence in 2015-16.

Glasgow Caledonian University provides support for its London campus students via online resources available in its VLE, GCULearn. Academic staff, support staff from the careers service, and student officers provide support for the University's London postgraduate student community. The University is also a global network member of the Collaborative Online International Learning community, which connects student and staff from 43 institutions in 14 countries and supports the use of blended learning and technologies, such as the use of video capture in learning and teaching. The University intends to develop digital library resources on mobile technology for students participating in the BSC Railway Management Operations in South Africa.

Heriot-Watt University has developed an online resource to support new managers based on all campus locations. The University has also developed a professional development programme known as GlobalPD, which contains two core modules for approved tutors at the University's Approved Learning Partners (ALPs) and is delivered via the University VLE. Students enrolled via ALPs (and the Associate Campus, West London College) are designated as Heriot-Watt University students and are often able to access the majority of the University's learning and support resources including the VLE that are available to on-campus students.

Queen Margaret University's Centre for Academic Practice is developing the capacity to provide staff development for its partners through a series of online webinars. At the University of Stirling, the E-learning Liaison and Development Team provides online E-Learning Forum sessions that are accessible to staff teaching on remote campuses, covering topics such as electronic marking. Students studying in London with INTO University Partnerships use Stirling University's VLE, known as SUCCEED, as a key

¹ QAA Audit of Overseas Provision Malaysia 2010, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education/review-of-overseas-provision/overseas-provision-malaysia-2010.

interface with Stirling-based staff, with students reporting general satisfaction with its effectiveness.

Areas for development

This section of the paper outlines the areas for development identified relating to collaborative practice in a higher education institution in the ELIR 3 Technical Reports.

Oversight of collaborative arrangements and risk management

Some Technical Reports indicate that institutions have identified the need to further develop their approaches to risk management in relation to collaborative provision.

The University of Dundee's Internationalisation Strategy and the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2017 recognise the need to embed a more robust approach to consideration of responsibility, due diligence and risk registers when creating new international partnerships. The University of Glasgow reviewed its approach to the management of collaborative provision and is in the process of taking forward the review recommendations, which include a need to strengthen guidance for academic and support staff regarding the risk register, due diligence and Court approval. The Technical Report for the University of the Highlands and Islands noted that the University does not currently have an explicit strategy for developing collaborative activity, and the report encourages the University to progress with its intention to introduce one, including articulating priorities for the development of international academic partnership. Queen Margaret University's Collaborative Operations Group reviewed the University's collaborative practice and part of the actions involved, clarifying its risk assessment arrangements. The University's Technical Report recognised the difficulty of assessing political risks, which can fluctuate regularly. This was evident when minutes of the Joint Board of Studies showed that in Nepal and Pakistan some meetings had to be postponed and, at times, some students could not attend classes. This perhaps illustrates that more work could be undertaken to mitigate any potential issues.

The Robert Gordon University Technical Report noted that the University intends to expand the number of its partnership links, and had recognised that there would be benefits in continuing to develop its operational infrastructure and strategic approach to the management and oversight of collaborative activity. The ELIR team noted that the University was undertaking a review of its arrangements for the consideration, approval, monitoring and review of collaborative activity, with a view to further enhancing institutional oversight and encouraged the University to continue developing its approach.

The Scotland's Rural College Technical Report states that '[the institution] does not currently have an overall strategy for, or institutional oversight of the development of education collaborative activities.' The Report goes on to suggest that there would be considerable benefit in the College establishing a strategic institutional approach to collaboration in all of its forms and clarifying where in the institutional structure oversight of collaborative arrangements sits; it should also include oversight of arrangements relating to awards at all levels. The Technical Report states that the College should ensure that its developing policies and practices are in line with the Quality Code, *Chapter B10*. The Technical Report for the University of St Andrews notes that the ELIR team was unclear about where academic oversight for collaborative provision rested. The University was encouraged to ensure that there is clear academic oversight of all collaborative activity at the institutional level, as there is a possibility of this becoming distributed between schools.

At the time of the ELIR the University of Stirling had identified that expansion of its portfolio of collaborative partners would benefit from a more systematised approach and was revising its arrangements for the approval and monitoring of collaborative partnerships. The new approach would include: revised templates for proposals and agreements; enhanced annual

reporting for collaborative programmes; and the establishment of enhanced arrangements for institutional oversight of student performance. The ELIR team noted that, on a number of occasions, the Chair's action had been taken to approve reports on collaborative arrangements and it was not always clear whether there had been any discussion of these reports in the committee structure. The ELIR team suggested that there would be value in making the equivalence of student support arrangements an explicit statement in all Memoranda of Agreement.

The University of Strathclyde was encouraged in its Technical Report to continue to use processes to promote enhancement of the student experience in its collaborations, and to identify and share approaches that are effective. In its Technical Report, the University of the West of Scotland was encouraged to ensure that the pace of growth in delivering the international dimensions of its corporate strategy is actively monitored to ensure that any associated risk is carefully managed. The University was also encouraged to consider the potential impact of these plans on its widening participation policy.

Student representation and feedback in partner institutions

A number of institutions are enhancing their approaches to ensure that students involved in collaborative programmes are adequately represented and that their feedback is taken into consideration. Edinburgh Napier University's Technical Report noted that its Students' Association work does not currently extend to systemically include TNE provision, although the University has plans to address this.

Abertay University's Technical Report indicated that there is a limited connection between its Students' Association and partner college Students' Associations, although SEGi University and Colleges' students are able to submit individual feedback to the University on their student experience. The University was asked by the ELIR team to explore further ways of ensuring that student feedback from collaborative activity is gathered and acted upon.

Glasgow Caledonian University has collaboration and accreditation arrangements in place with a number of institutions but the Technical Report states that it is evident that formal student feedback from these institutions does not feed into the University's representative and enhancement structures. The Technical Report states that consideration should be taken to ensure parity of student experience at all locations such as other campuses or institutions with collaborative arrangements, including postgraduate students.

Heriot-Watt University's Technical Report noted that the implementation of a Student Feedback Survey Framework could effectively manage student feedback and allow the University to consider more carefully the feedback it gathers from students studying in different locations and through different modes of study. The Students' Union does not currently work with Approved Learning Partners or independent distance learners. The ELIR team asked the University to progress its representative structures for these students, building on the arrangements in place at Edinburgh, Dubai and the emerging Malaysia.

Equivalence of student experience

A small number of institutions were encouraged to enhance existing practice to ensure students receive an equivalent experience in partner institutions. Students at Heriot-Watt University's Dubai and Malaysia campuses raised concerns over the adequacy and accessibility of library resources. The University was asked to ensure that there was appropriate alignment between the demands of the curricula and the resources available to support students in achieving learning outcomes. In respect of the Dubai campus, the University was asked to make progress to improve the learning environment and availability of learning support. The report also advises that additional resources, including support for the global provision of academic staff, will be required.

The University of Stirling's Technical Report notes that the University's strategic focus of its Internationalisation Strategy 2014-19 is the student experience, with recognition of the need for equivalence of the student experience whether programmes are offered in the UK or overseas. This includes access to IT and library resources, access to academic staff, the provision of student support, engagement with the Students' Union and opportunities to provide feedback. These aspects should be considered and documented within the Memorandum of Agreement. In its report, the ELIR team indicated that there would be value in making the equivalence of student support arrangements an explicit statement within these agreements.

The University of the West of Scotland was encouraged to build on the model that had been piloted by its Business School to ensure that collaborative student experience is considered in both the School and across the support departments, as it moves into a phase of rapid expansion of its international activity.

Other areas for development

A small number of institutions were encouraged to undertake further activity to ensure appropriate consideration is given to the requirements of the Quality Code and other external reference points. Scotland's Rural College's Technical Report encouraged the institution to develop practices and policies in line with the Quality Code, *Chapter B10*. The College was also encouraged to have robust arrangements in place to ensure seamless formal continuation of the collaboration agreement with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh on the expiry of the current Memorandum of Understanding. The University of the West of Scotland was also encouraged to explore the potential for using international academic reference points to support its expansion of international provision.

The Technical Report for the University of St Andrews indicates that each school is required to report on their collaborative activity as part of the Annual Academic Monitoring process, however there is variable practice across the schools, from a 'light of touch' reporting through to none. The University has committed to update the monitoring template and to make it explicit that consultations with students should be part of this reflection process. Edinburgh Napier University's Collaborative Provision Committee highlighted a number of cases where the first-year review for newly established partnership provision was not undertaken within the published timescales.

Heriot-Watt University's Technical Report asked the University to include the location of study on its transcripts, a matter that the University was reluctant to do, as it considered that this did not fit with its strategic approach to delivery this activity.

A small number of reports highlighted the need to further enhance the information available to students who may be considering undertaking a period of study abroad. At the time of the ELIR, Heriot-Watt University was considering how to improve information and advice to students to promote its Global Student Programme, covering all aspects of mobility, including ERASMUS. Challenges have been identified with the communication of mobility opportunities and encouraging students based in Scotland to undertake transfers and placements. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Technical Report encourages it to adopt a more flexible approach to support students in achieving comparable learning outcomes through study exchange, rather than requiring a direct match of outcomes against those in module descriptors. The Conservatoire was also encouraged to consider the ways in which it ensures staff and students are made aware of the benefits of greater mobility.

What happens next?

QAA Scotland follows up the ELIR outcomes with institutions individually through annual discussion visits, and each institution is required to produce a Follow-up Report indicating how it has addressed its own ELIR outcomes. QAA Scotland also promotes collaborative working between institutions to share good practice and to find collective solutions to common areas for development. Each institution is invited to participate in a follow-up event to engage with the ways other institutions that were reviewed at around the same point of the ELIR cycle have addressed their review outcomes.

Annex A - Summary of institutional collaborative activity arrangements

This section summarises each Scottish higher education institution's (HEI) collaborative provision.

University of Aberdeen: The University has six agreements whereby joint supervision of a single student leads to award of a dual PhD degree. It has a long-standing accreditation agreement with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) that enables UHI to deliver research Masters and PhDs in certain defined areas. It has a validation agreement with the International Christian College covering undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision in Theology and Ministry. The University also has a number of articulation agreements with further education colleges to enable students to gain advanced entry to some of the University's undergraduate programme. A 2+2 agreement with Wuhan University in China enables students to join year 3 of a business-related undergraduate programme.

Abertay University: The University has 2,091 (head count) undergraduates studying at partner institutions: 185 based at Fife College, 1,863 at the Systematic Educational Group International (SEGi) University and Colleges in Malaysia and 43 at the Ecole Supérieure de Conduite de Travaux (ESCT) in Paris. There has been an expansion in student numbers studying at partner institutions of around 70 per cent between 2012-13 and 2015-16. Future strategic developments will include the expansion of international (non EU) student recruitment, with the University setting plans to double its international undergraduate population by 2020.

University of Dundee: The University of Dundee It has one formal collaborative partnership agreement which is with Ballyfermot College of Further Education in Dublin for the delivery of a Bachelor of Arts in Animation.

University of Edinburgh: In September 2014 the University of Edinburgh had collaborative agreements with 64 international institutions and 20 UK institutions. The University's current collaborative, partnership and exchange activity includes jointly awarded postgraduate research degree programmes.

The University offers a range of partnerships for the purpose of offering students study abroad opportunities. Two-plus-two agreements are in place with eight Chinese universities to admit students to the third year of an Edinburgh engineering degree following the successful completion of two years of approved study at the respective Chinese institution. Five similar agreements are in place with the schools of Chemistry and Geosciences. The College of Humanities and Social Science has recently developed a two-plus-two agreement with Donghua University in China. Edinburgh College of Art has been delivering the programme in China for two years, with the first students due to arrive at the University of Edinburgh at the start of 2016-17. The University of Edinburgh has one accreditation agreement with SRUC which is managed through the College of Science and Engineering. Articulation exists with further education colleges where students can gain direct entry to later years of a University degree programme, but no formal agreements are in place.

In 2013-14 the University of Edinburgh had 1,716 students registered on online distance master's programmes. The University has two collaborative online distance learning programmes: one international with the Christian Medical College in Vellore, India, and one with the Royal College of Surgeons. At the time of the ELIR the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine was at an advanced stage of discussion with Zhejiang University in China regarding a dual award model of collaboration, introducing an undergraduate programme in Biomedical Sciences. In order to support this development the University developed a formal policy on dual, double and multiple awards.

Edinburgh Napier University: The University's programmes are based in three campuses in Edinburgh with partners in other locations including Hong Kong, Singapore, India and Sri Lanka. The University has 5,005 students based in transnational partnerships. The University has 240 formal articulation agreements with eight colleges in Scotland and 29 formal articulation routes with international partners from eight countries. In 2013-14, 887 new undergraduate entrants joined the University from Scottish colleges and, in 2014-15, 565 students entered the University with Advance standing. The University has 6,403 overseas students making up one third of the total student population. These students study on programmes delivered predominately in Hong Kong, Singapore and India. The University aims to grow its international, non-EU, student population from 4,600 full-time equivalent (FTE) to 7,800 FTE by 2020. Since 2013, the University has established 57 agreements in 17 European countries and has 23 non-European partners in six countries (US, Canada, China, Australia, New Zealand and Colombia), which allows for student and staff mobility.

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU): The University has satellite campuses in London (GCU London) and New York (GCU New York). The former is well established and offers postgraduate provision but the latter does not offer credit bearing activity although a range of masters degrees will be offered in 2015-16, subject to approval by the State Education Department of New York. The University offers flexible routes into programmes and has seen a significant increase in the number of HNC and HND students articulating into years 2 and 3 of its undergraduate programmes, from 490 FTE in 2011-12 to 834 in 2012-13. The Scottish Funding Council awarded the University an additional 157 articulation places for the academic year 2013-14. The University's College Connect strategy seeks to develop the University's relationship with partner colleges and aims to increase the number of students coming to the University through the articulation route from 610 to 1,000 in 2016-17, representing 30 per cent of their undergraduate intake. Glasgow Caledonian University uses College University Subject Partnerships (CUSPs), which are subject level areas of activity built on existing working relationships between the college and university sector to create a sustainable infrastructure for articulation.

The University also has a number of existing collaboration activities which lead to a GCU award including: accreditation arrangements with Caledonian College of Engineering (CCE) Oman for School of Engineering and Built Environment BEng (Hons) programmes; activity formerly under Business Academy (now the school for Work-based Education); a number of joint delivery and joint awards with other partners in Scotland; joint delivery of BSc Railways Operational Management in the UK and South Africa; off-campus delivery in Oman (BSc with Institute of Health Sciences and MSc programmes for CCE); and the delivery of academic pathway programmes through GCU INTO. The University has academic relationships with 80 universities and academic institutions, largely focused around student and staff exchanges and research collaborations. The University has also developed a Partnership Engagement Plan template to support the monitoring of collaborative activities.

Glasgow School of Art (GSA): GSA is an accredited institution of the University of Glasgow, which has validated GSA undergraduate and postgraduate programmes since 1992. GSA also works in partnership with Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), which is an existing partner of the University of Glasgow. The SIT partnership involves delivery of the two GSA programmes in Singapore: the BA (Hons) Communications Design and the BA (Hons) Interior Design.

University of Glasgow: The University has four well-established UK-based validation arrangements with Glasgow School of Art, SRUC, the Edinburgh Theological Seminary and Christie's Education, as well as a range of other collaborative agreements, and does not intend to extend validated provision beyond the existing four UK partners. The University has a policy of not entering into franchise or validation agreements with overseas partners, instead the focus of collaboration with overseas institutions will be on the delivery of

transnational education with a small number of international partners. The University already has partnerships with Singapore Institute of Technology, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, and Majan University College, Oman.

Heriot-Watt University: Heriot-Watt University has 11,200 students enrolled through 50 Approved Learning Partners (ALPs). ALPs are partnerships in which the University retains responsibility for curricula, learning outcomes, assessment, awards and all quality assurance matters, with the partner being responsible for providing local support and teaching for specific Heriot-Watt programmes of study. The University has a further 8,000 distance learning students. Of the total student population, almost two-thirds of students are non-UK based. Academic provision at the University is undertaken across five campuses located in: Edinburgh; the Scottish Borders; Orkney; Dubai; and Malaysia. In addition West London College has been a partner since 1993 and an Associate Campus since 2012, with the University being its sole academic partner for degree-level provision. Dubai is the more developed international campus, having been established since 2005. In 2013-14 there were 3,758 students studying on the campus, most of whom were undergraduates (2,085). 70 per cent of these students were United Arab Emirates residents. The Malaysia campus was established more recently, with the first undergraduate programmes running in 2014-15, with 96 students. The University's International Strategy sets out plans to double the scale of its international activities by 2018 and grow the international student population by around 40 per cent.

University of the Highlands and Islands: The 21 academic collaborative partnerships cited in the Collaborative Register, including the arrangement for the award of research degrees by the University of Aberdeen, are modest in volume, but they represent a wide variety of relationships. These include articulation within Scotland and internationally, joint delivery of degree programmes with institutions in Scotland and China, module contributions to degrees awarded elsewhere, partnerships with professional organisations and partnerships with universities similar to UHI in terms of mission, geography and pedagogy, such as the Federation University, Australia (with whom UHI is developing joint online master's programmes). In 2014-15, UHI had 240 students registered on its collaborative programmes, with the Hunan Institute of Engineering (HIE) in China representing over 90 per cent of all the University's students on collaborative programmes

Queen Margaret University (QMU): QMU has a significant number of collaborative partners with nine UK-based and six overseas with the latter largely concentrated in Greece and Singapore; these include validation and franchise arrangements. Enrolments in overseas collaborative provision now constitute 21 per cent of the University's total enrolments.

Robert Gordon University: The University's commitment to providing flexible and accessible routes into higher education is reflected in its portfolio of articulation arrangements with other institutions, including North East Scotland College (NESCOL) and Dundee and Angus College (see paragraphs 28-29). The number of students entering through articulation arrangements increased from 892 in 2010-11, to 1,339 in 2014-15. The main developments in collaborative activity since the 2012 ELIR are: the continued development of the relationship with the International College RGU (ICRGU); and growth in the validated programme arrangements with Benedict Schools in Switzerland.

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (Conservatoire): The Conservatoire has UK-based partnerships with five institutions in relation to the following collaborative programmes:

- BEd programme with the University of Glasgow with the Conservatoire retaining responsibility for oversight. This course is professionally accredited by the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS)

- Research degrees for postgraduate research students studying at the Conservatoire with the University of St Andrews
- BA Hons (Scottish Music - Piping) programme with the National Piping Centre
- BA Modern Ballet, which is formally awarded by the Conservatoire but the institution work closely with Scottish Ballet on this. In addition, there is close collaboration with Scottish Ballet over the MMus (Piano and Dance) programme
- The Conservatoire is also working with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI to develop a master's programme aimed at Gaelic-speaking theatre artists.

Scotland's Rural College: identified one specific education collaborative activity, with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE). This currently involves the joint delivery of HND and BSc programmes in Horticulture with Plantsmanship, with the degree being awarded by the University of Glasgow.

University of Stirling: In 2014-15, there were 1,299 overseas students (outside Europe). In 2014-15 the University had 493 students studying on transnational programmes and 107 students studying on the joint venture with INTO. At the time of the ELIR, the University had 23 collaborative arrangements, including 12 with overseas partners. In 2014-15 there were 805 students enrolled across all collaborative programme types. In 2013-14, the University developed a partnership with INTO University Partnerships to create two INTO Stirling centres: one in Stirling and one in London. The University's work on widening access is supported by a number of articulation arrangements, including an established partnership with Forth Valley College. Working in partnership, the University and Forth Valley College have developed four programmes on a fully integrated model where the programmes are jointly designed, developed and delivered by the college, University and industry partners.

University of St Andrews: The University has a small number of collaborations which involve study at two or more institutions leading to a joint award. Current collaborations comprise one undergraduate programme and 10 taught postgraduate programmes: with four UK partners, two international partners, and three European consortia. There are cotutelle arrangements with around 20 institutions in the UK, Europe and overseas. It is involved in the Science without Borders scheme providing links with institutions in Brazil. In the UK, there are arrangements with the University of Stirling and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. The BA (International Honours) programme represents a longstanding and close collaboration with the College of William and Mary, Virginia, USA.

University of Strathclyde: The University currently operates a number of types of collaborative activity including articulation with further education colleges in Scotland, and internationally with five universities in China, Malaysia, India and Pakistan. In September 2013, the University also entered into a partnership with the private provider Study Group UK, and launched the Strathclyde International Study Centre. The University also offers a master's degree programme in collaboration with Aalborg University in Denmark and Hamburg University of Technology in Germany, as well as a Master of Science programme with the International Prevention Research Institute in Lyon. Strathclyde Business School delivers a range of postgraduate taught programmes on international branch campuses. The University has service level agreements with local education partners who provide administrative support and teaching facilities, and manage students' daily requirements. The University currently has one collaboration with an industrial partner to provide research degree programmes for the partner's employees through a combination of work-based learning and joint professional and academic research supervision.

University of the West of Scotland (UWS): The University's collaborative activity has been largely with local and regional colleges to facilitate access to higher education. Around 12 per cent of the University intake each year is provided by articulating students. The University's current strategy is to move from franchised programmes with college partners

towards adopting a validation model with its partners. As set out in the Corporate Strategy 2014-20 and 'Global Reach' Enabling Plan, the University has plans to expand transnational education (TNE). At present, the University has agreements with an institution in France for dual delivery for a master's programme and, in the latter half of 2014, agreements were completed for delivery of master's programmes in Malaysia, Ghana and Russia. At present the University is also considering setting up a campus in Dubai.

Annex B - References to collaborative activity in the ELIR 3 Technical Reports

The paragraph numbers in this section refer to the original ELIR Technical Reports.

[University of Aberdeen](#)

15 Increasing international recruitment has been identified as a priority for the University. The Strategic Plan included targets of increasing the international student numbers to 2,360 and improving the University's position in international league tables, particularly in relation to the proportion of international students and international staff. In discussions with the ELIR team, staff spoke of a number of University initiatives at the school level designed to recruit international students, including the development of 2+2 programmes with Chinese universities. Progress towards the overall aim of increasing non-EU international numbers has been slow. However, a newly-appointed Vice-Principal (Internationalisation) was due to take up post in January 2014 and the University has appointed regional champions. The University indicated that these appointments were essential to the development of the Internationalisation Strategy and were likely to facilitate a strategic approach to achieving the institutional targets. The University is encouraged to progress its plans for internationalisation which are likely to support the student population as well as the strategic intentions.

86 A strategic objective of the University is to continue to promote partnership working and to engage fully with its regional, national and international partners. The University is committed to growing its work with further education partners, mainly in terms of articulation agreements. At the time of the current ELIR, the University was exploring potential new 2+2 articulation partners in India, Sri Lanka, China, Kazakhstan and Malaysia. The University indicated that it does not normally enter into franchise agreements, and, at the time of the current ELIR, did not have any.

87 The University has six agreements whereby joint supervision of a single student leads to award of a dual PhD degree. It has a long-standing accreditation agreement with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) which enables UHI to deliver research Masters and PhDs in certain defined areas. It has a validation agreement with the International Christian College covering undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision in Theology and Ministry. The University has a number of articulation agreements with further education colleges to enable students to gain advanced entry to some of the University's undergraduate programmes. A 2+2 agreement with Wuhan University in China enables students to join year 3 of a business-related undergraduate programme.

88 The University has effective arrangements in place for securing the academic standards of its collaborative provision.

89 New collaborative provision procedures implemented in 2012 are detailed in the Academic Quality Handbook and meet the Expectations of the Quality Code. All proposed collaborative partnerships are assessed in terms of their strategic fit and associated risk and require submission of a Collaborative Partnership Proposal proforma comprising a business case, risk assessment, partnership appraisal, and resource considerations. Sponsoring schools and colleges complete the business case and risk assessment elements of the documentation. Proposals then follow one of three routes depending on the type of collaboration and the assessed level of risk.

90 QAC is responsible for overseeing the academic standards of collaborative provision and is involved in all stages of the process. All Collaborative Partnership Proposal proforma are considered by QAC. Proposals involving a potential partner from outside the UK are subject

to additional scrutiny. All proposed validation and accreditation partnerships require a visit to the institution concerned by a QAC-appointed validation panel and QAC considers the validation panel's report. All proposals for accreditation, validation and joint degrees also require the final approval of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning, the Senate and the University Court before an agreement can be signed. All validated and accredited partners are required to submit an annual report which is scrutinised by QAC.

91 The procedures now in place enable the University to enhance the student learning experience on its collaborative programmes.

92 The Collaborative Partnership Proposal proforma require all proposals to describe a potential partner's capability to provide and assure a student learning experience comparable to that of the University. Validation visits to prospective partners place a strong emphasis on the student learning experience. Similarly, the student learning experience features strongly in revalidation reports. In addition, QAC maintains oversight as all validated and accredited partners are required to provide an annual report which includes commentary on a range of issues related to the student learning experience.

93 The University indicated that lessons have been learned from collaborative arrangements put in place prior to the development of its new procedures. Consequently, there was a recognition that work may be needed to map Higher National provision (delivered in further education colleges) with University curricula. Similarly, the University will seek to develop closer links with students in partner colleges prior to their progressing to the University.

94 The University has an effective approach to managing its collaborative activity. It seeks to grow such activity not least because articulation agreements with further education colleges are a key element in the University's widening participation strategy. The University emphasised its commitment to supporting students on collaborative programmes and indicated its preparedness to take steps to enhance their learning experience.

[University of Abertay Dundee](#)

2 In session 2015-16 the University had a total student population of 6,116 (head count). This total comprised 3,664 undergraduate students, 233 postgraduate taught students and 128 postgraduate research students studying at the University's campus in Dundee. In 2015-16, 2,091 undergraduate students were studying at the University's partner institutions (paragraph 29).

17 The Strategic Plan (2015-), which articulates the University's global, national and local ambitions, was developed in partnership with students, staff, and members of Senate and the University Court. The Plan was informed by discussions around key supporting strategies including: the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Strategy, the Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy, the Estates Strategy, the Employability Strategy (where employability is supported by the Abertay Attributes) and the Internationalisation Strategy. The ELIR team learned from discussions with senior staff that, following the appointment of a new Director of Strategic Planning, the Strategic Plan was more integrated with the planning process. In 2015-16, a new planning framework was introduced to clarify the University's decision-making processes. The Strategic Plan included 20 university-level key performance indicators (KPIs) and the University is committed to identifying specific targets at the school level during 2016.

29 In 2015-16 the University had a total student population of 6,116 (head count) students, comprising 3,664 undergraduates, 233 postgraduate taught students and 128 postgraduate research students studying at the Dundee campus. In the same year, there were 2,091 (head count) undergraduates studying at partner institutions: 185 based at Fife College,

1,863 at the Systematic Educational Group International (SEGi) University and Colleges in Malaysia and 43 at the Ecole Supérieure de Conduite de Travaux (ESCT) in Paris.

30 Scottish-domiciled students account for 82 per cent of the University's students. Over the past four years, the University has taken purposeful action to realign its student population, reducing the total number of Scottish and EU domiciled students to bring these into line with funding changes from the Scottish Funding Council. Additionally, there has been a 40 per cent decrease in the number of students attending the University from the rest of the UK (rUK) and a 50 per cent decrease in international student numbers, resulting in around a 17 per cent decrease in undergraduate students numbers based at the Dundee campus and around a 30 per cent reduction in postgraduate taught student numbers. The University attributes these changes to a planned strategy to bring its SFC-funded (home and EU students) undergraduate population into line with the number of funded student places it receives from SFC, and, in the case of international and rUK students, to increased competition.

31 Postgraduate research student numbers have increased by around 7 per cent and there has been an expansion in student numbers studying at partner institutions of around 70 per cent between 2012-13 and 2015-16. Future strategic developments will include the expansion of international (non EU) student recruitment and postgraduate provision, with the University setting ambitious plans to double its international undergraduate population by 2020, as set out in both the Strategic Plan and the International Strategy.

63 The University has a deliberate and sustainable strategy for providing effective support to students entering from its partner colleges. The University offers a range of activities and services specifically designed to aid the transition of non-traditional students including pre-transitional and post-transitional support for students and support for partner staff. The range of pre-transitional support includes: the Abertay Associate student scheme; the college-based degree adviser system; and two summer preparation programmes for students, known as the University Preparation (UP) Programme and the Abertay College Transition (ACT) Programme which are bridging programmes for students entering the University from college. Transition officers based in partner colleges provide direct support to students in preparing them for their transition into the University. Students commented positively on these arrangements in discussions with the ELIR team.

64 Once enrolled, ongoing post-transition support for articulating students is provided through SEZ. In-session support is offered to students whose first language is not English. Students were particularly positive about the support offered by academic staff in facilitating the transition into the University and supporting them through to further study and employment.

65 The University provides development opportunities for staff in partner colleges, including delivering briefings and awareness-raising sessions by senior Abertay staff and inviting partner college staff to attend TLE seminars held at Abertay.

77 Arrangements for supporting students are effective and the establishment of the Support Enquiry Zone was regarded extremely positively by both staff and students in providing responsive and supportive services to students. Support for students entering the University from partner colleges is extensive and effective in ensuring smooth transitions. The introduction of the Graduate School, offering a range of training and professional development opportunities including induction training, seminars, a supervision training programme and support for students with teaching responsibilities, has led to the creation of a strong community and has facilitated the development of good relationships between postgraduate students and staff.

136 One of the University's strategic principles of 'expanding horizons' places emphasis on internationalisation and encouraging student and staff mobility. The University's Internationalisation Strategy is focused on inward and outward mobility, that is, it aims to attract students and staff from overseas to Dundee and provide and promote opportunities to Abertay staff and students to participate in mobility programmes such as Erasmus plus, student exchange and study abroad, with the aim of enriching the cultural experience of local students, rather than seeking new delivery opportunities or expansion of existing partnerships. The Strategy indicates that any international collaborative activity is expected to support this.

137 The University is committed to addressing local needs, particularly through its widening participation activities, for which it has a good track record. These include partnerships with local further education colleges and close working relationships with local businesses. There are formal partnerships in place with Dundee and Angus College, Fife College, SRUC (Elmwood campus) and the Dundee and Angus Chamber of Commerce. Key international links are with SEGi University and Colleges, Malaysia, and the Ecole Supérieure de Conduite de Travaux (ESCT), Paris.

138 Following the University's portfolio review, the institution decided to rationalise its franchised provision, putting in place the necessary arrangements to support the running out of these programmes, while maintaining the quality of the student experience. The University is committed to supporting and developing articulation arrangements, as detailed in its SFC Outcome Agreement and is the lead institution in the Tayside and Fife Articulation Hub, which is funded until July 2016. Other Scottish partnership activity includes participation in the delivery of a joint MSc in Industrial Biotechnology where the award is made by the University of Strathclyde. In 2015-16, there were 2,091 (head count) undergraduate students studying at partner institutions, just over half of the number of students studying on the Dundee campus.

139 The key international collaborative activity is a long-standing partnership with SEGi University and Colleges in Malaysia, with the latest Memorandum of Agreement reviewed and signed in 2014. The Dundee Business School remained the largest contributor to the collaborative provision at SEGi University and Colleges. Started in 2015, revised double degrees have been introduced with students studying SEGi University and Colleges degrees in years 1 and 2 and articulating to the dual award for year 3. On successful completion, students receive degrees from both SEGi University and Colleges, and the University. In line with the strategic objective to increase the number of international students, SEGi University and College students are encouraged to complete their final year of study at the Dundee campus. The MSc Construction Management is delivered in collaboration with ESCT in Paris and is delivered jointly between the two institutions, taught in both French and English. It leads to a University of Abertay Dundee award.

140 Overall, the University has effective arrangements in place for securing the academic standards of its collaborative provision. Following the University's committee restructuring, institutional oversight of collaborative activities is to be managed through a joint management forum whose membership includes the Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement, the Academic Quality Manager, the Director of Student Services and a representative from the Registry and the International Office. Individual partnerships are supported through interactions between individual members of academic staff in the relevant schools and the partner institutions. The management of collaborative activity is supported by the Collaborative Procedures handbook, with each partnership also having its own detailed procedures manual.

141 The University Executive formally approves all partnerships and the International Office provides central monitoring of partnerships with school involvement through annual

monitoring. The 2012 ELIR identified the University's Strategic Partnership Review (SPR) process, used with the then Adam Smith College, as positive practice. Since then, the University has applied this approach to reviewing all of its strategic partnerships. The SPR process links to the quality review processes adopted for the 'home' programmes.

142 The University confirmed that its collaborative activity is delivered in line with *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code. Key features of the quality arrangements include: a Memorandum of Agreement with each partner; the University Collaborative Procedures handbook; procedures manuals for each partnership; associate lectureships and associate student status being offered to those studying on an Abertay programme at a partner institution; annual monitoring visits and reporting; quality review of collaborative programmes being integrated within 'parent' programmes; staff contributing to the delivery of the University's programmes needing to be approved by the University; and college partner staff being encouraged to hold an appropriate teaching qualification.

143 Collaborative provision delivered with the University's local college partners and at ESCT use the University's academic regulations, and good working relationships between staff ensure the effective communication of changes associated with the development and delivery of the programmes. The procedures manual for the degrees delivered at SEGi University and Colleges sets out that this provision is delivered in accordance with SEGi regulations and quality assurance processes. The University indicated the decision to adopt SEGi University and Colleges' regulations and processes was taken in recognition of the long-standing partnership, level of trust and confidence in the communication and monitoring systems that have been built between the two institutions, as well as an acknowledgement of SEGi University and Colleges' growth and maturity as a university. External examiners are appointed by the University to provide externality to its collaborative provision, confirming that programmes are subject to the same oversight as those delivered in Dundee and that academic standards are comparable.

144 The University has effective arrangements in place for students studying on collaborative programmes, offering extensive transition support for students entering the institution, particularly for students entering with advanced standing from college partners. This is achieved through supporting partner staff and pre and post-transitional support for students (paragraphs 63 and 64). As associate lecturers of the University, staff employed by collaborative partners to deliver University programmes are encouraged to enrol on the Pg Cert HET. They can access online resources and a calendar of CPD events is run at partner institutions to foster sharing of practice and staff exchange. More locally-based partner staff are able to attend TLE seminars in Dundee and the ELIR team heard that staff from Fife College were actively involved in the curriculum reform changes.

145 The 2010 QAA report on transnational education provision in Malaysia recognised as positive practice the University's use of the VLE to promote a common learning experience between students based in Dundee and its partner SEGi University and Colleges. SEGi's adoption of the same VLE platform at the University at the end of 2015 will allow this work to be extended, providing an opportunity for cross-institutional student discussions and group work. There is also an intention to use the VLE to engage SEGi University and Colleges staff with CPD.

146 Through liaison with University school-based staff, SEGi University and Colleges' colleagues have been informed of new initiatives including curriculum reform. There are effective communication arrangements in place between Abertay and SEGi University and Colleges including: regular visits of staff between the two institutions, videoconferencing between Abertay and SEGi's staff and students, and workshops on enhancing teaching and learning during the visits to the Malaysian campus. Students in Abertay and Malaysia are

being encouraged to set each other quizzes in order to develop an understanding of their different cultural and educational contexts.

147 There is a limited connection between the Students' Association and partner college Students' Associations, although SEGi University and Colleges' students are able to submit individual feedback to the University on their student experience. The SEGi University and Colleges partnership manual contains guidelines for establishing a staff student consultative committee and indicates that there should be an opportunity for students to have a forum where they feel their voices can be heard. The University should explore further ways of ensuring that student feedback from collaborative activity is gathered and acted upon.

148 The University's processes for managing its collaborative provision are effective and meet sector expectations. Following curriculum reform, the University indicated that it intends to conduct a review of its collaborative provision in 2017-18, using the same panels to consider Dundee and partner-based provision. The University has recognised that recent restructuring has impacted on its ability to measure the effectiveness of its approach to managing collaborative activity. The establishment of the joint management forum should support the University's ambition to gain greater oversight of its collaborative activity and to ensure its approach to reviewing and enhancing this provision remains effective. The ELIR team would support this approach.

149 The ELIR team noted the deliberate and sustainable strategy for supporting students entering the University from its partner colleges, which represents positive practice. The international collaboration with SEGi University and Colleges is indicative of a successful approach to managing collaborative activity where the evolving nature of the collaboration reflects the implementation of the University's strategic approach in this area. The long-standing nature of the relationship with SEGi University and Colleges is based on mutual trust and understanding, and allows changes to be easily communicated.

[University of Dundee](#)

1 The University of Dundee (the University) became independent in 1967, having formerly been a college of the University of St Andrews since 1897. The University experienced a period of rapid growth from 1994-01 as a result of mergers with Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, Tayside College of Nursing and Midwifery, Fife College of Health Studies and the Dundee Campus of the Northern College of Education.

17 The proportion of international students at the University is around 10 per cent and the University has a specific sub-aim in its internationalisation strategy to recruit more international students. Figures provided by the University show that it has a lower percentage of international students than the comparator group against which it benchmarks itself. The University Strategy to 2017 also sets out the aim of increasing the number of postgraduate students, particularly through the development of international partnerships.

91 The University has taken a cautious approach to collaborative activity and has only one formal collaborative partnership agreement which is with Ballyfermot College of Further Education in Dublin for the delivery of a Bachelor of Arts in Animation.

92 The Internationalisation Strategy to 2017 is in its early stages of being implemented and has four key aims: to build sustainable high-level international partnerships; to bring the world to Dundee; to take Dundee to the world; and to develop capacity and resource to support internationalisation. The initial task of the Internationalisation Committee has been to review the University's partnership activity in order to develop a greater understanding of the context and range of current provision.

93 The Director of Legal Services and the Director of Quality Assurance have to date provided tailored advice on the legal and quality assurance aspects of new collaborative proposals on a case-by-case basis, however the University intends to develop future collaborative activity within a more strategic framework. The Learning and Teaching Strategy to 2017 and the Internationalisation Strategy to 2017 both highlight the University's current strategic commitment to creating new and stronger international partnerships while recognising that a robust approach to the consideration of responsibilities, due diligence and risk registers is needed.

94 The University has effective arrangements in place for securing the standards of its collaborative provision.

95 The University's policy statement on collaborative provision outlines expectations for all types of collaborative activity, stating that the University will only validate external provision which is equivalent to the University's own provision in terms of both standards and quality.

96 Collaborative provision is monitored through the annual monitoring and periodic review processes, and the external examiner system, to ensure a comparable student experience. External examiner reports for the BA in Animation indicate that the programme is subject to the same oversight as a programme delivered at the University and that academic standards are being monitored in line with the University's quality assurance systems.

97 Although the University has only one formal collaborative partnership, it recognises that all of its students should be given appropriate opportunities to engage with the student representation system and should have equivalent opportunities and support from the University, irrespective of where they are studying.

98 External examiner reports for the BA in Animation have highlighted opportunities for enhancement by, for example, encouraging research-informed practice and the use of student self-assessment. In addition, the revised procedures for the annual review of taught provision have a specific requirement that the effectiveness of collaborative arrangements is considered as part of the annual programme quality enhancement report.

99 The University has an effective approach to the management of its collaborative activity.

[University of Edinburgh](#)

18 The University has a clear, strategic aim to increase both overall student numbers and to diversify the student population by increasing the proportion of international, postgraduate and online distance learning (ODL) students.

21 The main increase in student numbers since 2011 is accounted for by overseas and EU students, with rises in numbers of overseas students particularly apparent at undergraduate (56 per cent) and taught postgraduate (44 per cent) levels. In comparison, the number of overseas postgraduate research students has risen by 16 per cent. There has been a slight increase in Scottish domiciled students of four per cent at undergraduate level and three per cent growth in the postgraduate research student numbers. The proportion of other UK-domiciled students has also grown at postgraduate level, the number of taught postgraduate students having risen by 25 percent and postgraduate research students by 24 per cent. Other UK-domiciled undergraduate numbers have fallen by two per cent.

51 The University has an effective approach to growing, promoting and enhancing student mobility. The University Strategic Plan 2012-16 has set a target to create at least 800 new opportunities for students to gain an international experience, and Vision 2025 sets out an ambition for every student to have an international experience. Senior staff confirmed that

the University was exploring new models of supporting student mobility and that its strategy was to develop more substantial relationships with a small number of strategic partners.

52 The University is investing in scholarships to support students from a widening participation background to go abroad. The Principal's Go Abroad Fund gives students the opportunity to study abroad for short periods as part of their degree programmes; the Widening Horizons Programme provides funding to give widening participation students an immersive study abroad experience in their first year.

53 The University supports opportunities for students to undertake a voluntary study abroad period in their third year of study. The University has 288 Erasmus agreements in place in 41 countries, and the International Office's International Programme supports an additional 40 partner institutions across North and South America and Asia. In 2013-14, 667 students spent a year abroad at a partner University; 379 of these were on Erasmus programmes; 195 on an international programme; and 93 undertook an international departmental exchange.

54 Students are supported before and during their experiences abroad by an Exchange Coordinator, an academic member of staff, who, together with the student's Personal Tutor, supports students before and during their time abroad. Exchange coordinators also provide a contact point between the University and the partner institution. On their return, students are encouraged to reflect on and share their experiences. The International Office's annual quality assurance report includes a survey of students' experiences while studying abroad and this is reported through a subcommittee of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee. Student feedback on the academic experience is routinely collected from students on exchange returning from study abroad.

127 The University's strategic goals with respect to internationalisation, global impact and partnership are set out in the University Strategic Plan 2012-16. The University aims to attract the most able minds from anywhere in the world, provide students and staff with a world-class experience, and ensure that teaching and research deliver global benefits. The University's overarching objective is to become a first choice place of study, with priority being placed on enhancing the institution's global presence in learning, research and knowledge transfer. This activity is led by a Vice-Principal (International), who is supported by senior staff in each of the colleges, new deans of international for each of the priority countries or regions, and internationalisation groups at school level.

128 The Strategic Plan 2012-16 includes a target to create at least 800 new opportunities to gain an international experience as part of the Edinburgh degree. A number of initiatives support this ambition, including: Go Abroad, which provides all students with an international educational experience of between one and eight weeks (see paragraph 52). The key metrics in the University Strategy Plan relating to internationalisation include increasing the headcount of non-EU international students by at least 2,000; and to increase the number of postgraduate research students on programmes jointly awarded with international partners by 50 per cent. Staff who met the ELIR team confirmed that the aim for growth was ambitious and would require a concerted effort and commitment at all levels. Staff confirmed that the University was on target to meet the 50 per cent increase in international postgraduate research student numbers because the total numbers across the institution remained relatively small.

129 In September 2014 the University had collaborative agreements with 64 international institutions and 20 UK institutions. Although the number of agreements has increased since the 2011 ELIR, the number of students studying with the University through collaborative arrangements has not increased significantly. The University's current collaborative, partnership and exchange activity includes jointly awarded postgraduate research degree

programmes, which enable doctoral students to embark on jointly supervised research degrees aimed at enhancing their research experience and employment opportunities internationally. The benefits for students on these programmes include access to two research environments and cultures, as well as access to the training and facilities of two research-intensive universities.

130 The University offers a range of partnerships for the purpose of offering students study abroad opportunities. Two-plus-two agreements are in place with eight Chinese universities to admit students to the third year of an Edinburgh engineering degree following the successful completion of two years of approved study at the respective Chinese institution. Five similar agreements are in place with the schools of Chemistry and Geosciences. The College of Humanities and Social Science has recently developed a two-plus-two agreement with Donghua University in China. Edinburgh College of Art has been delivering the programme in China for two years, with the first students due to arrive at the University of Edinburgh at the start of 2016-17.

131 The University has one accreditation agreement with Scotland's Rural College. The University's collaboration with Scotland's Rural College is managed through the College of Science and Engineering; three BSc degree programmes are currently accredited, in addition to a number of research degree student registrations.

132 The University is committed to maintaining and developing partnerships with both Scottish and other UK higher education institutions. Its ambition is to introduce further flexibility into its degree pathways through closer working with strategic partners and through direct entry to year two for undergraduate students. Senior staff confirmed that there was a political imperative to provide flexibility in the learner journey, and the University curriculum structure is designed to facilitate this flexibility. There are no formal articulation agreements in place with further education colleges. Articulation exists with further education colleges where students can gain direct entry to later years of a University degree programme, but no formal agreements are in place.

133 In 2013-14 the University had 1,716 students registered on online distance master's programmes, with ambitions to increase these numbers significantly (see paragraphs 47-50) The University has two collaborative online distance learning programmes: one international with the Christian Medical College in Vellore, India, and one with the Royal College of Surgeons.

134 At the time of the current ELIR the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine was at an advanced stage of discussion with Zhejiang University in China regarding a dual award model of collaboration, introducing an undergraduate programme in Biomedical Sciences. In order to support this development the University developed a formal policy on dual, double and multiple awards. The proposal is with the Chinese authorities for approval.

135 The University has a clear focus on academic standards and academic governance, which is set out in its collaborative provision policies. The policies and procedures are aligned to the Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*. The University considers that it has clear collaborative procedures, which staff understand fully, including: clear memorandum agreements; transparent due diligence processes; and clear guidelines on the types of agreements that the University will consider.

136 The University ensures that appropriate scrutiny, review, approval and risk assessment is undertaken for all collaborative proposals. Partnership proposals originate in schools, with advice from college and specialist teams from across the University. All proposals comprise a business case, risk assessment and resource review. The University considers new collaborative proposals on a case-by-case basis. Advice on setting up collaborative programmes is provided by a number of areas, including: Governance and Strategic

Planning; International Office, including Edinburgh Global and its dedicated team supporting schools; Academic Services, providing guidance on academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement; and the Director of Legal Services.

137 In discussions with the ELIR team staff confirmed that all external collaborations are initiated at school level. Support is provided at both University and college level, including advice from the International Office. Due diligence is scrutinised by college and school-level committees, including by the College Registrar. No new collaboration is developed unless supported and promoted by the relevant head of school. A detailed and robust business case is produced at school level, which outlines the academic rationale for the collaboration and confirms its financial sustainability. Any new collaboration must also be agreed at college level and must have a Memorandum of Agreement, which requires University-level approval, in place before any activity commences. Boards of studies are responsible for curriculum development and approval within a school and must ensure that new proposals are academically appropriate and supported by evidence. The University retains responsibility for the quality and standards of any award made in its name and ensures that awards meet and align with the expectations of the Quality Code. This includes the University having comprehensive arrangements for the approval of Collaborative, study abroad and joint PhD programmes. The ELIR team noted the clarity and comprehensiveness of the Memoranda of Agreement, which make clear the responsibilities of each party (University and partner).

138 Collaborative programmes are subject to annual monitoring and review in the same way as other University programmes and are included in standard internal review processes. Programme monitoring is undertaken at school level, with reporting upwards to colleges who in turn report to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee. The Senate Quality Assurance Committee has oversight of collaborative programmes through both internal review reporting and annual college Quality Assurance and Enhancement Reports.

139 In 2013 the University conducted an Internal Audit of its collaborative activity, including teaching and research. In 2014 the University started work on a project to address the recommendations arising from the Internal Audit report. The report confirmed that the University's approach was robust, however, it noted that there were opportunities to clarify roles and responsibilities in schools, colleges and University departments in the approval of collaborative programmes, in order to reduce duplication and provide clearer guidance and support. Outcomes from the exercise included: the University producing a revised suite of standard Memoranda of Understanding and Agreement for collaborative activities; defining categories of collaboration, and preparing guidance for academic and non-academic approval processes for new collaborative programmes; and holding an enhanced digital repository and making improvements to the existing student record system.

140 The University aims to provide students on collaborative programmes with a learning experience equivalent to students on campus in Edinburgh. The partnership approval process ensures that mechanisms are in place to support the student learning experience, for example ensuring that students are able to comment on their experience and engage in decision-making through student representation. All students on collaborative programmes are given access to pastoral and academic support.

141 The effectiveness of partner arrangements are reviewed as part of the routine quality review processes. The University also monitors collaborative arrangements through site visits.

142 For the College of Humanities and Social Science two-plus-two agreement with Donghua

University in China, staff confirmed that the due diligence process ensures that a comparable learning experience is being delivered. This, coupled with a one-month pre-session process to fill curriculum gaps and provide support for English language, ensures that students are adequately prepared for the interview process to attend the final two years at Edinburgh. The process is selective and not automatic; students apply via UCAS. The launch of the Shanghai International College of Fashion and Creative Studies at Donghua introduced courses in Fashion Innovation and Fashion Interior Design, which are delivered and assessed in English by Edinburgh College of Art academic staff. In 2016-17 the first international students could begin studying in Edinburgh through the '2+2 Fashion Innovation Degree'. It was confirmed that the programmes already have a diverse profile of students, for example students from Australia, Hong Kong and China, although the cohorts at Donghua are small. The challenge for Edinburgh College of Art is to encourage Edinburgh students to go to China and benefit from the collaboration.

143 Since the 2011 ELIR a revised Code of Practice on Study Abroad has been put in place to aid student mobility. The Code sets out responsibilities and expectations of staff and students to ensure appropriate support for students who are at a partner university. Students who met the ELIR team indicated that, generally, support was good, but it was dependent on the year abroad coordinator. While abroad, students felt connected to the University but confirmed that they needed to be proactive. Engineering students in particular confirmed that they were well prepared with respect to risk, culture and the political situation of the country they were going to.

144 Scotland's Rural College is responsible for gathering and responding to student feedback on their experience while studying at the College. Matters arising from the feedback are included in an annual report to the University, which is considered by the Accreditation Board.

145 The University has an effective approach to managing its collaborative activity. All arrangements are managed in accordance with the approved University policies and procedures, and a business case is conducted at school level separately from approval of the academic proposal. The risks of each arrangement to deliver learning opportunities with partners is assessed at the outset and reviewed subsequently on a periodic basis. Appropriate and proportionate safeguards to manage the risks of the various arrangements are determined and put in place.

146 The ELIR team found that the University had a strong commitment to internationalising the student experience, and has developed effective approaches to: study abroad, online distance learning and collaboration with international partners. It has a proactive approach to the development of joint PhD programmes, and has implemented robust arrangements for their approval.

[Edinburgh Napier University](#)

2 The University's programmes are based at three campuses in Edinburgh with partners in other locations including Hong Kong, Singapore, India and Sri Lanka. In 2013-14 the University had a total student population of 18,436 students, of whom 15,182 were undergraduate, 3,046 postgraduate taught and 208 were postgraduate research. There are 13,381 students based in Edinburgh and 5,005 in transnational educational partnerships.

6 This overarching strategy is underpinned by seven corporate strategies, including academic and international. The Academic Strategy contains strands on learning, teaching and assessment; research and innovation; and student experience. The Internationalisation Strategy details the University's plans to grow transnational education (TNE). The Corporate Plan 2014-15 sets out the initial actions towards implementing Strategy 2020, including

targets for growth and achievement. The Budget and Investment Plan 2014-15 was developed to ensure early investment in academic support and development, including academic staffing, online delivery, student enterprise and the partnership with the Napier Students' Association (NSA).

23 The University has 240 formal articulation agreements with eight colleges in Scotland and 29 formal articulation routes with international partners from eight countries. In 2013 the Associate Student Scheme was established in collaboration with local colleges to strengthen the University's approach to articulation. The University is a member of the Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife and Borders Regional Articulation Hub (ELRAH). The ELRAH established a national articulation database and route finder search tool, which aims to improve the statistical reporting of students entering through an articulation arrangement to provide a regional and national context. In 2013-14, 887 new undergraduate entrants joined the University from Scottish colleges and, in 2014-15, 565 students entered the University with advanced standing.

31 The University offers a range of pre-entry interventions to support students entering the University through a formal college articulation route, including drop-in lectures, team teaching with college staff, campus visits and the use of social media. A Coming from College resource can be accessed through the University's virtual learning environment (VLE) and is open for any student to self-enrol. This online support tool is designed to help college students negotiate the transition from college to university and provides additional signposting to relevant services, such as employer mentoring, study abroad, and study skills support.

121 In 2012-14, just over a third (6,403) of the student population were overseas students, with the majority of these studying on programmes delivered in Hong Kong, Singapore and India through the University's TNE model of provision. This figure also includes overseas students studying in Edinburgh. Between 2010-11 and 2013-14 the number of students (undergraduate and taught postgraduate, full-time and part-time) on University programmes delivered overseas increased from 3,478 to 5,052.

122 Internationalisation is one of four key objectives within the University's new Strategy 2020. Strategy 2020 sets out the University's intent, not only to grow TNE delivery and student numbers, but also to create an 'internationalised' environment through its curriculum, pedagogy, research service delivery, and increased staff and student mobility and international experience. In support of this, the University has developed an Internationalisation Strategy 2020, which highlights the central role that the growth in TNE activity will have in enhancing the University's global reach, reputation and revenue. The Internationalisation Strategy 2020 sets out clear indicators of success, including a doubling of revenue by 2020 and an increase in students studying on University TNE programmes from 3,390 FTE in 2013-14 to 5,900 by 2020.

123 In order to achieve these ambitious growth targets, the University has recognised its need to develop new models of partnership and delivery, supplementing, but not necessarily replacing, its current delivery model, which involves high-contact, face-to-face teaching delivered in-country by University staff in intensive blocks. At the time of the current ELIR, a subgroup of the University Court, comprising three Court members, the Director of Finance and the Assistant Principal Internationalisation, was working on the development of a risk framework within which new TNE delivery models will be located. It was expected that the subgroup would report in June 2015. In parallel, work is ongoing to develop a TNE Strategy, which will, in common with the approach taken to the development of the Internationalisation Strategy, involve a year-long period of consultation. Following agreement by the University Leadership Team, the strategy will be considered for approval by the ASEC, Collaborative Provision Committee and the University's Academic Board.

124 Senior staff noted that the extent of engagement with TNE activity currently differed between schools. They confirmed that the Internationalisation Strategy was enabling rather than prescriptive and that each school would, therefore, continue to make a different level of contribution. Nevertheless, the University would remain fully responsible for the student experience and would work to enrich that experience for students studying under every type of TNE partnership arrangement. The University anticipates that the wider TNE student experience will be enriched and more closely aligned with that of Edinburgh campus-based students through, for example: a strong programme focus (see paragraph 15); enhanced use of the common VLE; and affiliation of students studying outwith Edinburgh to the NSA. Overall, the University is committed to being responsive to student and staff needs, with processes relating to student support being built on common principles regardless of geographical location.

125 The University is aware of the many operational challenges that the ambitious TNE growth targets present and is working through its consultative and deliberative processes and committees in order to ensure changes are made on a fully risk-assessed and managed basis. It is also conscious of the great potential that exists for TNE activity to enrich the University community as a whole.

126 The University has extensive and long-standing partnerships with colleges in the region. It leads the ELRAH and currently has 240 formal articulation agreements with eight colleges. In 2014-15 the University admitted 565 students with advanced standing through articulation routes. Internationally there are 29 formal articulation routes from international partners into University programmes delivered in Edinburgh.

127 Links between the University and the colleges are mature and cemented by the engagement of professional services staff working in Student and Academic Services. As part of the University's commitment to delivering an excellent personalised student experience, University staff work with college students from the time at which they begin their college studies. Students articulating from college partners have Associate Student status. The University recognises that key challenges for Associate Students include issues relating to the learning environment and the learning culture. To support an effective articulation to the University, customised campus visits are organised to complement the work of University staff at the college. Associate Students are able to drop in on normal timetabled University lectures, giving them a first-hand insight into differences in teaching styles that they may expect. On arrival, Student and Academic Services signpost college students to relevant services, including study skills support, such as guidance in note taking; student-to-student mentoring; employer mentoring; and study abroad opportunities.

128 The progress of students joining the University through articulation routes is monitored with progression and retention being reviewed. Project work in this area is currently being funded under the auspices of the national Enhancement Theme, Student Transitions (see section 3.2).

129 The University participates fully in Key Action 1 of the new Erasmus+ Programme. Since 2013, the University has established 57 agreements in 17 European countries, and it also has 23 non-European partners in six countries (US, Canada, China, Australia, New Zealand and Colombia), which allows for student and staff mobility.

130 The University has effective arrangements in place for securing the academic standards of its collaborative provision.

131 Section 4 of the University's Quality Framework 2014-15 details the processes for designing, developing, approving, monitoring and review of all taught provision delivered in partnership. The development of this section of the Framework was informed by, and meets

the Expectation and all Indicators of, the Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*.

132 Approval and monitoring of all programmes offered by partner organisations is undertaken by the Collaborative Provision Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Board. Chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, this committee meets monthly (except July to September). As part of the approval process, the Collaborative Provision Committee ensures that the necessary academic resources, for example library provision, are in place to support the student learning experience. The Collaborative Provision Committee is responsible for the institutional oversight of all articulation arrangements, receiving an annual report on UK-based articulation activity in May-June each year and noting all new overseas articulation proposals.

133 The principal means by which the University secures academic standards on collaborative programmes is through its teaching model, whereby campus-based University staff travel to partner locations to deliver teaching and support to students and partner staff. Additional activities, routinely undertaken during regular visits, include student staff liaison committee meetings, and staff meetings to deliver module and programme induction and training for partner staff. Outwith these visits, University staff, primarily programme leaders, based at the Edinburgh campuses are in regular contact by email, video conference and telephone to discuss the general management of provision. In a small number of cases staff from partner institutions travel to Edinburgh as visiting scholars.

134 Staff involved in the delivery of TNE activity confirmed the effective operation of key elements of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement, including: common module descriptors (variation for the purposes of local contextualisation is permitted with due approval); harmonised assessment arrangements, moderation of coursework and final examinations for modules delivered in Edinburgh and at TNE partners; common external examiners for programmes delivered in Edinburgh and at TNE partners; and common annual monitoring processes. All collaborative agreements are routinely reviewed by programme teams after five years of operation.

135 The ELIR team recognised that University staff are proactive in their engagement with, and support for, colleagues in international partners to the benefit of the students. There is clear evidence of University staff reflecting on practice at the module and programme level, and sharing the outcomes of this reflection with colleagues in international partners to enhance the student experience.

136 Another means by which the University assures itself of the maintenance of quality and standards at TNE partner locations is through external validations for individual programmes, a subset of the whole portfolio. Examples of these include accreditation from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications for BA (Hons) Accounting and BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance provision in Hong Kong. Similarly, the undergraduate nursing provision in Singapore is accredited by the Singapore Nursing Board.

137 For newly established partner provision, the University undertakes an additional 'first year review' conducted between 15 and 18 months after the first student cohort has enrolled. The University, through the Collaborative Provision Committee, has highlighted a number of cases where these reviews have not been undertaken within published timescales and intends to expedite matters according to a TNE First Year Review Catch up Plan. The Collaborative Provision Committee has also agreed to review the process, with a view to ensuring that the principles underpinning first year review continue to be implemented but within the intended timeframe. Meanwhile, collaborative provision, including new arrangements, continues to be monitored as part of annual programme evaluation.

138 The University has systematic arrangements in place for enhancing the student learning experience on its collaborative programmes (see section 6.2).

139 The experience, expertise and enthusiasm of programme leaders responsible for the delivery of equivalent modules in Edinburgh and overseas was evident to the ELIR team. Staff provided evidence of the ways in which academic practice is aligned and additional support tailored to partner staff and students. The importance of good communication between University staff, TNE partner staff and students was highlighted. Formal (for example, student staff liaison committees) and informal (for example, direct contact with University staff) communication channels are used extensively by partner staff and students, and were seen by students and staff to be effective. At present, the work of the NSA does not extend systematically to TNE provision, although the University intends to build this into future plans.

140 The limitations of the present model were understood by both staff and students; these included the limited periods during which face-to-face contact between University staff and students studying at TNE partners was possible, and the challenges of organising teaching timetables at the Edinburgh campus and overseas partner locations. More extensive use is being made of Associate Staff for delivery in order to overcome these constraints. Associate Staff recruitment is undertaken at school level through normal systems. All Associate Staff, whether employed directly by the University or the partner, must be approved by the University through the schools. Under the new Internationalisation Strategy and the TNE sub-strategy, senior managers signalled to the ELIR team the University's commitment to extending in a more holistic and systematic way features of the Edinburgh-based student experience not yet available to students studying elsewhere.

141 University staff involved in TNE teaching delivery at module and programme level demonstrated a number of ways in which they currently proactively manage the operational aspects of the relationship, seeking, systematically, to enhance the student learning experience. An important aspect of this is the use of technology to underpin the delivery of an equitable student learning experience to all students regardless of location. University staff travelling to partner institutions offer both induction and bespoke staff development sessions for partners according to local staff needs. Partner staff have access to their own institution's staff development provision and may access relevant University courses. The ELIR team learned of a number of enhancements to TNE provision, for example offering online versions of student development workshops developed in the VLE, and the approval of a protocol (by the Collaborative Provision Committee in October 2014) on the provision of disability and inclusion support to students studying remotely at partner institutions. Staff confirmed to the team that a more comprehensive suite of initiatives will be brought forward under the TNE Strategy, covering, for example, extension of the PDT scheme and student representation via the NSA.

142 An E-Services Feasibility Study, which scopes aspirations for student facing support services regardless of location or mode of study, has been completed. The University agreed that by 2020: all key administrative transactions and routine student queries should be capable of being fulfilled or resolved remotely, consistently and at any time; online services should be delivered seamlessly, and wherever possible through automated workflows; and the service experience should be personalised, flexible, speedy, supportive and user-friendly. At the time of the current ELIR, work was underway to produce an e-services implementation plan to commence in 2015-16. The University is encouraged to continue with their proposed outputs from this plan.

143 TNE activity is covered by standard annual monitoring processes, which is one means by which good practice is shared across schools. Reports are considered by the QAMRC, which includes members of the Collaborative Provision Committee. Other means by which

good practice specifically relating to TNE is shared include the staff conference and the Teaching Fellows network.

144 The University has an effective approach to managing collaborative activity. Its regulations, policies and procedures embodied in the comprehensive Quality Framework (especially Section 4) meet sector expectations as set out within the Quality Code, *Chapter B10*.

145 Oversight of all collaborative activity is exercised by the Collaborative Provision Committee, which has recognised the need to complete its TNE First Year Review Catch Up Plan. The University is encouraged to continue with this and to conclude its review of the process.

146 The University has in place a clearly articulated Internationalisation Strategy, which is understood and supported by key academic and professional services staff. Further work led by senior management to elaborate the Strategy in the context of TNE is ongoing, with particular attention being given to alternative models of provision necessary to sustainably underpin its ambitious growth plans. The ELIR team endorses the University's commitment to further enhancing the experience of its students at partner providers, enabling it to offer more elements of its Edinburgh campus-based development and support resources, thereby building a single, more fully integrated University community. In particular, the University should continue to explore staffing models, opportunities for student representation, and student support.

[Glasgow Caledonian University](#)

10 The University's Internationalisation Strategy sets out key priorities. These include strengthening existing partnerships, increasing international student numbers, growing student exchange activity, and establishing more research collaborations. The University has targeted geographical regions where it will expand its global network and form new transnational educational partnerships. The London and Glasgow campuses provide a focus for recruiting international students who are already in the UK. There is an emphasis on direct recruitment, the development of global hubs, a focused approach to partnership management, and a commitment to enhanced online support. The University seeks to maintain a commitment to an excellent international student experience.

11 A number of new frameworks, strategies and partnerships are in the process of being implemented and evaluated. Data from quality assurance mechanisms is used to measure the impact of change. Deans' Group meetings, which include the newly appointed Dean GCU London, will play a key role in the sharing of good practice and ensuring consistency of approach in implementing the University's strategies across the schools.

38 The ELIR team learned from discussion with senior staff and formal student representatives that these formal student representation structures and engagement processes relate to the University's students in Glasgow and London. While the University has collaboration and accreditation arrangements with a number of institutions such as Caledonian College of Engineering (CCE) Oman, formal feedback from students in these institutions does not feed in to the University's representative and enhancement structures. To further enhance the student experience, consideration should be taken to ensure parity of the student experience at all locations such as other campuses or institutions with collaborative arrangements, including postgraduate students

39 Internationalisation of the student experience is identified as an area of positive practice. The SfL aims to create global citizens to contribute economically and socially to the communities they serve. The University encourages and supports students to have an international experience by promoting student mobility through a range of study-abroad

opportunities such as Erasmus and links with partner institutions in other countries. In discussion with the ELIR team, students highlighted many positive study abroad experiences. A range of opportunities are offered to students on most programmes to study abroad, with events in place to encourage students to take up study abroad.

41 In addition, the University is a Global Network Member of the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) community. The COIL approach has the potential to connect students and staff from 43 institutions in 14 countries using internet-based tools. COIL also supports use of blended learning and technologies, such as use of video capture in teaching and learning. A COIL pilot in 2014-15 is intended to impact on each school.

63 The University demonstrates a positive and successful approach to promoting widening participation and supporting a wide variety of student transitions into the institution. This is demonstrated through its progression and retention data and by the University's wide range of activities, including implementation of its College Connect Strategy, designed to enhance and support students articulating from college to the University, and the Caledonian Club, which provides targeted community engagement as well as an opportunity for current University students to act as mentors for school pupils.

132 The Internationalisation Strategy 2012-15 states that the University aims to deliver excellence, competitiveness and cultural diversity through its collaboration with partners in Scotland and around the world. The University has recently established an International Committee, a standing committee of the Senate chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, to replace the International Steering Committee and oversee both the implementation of the current strategy and the development a revised Internationalisation Strategy. The University intends to ensure that future collaborations build on the model used to develop current successful collaborations and to ensure these are meaningful in terms of the University's future direction. The Internationalisation Strategy Refresh aims to align with the University's Strategy 2020 and is due to be submitted to the Court in June 2015. The University intends to use its digital education environment to support collaborative activity and it is encouraged to pursue this as it develops its institutional Digital Strategy.

133 Three associate deans international support the implementation of the Internationalisation Strategy at school level. The Internationalisation Strategy also features in school plans and there are current moves to identify key collaborative activities at school level and to review any memoranda of understanding and memoranda of agreement that are not actively contributing to the University's internationalisation agenda.

134 A key development since the 2011 ELIR is the establishment of the University's first branch campus in London, offering postgraduate provision. The University is also in the process of opening another branch in New York which will offer non-credit bearing courses in the first instance. These developments are important to support the implementation of GCU's Internationalisation Strategy, forming a global hub model. These campuses are seen as key to the University promoting its international profile. Plans are underway for GCU London to become the fourth University school.

135 The University underwent a QAA Thematic Review of London Campuses in July 2014. The ELIR team had access to the review findings, discussed the University's approach to these findings and are content with its response. The ELIR team recognises that the University is responding to the conclusions of this report.

136 The University has a number of existing collaboration activities which lead to a GCU award: accreditation arrangements with Caledonian College of Engineering (CCE) Oman for School of Engineering and Built Environment BEng (Hons) programmes; activity formerly under Business Academy (now the School for Work-Based Education); a number of joint delivery and joint awards with other partners in Scotland; joint delivery of the BSc Railways

Operational Management in the UK and South Africa; off-campus delivery in Oman (BSc with Institute of Health Sciences and MSc programmes for CCE); and the delivery of academic pathway programmes through GCU INTO. The University also has academic relationships with 80 universities and academic institutions, largely focused around student and staff exchanges and research collaborations

137 The CCE Oman collaboration has been in place for 17 years and now has over 3,000 students. CCE Oman now has an accreditation arrangement with the University whereby a bachelor's programme of study (or constituent modules) is designed, delivered, and assessed by CCE, awarded by the University, and subject to the quality assurance procedures of the University.

138 The RA noted that, numerically, the most significant type of collaborative activity is articulation. By 2020, the University intends to increase the number of articulating students from 610 in 2012-13 to 1,000 post-15-16, representing a third of the undergraduate intake. Underpinning this aim are the College Connect Strategy (2013-20) and College University Subject Partnerships (CUSPs). CUSPs are subject level areas of activity built on existing working relationships between the college and university sector to create a sustainable infrastructure for articulation. CUSPs were highlighted by the Scottish Funding Council in 2012 as a model of good practice.

139 GCU INTO is a joint venture between INTO University Partnerships and the University that provides foundation certificate/diploma/graduate diploma programmes and English language tuition to international students intending to progress to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. There are further plans to develop a partnership with INTO and GCU London and establish a Joint Academic Management Board, reporting to APC, to oversee the provision. The ELIR team heard from senior staff that there are plans to carry out an INTO Thematic Review.

140 The University is wholly responsible for the assurance of the integrity of its academic awards, the maintenance of standards and the quality of the students' learning experience for all programmes delivered at international partner institutions. Quality assurance procedures are set out in the revised QEAH. This is also reiterated in Assessment Regulations, through the use of external examiners and included in each memorandum of agreement.

141 The oversight of quality assurance, enhancement and approval of partnership and collaborative arrangements is undertaken by the International Committee and Academic Policy Committee on behalf of Senate. The level and scope of oversight is dependent on the nature of the partnership and/or collaborative arrangement. The Executive Board may also be involved in the decision and approval processes.

142 The approach to monitoring collaborative arrangements, such as the CCE Oman, is set out in the Liaison Handbook with clear roles and regulations for supporting quality assurance including expectations of CCE and the University. The module content from programmes delivered at CCE is from the University and has the same learning outcomes which have been contextualised for Oman. Marking schemes for the University and CCE assessments are checked for comparability. CCE external examiner reports form part of CCE's annual monitoring reports and are considered at the GCU School Programme Board. School programme teams are responsible for monitoring the academic standards of collaborative provision through the programme boards.

143 As GCU London and GCU New York are branch campuses, quality assurance structures from GCU Glasgow campus are replicated. The host Programme Board at the Glasgow campus oversees the student experience at the satellite campuses. Institutional oversight of the GCU London campus is through the London Campus Board which currently

reports to the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee of the Academic Policy Committee. Arrangements will change when the London campus becomes the fourth school in the University structure. When the GCU New York campus is fully operational it will be managed in the same way that GCU London currently operates, before GCU London becomes another school in its own right. Both satellite campuses have a Dean who reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

144 The DGQE works with schools in the development, approval and monitoring of collaborative provision, and partnership approvals and agreements. The key stages for selecting a partner are set out in the QEAH. The DGQE also maintains the University Register of Collaborative Activity and holds central records of agreements. A single database of all partnerships is being developed.

145 An internal review of international partnerships was conducted in 2012-13 following the launch of the Internationalisation Strategy 2012-15, as well as an audit by PricewaterhouseCoopers. A number of recommendations emerged from both the internal review and the audit which were implemented in 2014-15. These recommendations included the need to ensure that the QEAH processes for partnership and collaborative arrangements were consistently followed; to ensure that there was clear oversight of international partnership development at institutional level; to ensure that the collaborative register reflected all activity; and ongoing monitoring of collaborative partnerships to assess whether planned benefits had been achieved.

146 In January 2015, a follow up to the PricewaterhouseCoopers audit report was carried out by Ernst and Young. This confirmed that all four issues highlighted in the earlier report had been addressed. An International Partnerships Office (IPO) was established in May 2014 and plays a key role in international partnership development, negotiation and relationship management, and contributes to oversight activity. The IPO has developed an International Partnership Proposal template to set clear criteria for establishing international partnerships and a Partnership Engagement Plan template to support the monitoring of collaborative activities.

147 The University notes that its approach to enhancing the student learning experience within collaborative agreements centres on two key elements: the selection of collaborative partners and adherence to the principles of *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code. The University emphasised that the student experience, whether at home or abroad, on campus or in college, is equitable.

148 The University recognises that, while the student experience needs to be equitable, it also needs to be tailored to the context of the student cohort, wherever located. While all aspects of curriculum design and delivery are implemented in accordance with the QEAH, the local context needs to be taken into account. The University aims to enhance the learning experience of students on its London campus through building networks with the London-based fashion industry.

149 The University is aware of challenges in the delivery of provision at its GCU London campus, such as space issues associated with increased intake; limited opportunities for face-to-face student interaction with fly-in faculty; and the need to provide more support services such as careers advice. The ELIR team was informed that plans are in place to address these issues, especially as the intention is for GCU London to become the fourth University school with the provision of undergraduate programmes.

150 According to the Liaison Handbooks, responsibility for quality enhancement lies with the collaborative partner and the Host School. In the case of CCE Oman, the partner is expected to develop a Programme Enhancement Plan as a result of Annual Programme Analysis for consideration by the School Board.

151 The ELIR team was informed that staff from the Glasgow-based School of Engineering and the Built Environment had recently been to CCE Oman to deliver workshops on the SfL and SEF. The University also undertook an Enhancement-led Internal Review at CCE Oman in November 2014, the report of which is to be discussed at the LTSC in April 2015. The findings highlight features of the enhanced student learning experience in Oman, such as the use of guest lectures, and encourage further staff exchange opportunities between GCU and CCE staff.

152 For its visits to South Africa to deliver the BSc in Railway Operations Management, the University has included Academic Development Tutors to support induction and plans to have Tutors involved to support the enhancement of the student learning experience. While students in South Africa have access to digital library resources, there are plans to look at developing a platform based on mobile technology.

153 The University cites partnership working with INTO as an example of the approach it takes to enhancing the student experience; the responsibility for the delivery of a high quality student experience is shared between the University and INTO. The University's modules provide the basis for the pathway programmes and subject-specific teaching is carried out by associate lecturers approved by LTSC. The University's professional support staff work in close partnership with INTO colleagues to ensure that students are prepared to study in the University environment.

154 The ELIR team was informed by staff charged with college collaboration enhancement that the University was successfully implementing the Scottish Funding Council initiative to provide college students with GCU associate student status.

155 The University demonstrates an effective approach to the management of collaborative activity through having formal academic programme collaborative arrangements which are subject to periodic approval and review, and arrangements which are embedded within quality enhancement and assurance procedures. An example of this is the recent ELISR carried out at CCE Oman which included external panel members. Draft Strategy 2020 highlights the University's intention to extend its global reach and impact and its reflective approach to monitoring its activities in this area provides a solid basis for this expansion.

156 The International Partnerships Office provides support for emerging collaborations and, once approved, the ongoing relationship management. The Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement is responsible for the ongoing quality assurance and enhancement of the collaborative programmes. All strategic partnerships leading to an award of the University are underpinned with a Liaison Handbook setting out the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

157 The ELIR team concurs with the University's recognition of its strengths such as the successful collaboration with CCE Oman, the growth and quality of articulation partnerships with colleges across Scotland, Strategic Partnership Boards with the college sector, College University Subject Partnerships (CUSPs), the development of the Joint Venture Partnership with INTO, and the development and establishment of satellite campuses in London and New York. The success of the work with GCU INTO is demonstrated through the high learner satisfaction levels, specifically evidenced by a 99 per cent student satisfaction with learning recorded in the 2012 International Student Barometer survey.

158 The University has been proactive in monitoring risk with regard to its collaborative activity and the use of external consultants has reflected this. The University has responded effectively to recommendations made in the resulting reports.

159 The University is aware of challenges in the delivery of provision at its London campus. It has also recognised the need to capture the student voice in collaborative activity. While

structures, such as the Student Staff Consultative Group are replicated in GCU London and CCE Oman, it is not clear how student feedback from off-campus collaborative activity is incorporated into the University's enhancement agenda or how feedback from students involved in collaborative activity is responded to. As the University implements its Strategy 2020, which aims to harness its campuses and educational activities overseas, it is encouraged to provide opportunities for these students to engage fully with GCU Glasgow.

Glasgow School of Art

32 The programme of student exchanges, involving a wide range of international partner institutions, is promoted effectively by GSA and is an integral part of the GSA student experience. Students from all undergraduate programmes and selected postgraduate programmes are eligible to take part in an exchange. Students noted that clear and accessible information about the opportunity to undertake a student exchange was embedded in GSA processes from interview onwards. They also commented positively on the high number of placement institutions to choose from. Incoming Exchange students have access to all support services at GSA during their study period, as well as access to the VLE.

37 In order to address this GSA is currently working collaboratively with Buckinghamshire New University on a Higher Education Academy (HEA) funded project, An Anatomy of Employability: articulating graduate capabilities for the creative arts. Initial outcomes from the project include a curriculum map enabling a comparison of approaches to the integration of employability skills in the curriculum across GSA. The final outputs from the project will be delivered during 2014, and it is envisaged that the project outcomes will lead to the articulation of a GSA employability strategy.

67 GSA has formal relationships with a number of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs): the BArch and DipArch are accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Architects Registration Board, and the BEng/MEng Product Design Engineering are accredited by the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and the Institute of Engineering Designers. PSRB accreditation reports are taken into consideration in validation events and as part of PMAR and Periodic Review.

86 Strategic oversight of collaborative activity is provided by GSA's Executive Group. All proposed collaborative partnerships are assessed in terms of their strategic fit, risk assessment and formal due diligence. Proposals require submission of a business case and the outline of an academic rationale for scrutiny by the Executive Group, while a more detailed academic rationale is considered by Boards of Studies and Academic Council. In addition the Board of Governors will consider academic proposals that have strategic, legal, and financial or governance implications.

87 GSA is an accredited institution of the University of Glasgow and also works in partnership with Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), which is an existing partner of the University of Glasgow. The SIT partnership involves the delivery of two GSA programmes in Singapore: the BA (Hons) Communication Design and the BA (Hons) Interior Design. Students enter the third year of one of these programmes through an advance standing articulation agreement between GSA and SIT. The first student intake to these programmes was in the 2012-13 academic year.

88 GSA has effective arrangements in place for securing the standards of its collaborative provision.

89 The relationship with the University of Glasgow is governed by a memorandum of agreement which is scheduled for review during 2014-15, and the partnership with Singapore Institute of Technology is governed by a Collaboration Agreement which is

scheduled for review in 2016-17. Collaborative provision is monitored through GSA's quality assurance system, including annual monitoring and periodic review processes as well as the external examiner system, to ensure a comparable student experience.

90 The SIT partnership is managed in Singapore by GSA's Director of GSA in Singapore and is overseen by the School of Design in Glasgow. In addition, an operations committee is held biannually between SIT and GSA. Curriculum design and quality assurance processes are owned and undertaken by GSA, and Academic Council makes external examiner recommendations to the University of Glasgow, which is responsible for making appointments. The validating institution and degree awarding body is the University of Glasgow.

91 GSA's partnership with SIT is effectively managed. There is a close working relationship between the two institutions, which includes regular visits from Glasgow-based lecturers to Singapore and vice versa. This arrangement helps to secure effective communication between GSA and SIT, ensuring that any issues are managed promptly and effectively, and also supports the enhancement of the student experience on GSA programmes delivered at SIT.

92 GSA runs an Overseas Immersion Programme in Glasgow which provides an opportunity for staff and students from both Glasgow and Singapore to work together collaboratively on a wide range of teaching, learning and assessment activities and to share good practice. The programme involves Singapore-based students spending three weeks in Glasgow and provides a comprehensive introduction to GSA's culture and practices.

93 GSA has an effective approach to the management of its collaborative activity. The revised Collaborative Provision Policy, which was recently developed at the time of the ELIR, has been widely consulted on and provides an effective framework for GSA to pursue its strategic intention to grow its international partnership activity.

[University of Glasgow](#)

76 The University has four well-established UK-based validation arrangements with Glasgow School of Art, Scotland's Rural College, the Edinburgh Theological Seminary and Christie's Education, as well as a range of other collaborative agreements, and does not intend to extend validated provision beyond the existing four UK partners.

77 The development of collaborative provision is a significant aspect of the University's internationalisation strategy and the University has a number of overseas partnerships. The University has a policy of not entering into franchise or validation agreements with overseas partners, instead the focus for collaboration with overseas institutions will be on the delivery of transnational education with a small number of international partners. The University already has partnerships with Singapore Institute of Technology, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, and Majan University College, Oman. The University is planning to grow student numbers on transnational education programmes from 350 in 2012-13 to 1,560 in 2018-19.

78 The University has an effective approach to securing the academic standards of collaborative provision.

79 Collaborative provision is governed by the University's Framework for Academic Collaboration and the Code of Practice for Validated Provision. Academic standards are set and monitored through the University's quality assurance systems. Collaborative programmes are normally overseen by a joint management board, which has a standard remit and composition, and which is responsible for reporting annually through the relevant

College Learning and Teaching Committee to the Academic Standards Committee. This approach utilises the University's embedded quality assurance processes but also provides specific oversight for particular collaborative arrangements.

80 In the context of planned growth, the University has reviewed its approach to the management of collaborative provision and is in the process of taking forward the review recommendations which include a need to strengthen guidance for academic and support staff regarding the risk assessment, due diligence and Court approval of collaborative provision.

81 The University Learning and Teaching Strategy identifies, as part of its aim to deliver an excellent student experience, an objective to promote student engagement with learning and enhance student success. The University recognises that this commitment applies equally to students studying on collaborative programmes as it does to those studying at the home campus.

82 The Overseas Immersion Programme is an effective mechanism for enhancing the learning experience of international students on collaborative programmes. It is a four-week intensive programme with academic and cultural elements, delivered in Glasgow, which provides opportunities for Singapore-based students to work with academic staff on a project-based assignment. Students who met the ELIR team were positive about their experience of the programme, commenting that it enabled them to feel part of the University community and engage with their programme of study.

83 The University has an effective approach to the management of its collaborative activity.

[Heriot-Watt University](#)

1 Heriot-Watt University (the University) was awarded University status in 1966; its vision is to be world-leading within all of its specialist areas of science, engineering, technology and business. It has around 32,000 students studying in disciplines intended to prepare students for professional practice in science, engineering, the built environment, computer science, business, management, languages, and textiles and design. Academic provision is undertaken across five campuses: three in Scotland and two overseas in Dubai and Malaysia, which were set up in 2005 and 2012 respectively. West London College has been a partner since 1993 and an Associate Campus since 2012, the University being its sole academic partner for degree-level provision.

2 A distinctive feature of the University's provision is the large number of students enrolled on programmes through the University's Approved Learning Partners (ALPs) and through distance learning. ALPs, of which the University has approximately 50, are partnerships in which the University retains responsibility for curricula, learning outcomes, assessment, awards and all quality assurance matters, with the partner being responsible for providing local support and teaching for specific Heriot-Watt University programmes of study. In 2013-14 the total number of University students studying with ALPs was around 11,200; the University also registered around 8,000 independent distance learners. Of the total student population (all modes of study and locations), almost two-thirds of students are non-UK based. As a result, the University considers itself to be Scotland's 'international university'.

3 The establishment of the Malaysia campus since the last ELIR is a significant development. In 2013-14, 106 students registered for postgraduate programmes and 172 enrolled on the foundation programme. The opening of a purpose-built campus building in September 2014 coincided with the launch of undergraduate programmes.

4 The University's academic structure is based around seven schools: the School of Life Sciences; the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences; the School of Management and

Languages; the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society; the School of Textiles and Design; the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences; and Edinburgh Business School (EBS). Apart from EBS, which has postgraduate provision only, the schools offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The school structure has undergone a recent change, when the School of the Built Environment and the Institute of Petroleum Engineering merged to become the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society.

5 The University has considered in depth its approach to the breadth of study options and locations it offers, resulting in articulation of the underlying principle: 'identical academic standards; diversity of learning experiences' and the development of a Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes (the Multi-Code) (see paragraphs 6, 7, 15, 29, 85, 96, 111, 114 and 120). Implementation of the Multi-Code allows for greater accessibility to University programmes and flexibility in the provision of learning opportunities, allowing students to switch easily between different modes of study and location depending on their programme and their needs and circumstances.

6 The key tenets of the Multi-Code are: that programmes must have identical learning outcomes and award/programme titles across all locations and modes of study; that, in addition, undergraduate programmes must have, at each stage, identical outcomes, core knowledge, skills and competencies; that programmes must contain the same mandatory courses; and that optional courses can be contextualised for local requirements. The Multi-Code provides operational guidance to support the University's strategic aims.

7 In 2014, the University introduced a common academic management structure for schools across all UK and overseas campuses, with a view to creating better alignment across campuses and to facilitate more effective management of committee business. The structure integrates the management of activities by schools across all locations. The University had recognised that operating location-based committees, systems and processes was not sustainable in terms of managing the academic aspects of multi-campus provision, for example, in managing the delivery of programmes in different locations and time-zones, and this was a key driver for change. The new multi-campus academic management structure is intended to underpin the Multi-Code, support quality assurance and enhancement, and facilitate academic alignment across campuses. Although this is a relatively new development, the ELIR team heard positive comments from staff about benefits that were already being realised, for example, better communication between staff across campus locations.

13 The ELIR team considered that the University is effectively implementing a clear strategic vision to become a genuinely international institution. It has made significant progress in integrating its UK and overseas activities to achieve its objective of operating effectively as one institution worldwide, where students can access University study flexibly through a range of modes of study in multiple locations. Significant time and effort has been taken to align institutional strategies and processes to support strategic aims.

14 The use of key performance indicators (KPIs) provides timely data to inform management and monitor progress of strategic objectives. The new academic management structure, although very recent, is working effectively to develop and monitor the implementation of institutional strategies. Staff who met the ELIR team were clear about the strategic direction of the University and were able to speak positively about the implementation and impact of the objectives.

15 The ELIR team learned that the Multi-Code is being implemented across all schools and campuses to support the principle of 'identical academic standards; diversity of learning

experiences'. The principle is widely understood by staff and students, who consider themselves to be part of an international university.

16 The University's global ethos is embedded in the institutional culture and operational processes; it is therefore recognised as part of everyday practice by staff and students. There is a genuine and considered approach to creating an international experience for all students and staff. Both the culture of internationalisation and the management of academic standards across delivery modes and locations were considered to be areas of positive practice by the ELIR team.

17 The Learning and Teaching Strategy is effectively promoted throughout the University. The ELIR team found evidence in meetings with staff from academic and professional services areas, and in operational learning and teaching plans, that staff understand the objectives of the Strategy and its enablers, and have taken ownership for its implementation (see paragraphs 36, 52, 53, 63, 67 and 72). There was evidence from the ELIR case study, and from meetings during the ELIR, that development of the Strategy had been a consultative and collaborative process, and that the University had taken a considered approach to ensure staff and student engagement with, and ownership of, the strategy. This approach was viewed as being an area of positive practice by the ELIR team.

23 The University has a significant number of independent distance learning students. Of the 7,900 students enrolled as independent distance learners in 2013-14, 95 per cent were postgraduate taught students. The majority of these students study through the EBS; 46 per cent of the School's students are independent distance learners. Discussion during the ELIR also highlighted circumstances within the EBS where independent distance learners could purchase additional value-added tuition support from an ALP.

24 The University's International Strategy sets out plans to double the scale of its international activities by 2018 and grow the international student population by around 40 per cent, by increasing student numbers in Dubai and Malaysia; expanding existing successful collaborative partnerships; and developing multi-programme partnerships.

28 A distinctive and significant feature of the University's approach is the wide range of opportunities to suit the needs of a diverse student population. The University has developed strategy, structures and policies to manage this complexity, in particular the new academic management structure (see paragraph 7) and the Multi-Code. The flexible provision of learning opportunities and the management of academic standards across delivery modes and locations represent positive practice.

29 The University recognises and supports the diversity of its student body. There is a well-developed internationalisation mission outlined in the University's Strategic Plan and International Strategy. The University has targets to increase international student numbers (see paragraph 24), strengthen the ALP network, and facilitate student and staff mobility opportunities. As part of these ambitions, it has developed a policy on inter-campus exchange that demonstrates its commitment to facilitating exchange between campuses through the alignment of curricula and learning outcomes. The policy is further underpinned by the principles set out in the Multi-Code; because programmes are run in multiple locations through multiple modes of study, this can facilitate easy switching between different modes of study and location depending on the programme, and on students' needs and circumstances. In 2013-14 there were 179 student transfers (the majority from Dubai to Edinburgh), as well as students moving from independent learning to a campus location, or to a partner of the University. Transfers also occur within the UK, for example, from the Scottish Borders campus to Edinburgh (104 transfers in 2013-14).

30 Students who met the ELIR team were aware of plans to increase opportunities for inter-campus mobility and were enthusiastic about the resultant possibilities. The University is

considering how to improve information and advice to students to promote what it describes as, 'the Heriot-Watt Global Student Programme' covering all aspects of mobility, including ERASMUS (the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students). There have been challenges identified with the communication of mobility opportunities and in encouraging students based in Scotland to undertake transfers and placements. However, the University is progressing with plans to address these issues. As it does, there would be benefit in ensuring that communication reaches all students regardless of location of study.

38 The Student Union does not currently work with students in ALPs or independent distance learners. Given the significant numbers of students in these categories, the University is asked to progress with the plans outlined in its Reflective Analysis to create representative structures for these students, building on the effective representation arrangements evident in the Edinburgh and Dubai campuses and emerging in Malaysia.

39 The University is implementing a Student Survey Framework to manage more effectively the process of gathering, evaluating and responding to student feedback (see also paragraphs 115 and 129). This will be managed centrally through the Student Survey Management Group. The ELIR team noted that the University uses student feedback to inform improvements to learning and teaching and the overall student experience. The team considered that the Student Survey Framework would strengthen these processes and help the University to consider more fully the feedback it gathers from students studying in different locations and through different modes of study.

40 The University has various mechanisms for induction of new students, including first year students, advanced entry students, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students. The induction arrangements are mostly delivered centrally. The University has recently redeveloped induction for advanced entry students, to address their needs more fully, and created two new posts to support recruitment, transition and induction for students admitted through widening participation routes. During the ELIR, the team heard about postgraduate research students who had missed the University's formal induction programme, having joined the University in the middle of the academic year. The University is asked to ensure that all postgraduate research students receive effective and consistent induction irrespective of when and where they commence their studies.

51 The first destination statistics for the University's UK-based students are very positive. Higher Education Statistics Agency Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) statistics from 2012-13 indicate that 93.4 per cent of graduates were either working or in further study six months after graduation, and that 75.2 per cent of those were in graduate level employment (compared to the UK average of 69.5 per cent and the upper quartile of 74.5 per cent). This data does not include international campuses. However, the University conducts its own survey to track graduate destinations that follows the DLHE format. The current employment rate (January 2014) for Dubai campus graduates is 78.8 per cent, and the University has seen a 6.4 per cent raise from the previous year. The Careers Service is working to develop improved consistency of service to students across all locations, including those studying with ALPs.

66 Staff training and development is undertaken in a variety of ways and organised by a number of units. The Human Resources Development Directorate delivers courses related to professional and leadership development and coaching across the University, including providing a number of courses at the Dubai and Malaysia campuses. An online resource has also been developed to support new managers based in all campus locations.

69 Current support for staff employed in ALPs is primarily school-based, informed by ALP visit reports and quality assurance reporting. The University Centre for Academic Leadership

and Development also provides some partner/programme specific development sessions for staff at partner organisations, for example, Baku Higher Oil School. In some cases, ALP Approved Tutors have visited the Scottish campuses to observe teaching or to participate in the programme with a view to teaching aspects of the programme in future cycles.

70 A Professional Development Programme (known as GlobalPD and comprising two core courses) has been piloted for Approved Tutors at the University's ALPs since the time of the 2011 ELIR, when the University was asked to implement a planned staff development programme for all staff in ALPs. The programme has been run as a small scale pilot with particular ALPs and tutors who support independent distance learners. The programme was delivered online via the University VLE. In discussions during the current ELIR, University Centre for Academic Leadership and Development staff, along with school staff, explained that a Phase 3 GlobalPD pilot was about to commence, informed by systematic evaluation of the earlier phases. It was explained that this phase would focus on work with individual ALPs and one school, and that future extension of the programme would be dependent on schools engaging with and rolling-out the programme themselves. The partners would also need to secure additional resources for this to happen. The University is encouraged to monitor and review the progress of the pilot, and the related engagement of school staff, to ensure that the outcomes of the pilot are disseminated to all ALP staff.

78 To facilitate the management of academic standards across its worldwide provision and study modes, in 2014 the University introduced a common academic management structure, including associated committees and terms of reference across all schools and campuses. The structure establishes responsibilities for programme approval, monitoring and review at school-level based around School Studies Committees, which are chaired by school Directors of Academic Quality. The structure is intended to support assurance and enhancement and to integrate the management of academic activities by schools across locations. To reinforce this common structure, the University has introduced Academic Councils at the Dubai and Malaysia campuses, and in West London College. Although these arrangements were too recent for the ELIR team to comment on their effectiveness, it was clear that the Councils have the potential to provide a further mechanism whereby campuses can report to the University Senate on institutional academic matters.

71 The University recognises that current staff resources in the University Centre for Academic Leadership and Development are stretched, and that additional resource will be required, including to support development of pedagogy for technologies and global provision of academic staff development.

94 The 2011 ELIR report asked the University to consider identifying the location of study in the certificates and transcripts awarded to students studying with ALPs. The University has debated this issue at length, particularly in view of the Quality Code indicator that states that such information should be identified on certificates and transcripts. In the most recent discussion of the issue at the Quality and Standards Committee it was recommended that location of study was included, but this proposal was not approved by the Senate. The Senate has determined that degree awards should not be differentiated by location or mode of study, and, as a result, this information is not recorded on the degree award certificates or student transcripts. During the ELIR visit, the University emphasised that, because processes are in place to ensure that academic standards are identical across all variants of a programme, the location and mode of study are not relevant to understanding the level and nature of the knowledge and skills acquired by students. Additionally, senior staff considered that inclusion of this information could be seen to undermine the University's principle of making the same award for successful completion of a programme, irrespective of mode or location of study. The ELIR team noted that EBS transcripts do record the language of study, as these are the only programmes that are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, but this information is not recorded on the degree certificates.

95 While the ELIR team recognised that this has been debated previously, the University is asked to reconsider its decision so that the name of partner organisations and location of study are recorded on student award certificates or transcripts for those students studying with an ALP. In particular, the University is encouraged to consider the impact of its current policy on the clarity and transparency of information provided to stakeholders (see also paragraphs 127 and 134).

96 The University has effective arrangements for securing academic standards. The University's principle of identical academic standards being secured across all variants of a programme is underpinned by the Multi-Code and through its Chief External Examiner system. The ELIR team considered that these arrangements represent positive practice.

97 There are areas where arrangements could be further enhanced, including: strengthening arrangements for externality in the programme design and approval processes; taking further steps to make external examiner reports more accessible to students; and including the location of study on degree award certificates or transcripts for students studying with ALPs.

117 The University has an effective strategic approach to managing its collaborative activity.

118 The University has a large number of students enrolled via collaborative activities, the most extensive of these being through ALPs, with approximately 11,200 students enrolled in 2013-14 with around 50 partner institutions.

119 As well as depth (in terms of student numbers), the University has a breadth of collaborative activity, namely: articulation partnerships with 20 local and overseas further education colleges; ALPs; an Associate Campus (West London College); and around 30 collaborative partnerships with UK, European and international higher education institutions to offer joint and dual awards. This depth and breadth of provision provides opportunities for students to access a range of learning opportunities in terms of location and mode of study.

120 The University's International Strategy sets out its plans for the development of collaborative activity. Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by the International Strategy Board, which approves new collaborative activities in schools. The development and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy, and the Multi-Code, support the University's collaborative activities. There is clear evidence of the Strategy and the Multi-Code being embedded in the University's quality arrangements and supporting the development of institutional culture.

121 University policies relating to learning and teaching also apply to ALPs, except policies relating to staff management, which do not apply as there is local management of staff in the ALPs. The University remains responsible for the academic programme delivered by ALPs, including academic content, assessment and standards. The ALP is responsible for providing local facilities and learning resources, which can include teaching staff and administrative functions. Students enrolled via ALPs (and the Associate Campus, West London College) are designated as Heriot-Watt University students and, depending on individual partnership agreements, are usually able to access the majority of Heriot-Watt University learning and support resources (for example the VLE) that are available to on-campus students.

122 The ELIR team met senior management and academic staff who were enthusiastic about the benefits that existing and proposed collaborative partnerships had for the University. The Student Union also considered collaborative partnerships to be beneficial, but it was not clear that all students were able to articulate the benefits and, in some cases, students believed partnerships had a negative impact on campus-based activities, for example, the timing of exams being altered to accommodate a partner. There would be

value in the University considering how it could promote better understanding amongst campus-based students of the benefits brought by partnership arrangements.

123 The University has effective arrangements in place to secure the academic standards of collaborative provision. The University maintains responsibility for the academic standards of all awards and qualifications granted, irrespective of mode or location.

124 There are clearly defined mechanisms for approving partnership arrangements. The processes involved take appropriate account of risk and include both academic approval and business approval procedures. The International Strategy Board ensures that new partnership arrangements are in accordance with the University's strategic objectives.

125 The monitoring of quality and academic standards provided by ALPs and at the University's Associate Campus is effective. The University employs a diverse set of review and audit arrangements to ensure quality and review risks (see paragraphs 99-106, which set these out at length). The University also has appropriate arrangements to ensure that feedback obtained is duly considered and acted upon as appropriate. Monitoring of academic standards and the quality of experience provided in articulation agreements and with joint collaborative partners is effective. Monitoring of this activity is managed through the Partner Annual Monitoring and Review, and School-level Review and Enhancement Report processes (see paragraphs 100, 101 and 104).

126 The ELIR team noted strong evidence of active engagement of University staff with partner institutions. Engagement was evident at a number of different staff levels and, in particular, through school Directors of Learning and Teaching, and Directors of Academic Quality, whose complementary roles ensure the maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of learning and teaching.

127 As outlined in paragraphs 94-95, the ELIR team identified an area for development around the recording of location of study on degree certificates and transcripts for students studying with ALPs.

128 The University has effective arrangements for enhancing the student learning experience on its collaborative programmes.

129 Student feedback is routinely obtained from ALPs and collaborative partners in the same way as for all registered students using the University's standard academic feedback mechanisms. The data as collected can be disaggregated to indicate views from ALP and collaborative partnership students. In addition, the views of students engaged in collaborative activities are also explicitly sought. Student feedback is adequately managed Enhancement-led Institutional Review of Heriot-Watt University and considered through school and University level processes, including the new Student Survey Framework.

130 The University operates a highly effective student representative network on its physical campus locations. This network has yet to be replicated for students registered via collaborative programmes or independent distance learners (see also paragraphs 38 and 55).

131 The University ensures that all students, including those studying through collaborative provision, have access to research-informed teaching and academic staff. Research-led teaching is made available through ensuring that: curriculum design and development is undertaken by research active staff; most course leaders are research active; and, where possible, ALP students have some level of interaction with a course leader or other staff member. Where there are variations in provision between collaborative partnership delivery and other modes of delivery, these are clearly documented and periodically reviewed.

132 Current support for staff employed in ALPs is primarily school-based, informed by ALP visit reports and quality assurance reporting, and in some instances provided by the University Centre for Academic Leadership and Development (see paragraph 69). Training for staff within the ALPs is also provided through the pilot programme, GlobalPD (see paragraph 70). The ELIR team considered the pilot programme to be a positive initiative and would encourage the University when reviewing the pilot outcomes to consider how the programme could have the greatest impact on the student experience in ALPs and across all schools.

133 The University has effective policies, processes and procedures in place to ensure that the academic standards are secured and the student experience is enhanced in its collaborative activities. The University has effective approaches for the approval and monitoring of collaborative activity, particularly in terms of the ALP partnership network.

134 The University could strengthen its approach to the management of collaborative activity by: establishing a student representation system for students studying with ALPs and for independent distance learners; ensuring appropriate access to learning resources where there is disparity of provision due to location; recording the location of study on degree certificates and transcripts for students studying with ALPs; and considering how to gain the most value for staff in ALPs from the outcomes of Phase 3 of the GlobalPD pilot.

[University of the Highlands and Islands](#)

19 The University has a small number of international students across all levels of study, which has seen a small overall decrease in recent years. While UHI identified its intention to increase international student numbers, it is anticipated that these will largely be limited to distance learning programmes.

114 The handbooks and materials that support the University's quality processes are clear and comprehensive. Key documents that support the University in ensuring that its approach to securing academic standards is well-informed and applied consistently include the AQSR (see paragraphs 108 & 125), the Postgraduate Code of Practice for Students and Supervisors, the Guide to External Examiners (see paragraphs 119 & 120) and the Collaborations Handbook (see paragraph 148). Although the format of the ASQR will, in future, be changed (see paragraph 108), it is comprehensive, clear and readily accessible to staff and was a key reference document for all involved in the University's quality assurance arrangements. The Postgraduate Code of Practice was familiar to postgraduate research students and supervisors, and includes succinct and clear explanations, arrangements and guidelines on such matters as postgraduate admissions, registrations, support, university systems, supervision, progression, thesis submission, appeals and complaints. This Code and the Postgraduate Research Regulations together provide a comprehensive, easily understood and accessible reference source for students and staff. The Guide to External Examiners is an equally clear and comprehensive handbook providing regulations and guidance on the roles of external examiners, the University's arrangements for their nomination and deployment, and the functions of various University committees for considering examiner reports and responses.

146 While UHI does not have an explicit collaborative strategy, collaboration is a core value of the University and applies to both internal and external partnerships and ways of working. The direction for the development of collaborative partnerships is articulated through the University's key strategic themes of student recruitment, widening access, internationalisation and reputation building, and proposals for collaborative activities are required to demonstrate, initially at faculty level, how they align with these strategic themes. The twenty-one academic collaborative partnerships cited in the Collaborative Register, including the arrangement for the award of research degrees by the University of Aberdeen,

are modest in volume, but they represent a wide variety of relationships. These include articulation within Scotland and internationally, joint delivery of degree programmes with institutions in Scotland and China, module contributions to degrees awarded elsewhere, partnerships with professional organisations (eg the Professional Golfers Association) and partnerships with universities similar to UHI in terms of mission, geography and pedagogy, such as the Federation University, Australia (with whom UHI is developing joint online Masters programmes). The ELIR team learned that, given the University's intention to develop its UK and international partnerships, it is intending to prepare strategies for collaboration and internationalisation and has commenced preparatory thinking on these.

147 UHI described its approach to collaborative activity as selective and cautious. In 2014-15, UHI had 240 students registered on its collaborative programmes, with the Hunan Institute of Engineering (HIE) in China representing over 90 percent of all the University's students on collaborative programmes. Most of the University's other partnerships are articulation or student exchange arrangements. The University is not currently engaged with franchising or validating activities, although it is keeping this under review.

148 The arrangements for the development and oversight of collaborative activity are explained in the second edition of the Collaborations Handbook, approved in August 2013 by the External Partnerships Steering Committee (EPSC), which reports to Academic Council (AC). This comprehensive Handbook, which is mapped against Chapter B10 of the Quality Code, sets out the principles and procedures associated with the proposal, approval and monitoring of collaborative partnerships. It includes information on assessment, examinations and the roles of external examiners, staff and student representation and feedback, publicity and marketing, and academic misconduct, appeals and complaints. The Handbook is another example of a high quality document, offering clear guidance and clarification of responsibilities to staff involved with UHI's collaborative provision (see paragraphs 114 & 125).

149 EPSC, chaired by the Deputy Principal since 2014, advises AC on all aspects of external collaborative partnerships and provision within the UK and overseas, excluding research-focused collaborations. EPSC meets at least four times per year (normally every six to eight weeks) and its membership includes the deans, senior representatives of the APs with significant collaborative activities, and UHI World (the University's prime marketing arm for international promotion and student recruitment). EPSC's main business normally includes approval to progress to the next stage of initial collaborative proposals, due diligence reports, Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), and Collaboration (MoC), articulation agreements and exchange/study abroad proposals. EPSC also considers revised Memoranda and proposed changes to collaborative relationships. Notwithstanding the relatively modest collaborative partnerships, EPSC papers reflect a large number of diverse proposals with different types of institutions. Some of these build on the expertise of APs with a tradition of collaborative activities, for example Inverness College UHI and Perth College UHI (particularly for study abroad programmes).

150 Once EPSC has approved in principle proposals to progress to the next stage, the University undertakes due diligence procedures of appropriate proportionality dependent on the nature of the partnership and the type of activity being proposed. Due diligence reports typically provide a background introduction to the institution and the area proposed, a summary of any preliminary interactions and visits to/by the potential partners, and a summary of the proposal. The Collaborative Handbook provides a detailed due diligence template including explicit reference to the Quality Code. Reports on international institutions require information on the political, ethical, cultural and higher education environment within which the partner will be operating.

151 EPSC approval of the due diligence report leads to the signing of a formal non-binding MoU, based on a standard UHI proforma, and approval to develop specific proposals. EPSC considers formal draft MoCs as part of the formal approval process. While these are properly tailored to the particular development under consideration, the MoCs for both international (eg with Hunan Institute of Engineering, China) and UK (eg with Glasgow Kelvin College) partnerships contain sections on the overall scope of the agreement; programme structure and duration of study; programme responsibilities; admissions; data returns; tuition and staffing arrangements; learning resources and student support; programme management and quality assurance and enhancement arrangements; assessment and examination boards; and termination. There are annexes on financial and administrative arrangements, the latter outlining the programme structure, named responsibilities, descriptions of roles and the responsibilities of key post holders. The University also has formal templates for home and overseas articulation agreements.

152 Student exchanges and study abroad opportunities are predominantly in the USA and Canada at centres providing a 'good match' with the University's mission and ethos. The study abroad exchange agreements require to satisfy EPSC on the nature of the agreement, selection and admissions, programme and assessment, student fees and expenses, financial arrangements, communications and publicity. Study abroad requires the approval of the dean or nominee; credit gained may count towards the programme, though not normally towards the final level of the award.

153 UHI's arrangements for securing the academic standards of its collaborative provision meet sector expectations. Following the partnership approval processes, the University applies the same quality assurance framework for collaborative provision as it has in place for awards delivered exclusively by UHI. However, given the added risk involved in collaboration with new partners, the University requires additional reports to EPSC after the first three and six months of initial programme delivery in addition to its usual planning and approval arrangements. These very comprehensive reports are submitted for approval to the relevant faculty board of studies and EPSC.

154 External examiners are appointed to UHI programmes irrespective of the delivery location and assessment boards receive data based on the programme as a whole. Assessment boards and programme committees are able to view data disaggregated by geographical cohorts, enabling comparisons of student performance at different locations and pointing to differential interventions as necessary, which is positive.

155 The University has no overall additional arrangements for enhancing the learning experience of students studying with partner institutions because its routine arrangements apply to all of its students wherever they are based. This means that enhancement initiatives apply in principle equally to collaborative programmes. The structure of UHI itself ensures that staff are accustomed to working with colleagues in a number of different organisations and at a distance, and each collaborative programme appoints a lead person who has day-to-day responsibility for links with the partner. UHI staff visit partners to engage with students and to meet with partner staff for whom UHI makes available online staff development opportunities. Nevertheless, the University takes particular care to ensure that its students on collaborative programmes are introduced to the relationship between UHI and the partner at the outset during induction, for example there are joint inductions for Glasgow Kelvin College and UHI students in Inverness. There are inevitably different student representative arrangements for those learning in partner institutions. The University indicated that course committees and class representatives are organised in a context and forum appropriate to the partnership.

156 The University's arrangements for managing collaborative activity are effective, including detailed and rigorous scrutiny at the approval stage. The requirement of all

partnership proposals to be considered by EPSC on the basis of the detailed completion of a sequence of templates adopted university-wide ensures consistency of approach. Ongoing monitoring and review arrangements mirror those applied to UHI's own programmes, supplemented by additional reporting after the first three and six months of operation. While UHI monitoring reports focus on all programmes wherever they are delivered, it is positive that the University is able to monitor the academic standards of a partner's provision by viewing student performance data disaggregated by location.

157 The University does not currently have an explicit strategy for developing collaborative activity and it is encouraged to progress its intention to introduce one, including articulating priorities for the development of international academic partnerships.

Queen Margaret University

6 The University's overarching Strategic Plan 2012-15 includes discrete strategies for: the Student Experience; Research and Knowledge Exchange; and Internationalisation.

9 The role of the Internationalisation Committee has recently been reviewed with its remit now split between two groups: the International Student Forum and the Collaborations Operations Group, both of which report to the SEC. This adds to the wide remit of the SEC, therefore it is important that the University continues to manage the business of SEC in a manner which allows it to remain focused on strategic matters and to have effective oversight of the internationalisation strategy.

79 For a small institution, the University has a significant number of collaborative partners with nine UK-based and six overseas with the latter largely concentrated in Greece and Singapore; these include validation and franchise arrangements. There has been a rise in overseas enrolments from 998 in 2008-09 to 1,381 in 2011-12. As a result, enrolments in overseas collaborative provision now constitute 21 per cent of the University's total enrolments compared to 17 per cent in 2008-09.

80 Following the 2009 ELIR, a University working group reviewed collaborative practice. Actions resulting from the group's work included clarification of moderation regulations, risk assessment, better communication links with partners and coordination of support for external examiners. Risk assessment templates cover a range of risks including academic, reputational, financial and political. Examples seen by the ELIR team had been carefully compiled but highlighted the difficulty of assessing the political risk where stability at the time of writing can change quickly. For example, minutes of the Joint Board of Studies showed that in Nepal and Pakistan some meetings had to be postponed and, at times, some students could not attend classes. The University revises the risk assessment template annually and the examples given here show the importance of regular monitoring of political risk in particular.

81 Institutional oversight of academic standards in collaborative provision has been the responsibility of school academic boards and the Internationalisation Committee has received summary reports of the annual monitoring of programmes delivered by partners to help determine common themes emerging from partnership programmes. During the Part 2 visit, the ELIR team learned that the Internationalisation Committee was to be discontinued and the summary reports would be considered by the Student Experience Committee. In addition, a new Collaborative Operations Group will monitor collaborative activity. The ELIR team was satisfied that the new arrangements would continue to provide effective oversight of collaborative partnerships.

82 Since the 2009 ELIR, the University has also appointed a Collaborations Development Co-ordinator who reviews, monitors and develops procedures and forms an effective central point of support for collaborative activity. Within schools, at Division level, the Academic Link

Person plays a key operational role for collaborative partnerships. The Academic Links share experience and good practice through the informal Academic Link Forum. The ELIR team learned that, with the restructuring of the Internationalisation Committee, this Forum will take on a more formal role and will become the Collaborations Operations Group in the 2013-14 academic year. The team supports this development, which is likely to provide a recognised channel for communicating positive practice and areas for development to senior institutional committees.

83 To aid staff involved in collaborative provision, quality assurance procedures have been brought together in the collaborations manual. The ELIR team found this to be a comprehensive and carefully structured document that provided staff with clear guidance on facilitating all aspects of collaborative provision. In 2012 the University strengthened the guidance by providing a module co-ordinator handbook specifically for collaborative partners. The guidance addresses some of the small, perennial problems identified by students and external examiners such as critical reading, referencing and plagiarism, and how students access library, IT and web resources.

84 Overall the ELIR team can confirm that there is a rigorous approval procedure that has been applied consistently. Proposals for new overseas collaborative programmes are initially discussed with the Collaborations Development Co-ordinator, Dean or Head of Division. The formal procedure for establishing a new programme involves gaining institutional approval at two stages from the Portfolio Development Group.

85 A Joint Board of Studies is established for each collaborative programme and this has operational responsibility for maintaining the quality of the programme. The joint boards of studies report to the school academic boards which have overall responsibility for quality. Minutes of these boards and the student staff consultative committee meetings, indicate that discussion and progression of quality assurance procedures, matters and actions is thorough and comparable to that of the University's home-based committees.

86 The University expects its partners to appoint student representatives and to operate formal mechanisms for gathering and responding to student feedback such as module evaluation and annual monitoring of the programme. The ELIR team considered documentation relating to two partners, which indicated that student representation and attention to student matters is well established in the collaborative partnerships.

87 Support for partner staff is provided informally through the academic link staff and the CAP will deliver staff development through workshops on the Edinburgh campus or onsite at the partner. Currently, CAP is developing the capacity to provide staff development for partners through a programme of online 'webinars'.

88 To enhance communication, the University has a Partners area on its website and provides a twice yearly partners' newsletter which highlights positive practice across the partnerships, staff development opportunities and learning technology developments at the Edinburgh campus.

89 The University has effective mechanisms for managing collaborative activity and maintaining the quality and academic standards of the provision, as demonstrated by the open and reflective account of collaborative provision provided in the RA. The University has reviewed its collaborative practice against the Quality Code and all collaborative provision documentation also makes reference to the Handbook for Practitioners of the Council of Validating Universities.

90 The University has acted rapidly and appropriately on issues raised in external examiners' reports. Where a partner has not responded sufficiently to these plans the University has instigated closure of the programme.

91 The ongoing enhancement of support for staff, both at the University and in the partners, illustrates much positive practice including the establishment of the Academic Link Forum, the staff development activities of the CAP and the proposed introduction of webinars, the partner area on the website, and the partner newsletter.

[Robert Gordon University](#)

22 In 2014-15, the University had a total student population of 17,198 (headcount), of whom 62 per cent were studying at undergraduate level. Of the 38 per cent postgraduate students, 36 per cent were taught postgraduates and 2 per cent postgraduate research students. The student body has a strong international component with nearly one third of all students coming from outside the UK (1,679 from the EU and 3,787 overseas students). Part-time students made up 41 per cent of the total student population and, of those, 83 per cent were distance learners.

23 The University has seen a positive growth in student numbers, particularly at postgraduate level, with online distance learning student numbers increasing by over 500 (headcount) in the last two academic years. This growth aligns with the University's intention to maintain Scottish Funding Council (SFC) supported places, while increasing international and postgraduate research students.

24 The University's commitment to providing flexible and accessible routes into higher education is reflected in its portfolio of articulation arrangements with other institutions, including North East Scotland College (NESCOL) and Dundee and Angus College (see paragraphs 28-29). The number of students entering through articulation arrangements increased from 892 in 2010-11, to 1,339 in 2014-15. The University has well-established widening participation links and initiatives (see paragraphs 28-30) and the number of students entering from areas identified as the most deprived in Scotland (referred to as MD20/MD40 or quintiles 1 and 2 through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, SIMD) has risen from 230 in 2014-15, to 274 in 2016-17.

25 International College at RGU (ICRGU), a strategic partnership between the institution and Navitas UK Holdings Ltd, is an associate college on the University Campus and is an important entry route for international students. ICRGU was established in 2011 to provide dedicated articulation pathways for international students (from outside the EU) to enter specific University courses, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The University provides accommodation and Navitas provides staffing and operational management. ICRGU recruited its first cohort of students in November 2011, and student numbers have increased from 5 in 2011-12, to 84 in 2015-16, with students coming predominantly from China (undergraduate and postgraduate), Nigeria (undergraduate) and Kazakhstan (undergraduate), (see also Section 6). The collaboration is viewed positively by both students and staff. The ELIR team met students entering from ICRGU who felt well supported and prepared to begin their studies at the University. Former ICRGU students were also being used to introduce and integrate new associate college students to life at the University.

28 DELTA has responsibility for the coordination of the University's widening access activity and delivers a range of outreach strategies and collaborative initiatives which are specifically designed to support non-traditional students in accessing the University. These include: the partnerships with NESCOL and Dundee and Angus College, which are intended to maximise the impact of articulation and other pathways as a means to supporting access to students from MD20/MD40 areas across the region; ACCESS RGU (see paragraph 30); the use of contextualised admissions; and the development of specialist support groups, for example for care-experienced young people. DELTA also has oversight of support services for students entering through an articulation pathway. This support is provided in a variety of

ways, including one-to-one and small group support; a portfolio of generic skills workshops; and a variety of online self-study resources available via the University virtual learning environment (VLE). The ELIR team noted that DELTA is also leading the University's engagement with the current national Enhancement Theme on student transitions, which includes a set of activities specifically focused on college articulations (see also paragraph 70 and Section 3.2). The ELIR team considered the coordination of these activities by DELTA, and the linking of them to the current Enhancement Theme, to be a particularly effective approach.

29 The North East Articulation Hub initiative, funded by the SFC, is a partnership between the University and NESCOL to promote and support enhancement through activities at the discipline level. Activities undertaken by course teams have included familiarisation visits to reciprocal colleges; information sessions about accessing the University; the development of degree preparation programmes which are coordinated by DELTA but delivered by course leaders; and the Associate Student Scheme, which is available to all students studying on a Higher National Diploma programme at a partner college, which is designed to assist prospective articulating students to become familiar with the University prior to entry. A key feature of the collaboration is the use of guaranteed places, so that a student commencing a qualification at NESCOL can understand the requirements for articulation to the University. During the ELIR, students commented favourably on the transitional arrangements in place for students on the NESCOL pathway.

31 The University considers the needs of particular students, including international students and widening participation students, as well as other groups of students, through a range of tailored induction programmes. A positive example is the programme of induction for campus-based international students which covers academic and pastoral dimensions in recognition of the international student transition. Induction provision also includes effective use of the VLE for campus-based and distance learners, and for all new students module inductions are available on individual course VLE pages.

46 The University has seen a steady increase in the number of students participating in the Study Abroad Scheme, with outbound student numbers increasing from a total of 165 in 2012-13, to 223 in 2015-16. Inbound exchange student numbers have been relatively stable with 156 in 2012-13, and 136 in 2015-16. The University is actively seeking to increase opportunities as part of its Employability Plus @ RGU strategy (see also paragraph 47), although certain restrictions remain for those on courses with specific PSRB requirements. The University provides targeted support to incoming and outbound study abroad students. Support for students participating in study abroad and overseas work placements is provided by a range of services and University staff, with the relevant contact point being determined by the particular course of study the student is enrolled on, for example these contacts include: Aberdeen Business School Global Engagement Centre; the International Exchanges Manager/Erasmus Institutional Coordinator; course leaders and placement officers. Support available includes a wide range of information targeted at students, staff and parents. This information is supplemented with face-to-face pre-departure briefings for students going on exchanges or work placements which provides practical information and a list of 'dos and don'ts'. During the ELIR, students were positive about the opportunities for study abroad and the support provided when overseas. They also valued the opportunities to report and feed back on their experience to influence future overseas experiences.

47 Employability Plus @ RGU is the University's strategic approach to employability. The University's vision is for its graduates to be recognised as the most fit-for-work, innovative, creative and engaged participants in the labour force and the economy, and for the University to be recognised for its close engagement with employers. The University's commitment to employability is evident throughout its course portfolio and provision of extracurricular employability activities, with a wide and appropriate range of links to and with

employers, PSRBs and local and international collaborators, embedded within courses and in its consistently high performance in league tables on graduate employment destinations.

123 One of the University's strategic aims is to develop further partnership links with a small number of universities. The ELIR team learned that, following an externally-facilitated review and internal discussions in March 2016, the University had approved a revised structure of senior officer/executive roles within the institution (see also Section 1, paragraph 8). This included the new role of Vice-Principal for Commercial and Regional Engagement, which will include responsibility for regional and international collaborative partnerships. The new management structure was being implemented at the time of the current ELIR. The University does not have an explicit Internationalisation Strategy but the ELIR team learned that the institution's approach to internationalisation is embedded in other institutional strategies and operational plans, for example the current Strategic Plan. The ELIR team also learned that the University was considering the establishment of a 'partnership unit' to provide oversight of collaborative arrangements and had been developing a 'partnership toolkit' intended to guide and support staff proposing new collaborative initiatives.

124 The main developments in collaborative activity since the 2012 ELIR are: the continued development of the relationship with the International College RGU (ICRGU) (see also paragraph 25), for example the admission of international students who have successfully completed programmes at ICRGU; responding to changes in the organisation and funding of the Scottish college sector, such as specific performance measures relating to collaboration with colleges being included in the University's formal Outcome Agreement with SFC; and growth in the validated programme arrangements with Benedict Schools in Switzerland.

125 The University has an established partnership with Benedict Schools, Switzerland, part of the Benedict International Group. The University validates the third year of the Bachelor of Arts (BA) courses; a graduate certificate course and a master's course which are delivered by the Benedict Schools. The student populations in Lucerne and Zurich are different. In Zurich, students are predominately local, mature entrant undergraduates and are taught and assessed in German; postgraduate students are taught and assessed in English. In Lucerne, students are predominately international, mostly from the Far East, and are taught and assessed throughout their three year course in English. Student numbers for validated Benedict courses increased from 257 in 2011-12 to 401 in 2014-15.

126 All academic collaborations are subject to formal approval, monitoring and review. The approval process typically involves two stages: initial approval 'in principle' and formal approval. The Head of School/Associate Dean proposing the collaboration will liaise with the Dean of Faculty, and if satisfied, permission is given to prepare an Academic Collaboration Proposal Pro forma plus a Risk Assessment Matrix. These documents are considered by the University Academic Development Committee (ADC). If the ADC approves the proposal in principle, the University will appoint a Course Development Consultant to assist the partner institution in preparing for a validation visit, which is undertaken in accordance with the University Academic Quality Handbook Procedures. The validation panel is approved by the Convenor of the QAEC on recommendation of the Dean of Faculty and Academic Registrar. A validation report is prepared together with a response by the programme team to address any issues or recommendations arising from the validation event. The QAEC reviews and confirms the final decision from the validation event, reporting the decision to Academic Council for review and onward reporting to the Board of Governors. Ongoing monitoring and review of collaborative provision is embedded within the normal University quality assurance processes, including annual course review and Institution-Led Subject Review.

127 The University recognises the importance of ensuring student development opportunities and support services are available to students, regardless of location of study and this is evidenced through initiatives such as the provision of an enhanced induction

programme for students articulating from link colleges (see also paragraphs 28 and 31). QAA Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight reports of ICRGU (2012-14) highlighted a number of areas of positive practice including: extracurricular activities for students; student support, such as the introduction of a student buddy scheme; and effective use by ICRGU of external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education.

128 The University has mapped its approach to collaborative provision against the Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others* and makes appropriate use of other external reference points, such as PSRB accreditation reports. All collaborative activity for taught credit provision is reviewed as part of the University's ILSR process (see paragraphs 99-102) and is also included in the course reapproval element of this activity. As part of the ILSR process, the University may determine that an ad hoc visit is required to any collaborative partner. The University maintains a register of all institutional partnership links involving taught credit-rated provision.

129 The University will not normally consider entering into collaborative arrangements where the delivery and/or assessment is in a language other than English. Where exceptions to this are made, as in the Benedict School example above (see paragraph 125), the Contract of Collaboration will state what arrangements the University requires in order to secure academic standards by having clear oversight of student achievement; for example, in relation to the Benedict School link, the contract stipulates the appointment of bilingual external examiners with internal moderation being carried out by University staff who are also bilingual.

130 Institutional approval and oversight of collaborative activities, apart from ICRGU, are managed through the ADC and through the regular institutional appraisal and subject review processes. The collaboration with ICRGU is managed through a Joint Strategic Partnership Management Board (JSPMB), reflecting the nature and scale of this collaboration (see also paragraph 25). The JSPMB oversight is supported by a number of advisory committees: Academic Advisory Committee (AAC); Operations Advisory Committee; and the Marketing Advisory Committee. The AAC oversees quality and standards. Its remit includes academic reporting, including generating systematic information about standards and quality, including student progression rates in both the University and ICRGU. ICRGU has been subject to three external visits as part of the QAA Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight process – the latest report was published in June 2014 – and all three reports concluded with positive judgements.

131 For collaborative arrangements involving validated courses, such as the Benedict Schools, the University Moderator is the primary point of contact. A University Moderator is appointed to each collaborative partnership involving validated courses and that person is responsible for overseeing the administration, general operation and monitoring of the collaboration. The Moderator also fulfils a quality enhancement role, preparing an annual report, including feedback and observations on the student experience, which contributes to the annual appraisal process.

132 The AAC for ICRGU considers support for staff, including the identification and dissemination of effective practice. The AAC also works with DELTA to provide support for students and staff in managing transitions to the University (see paragraphs 28 and 31). For collaborative arrangements involving validated courses (such as Benedict Schools), the University Moderator has specific responsibilities for quality enhancement and consideration of the student learning experience (see paragraph 131 above).

133 In discussions with the ELIR team, international students transitioning from ICRGU and articulating students (including those who entered with advanced standing) were positive about their experience including the support provided by the University and its partners prior

to entry. In particular, students expressed high levels of satisfaction regarding the accessibility of University staff.

134 The University has an effective approach to managing the current scale of collaborative activity, which is underpinned by robust policies and procedures and appropriate operations and support infrastructure. The ELIR team noted that the University's approach to the delivery of collaborative courses was characterised by high levels of contact between University staff and those working in partner institutions. This facilitates the early identification and resolution of issues and enables the enhancement of provision as well as securing academic standards and ensuring the delivery of a high quality student experience.

135 In view of the University's intention to expand the number of partnership links, there would be benefit in the University continuing to develop its operational infrastructure and strategic approach to the management and oversight of collaborative activity. The ELIR team noted that, at the time of the current ELIR visit, the University was undertaking a review of its arrangements for the consideration, approval, monitoring and review of collaborative activity, with a view to further enhancing institutional oversight. The University is encouraged to continue developing its operational infrastructure and strategic approach to the management and oversight of collaborative activity.

[Royal Conservatoire of Scotland](#)

28 Although some students engage with outward mobility opportunities including formal student exchanges, a number of students and staff expressed reservations to the ELIR team about the value of such activity. There appeared to be barriers to greater student mobility arising from rigid approaches within the institution to credit-mapping. The Conservatoire is encouraged to adopt a more flexible approach where students are supported to achieve comparable learning outcomes through study exchanges, rather than requiring a direct match of outcomes against those in the module descriptors. In addition, the Conservatoire should consider the ways in which it can ensure that staff and students are made aware of the benefits of greater mobility.

78 The Conservatoire has partnerships with five institutions in relation to collaborative programmes:

- University of Glasgow - the BEd programme is delivered jointly with the University of Glasgow and awarded by the Conservatoire. Following a national review of teacher education, Teaching Scotland's Future 2010, the Conservatoire undertook a significant review of the programme which resulted in it being restructured. It has also been aligned with the principles and philosophies of the Curriculum Reform project.
- University of St Andrews - the University awards research degrees for postgraduate research students studying at the Conservatoire. The Memorandum of Agreement with the University was renewed in 2011.
- National Piping Centre - the BA Hons (Scottish Music - Piping) programme is delivered jointly with the National Piping Centre and awarded by the Conservatoire.
- Scottish Ballet - the Conservatoire works very closely with Scottish Ballet in the delivery of the BA Modern Ballet programme although, formally, the programme is delivered and awarded by the Conservatoire. In addition, there is close collaboration with Scottish Ballet over the MMus (Piano for Dance) programme which is offered as a specialism within the Conservatoire's MMus provision to one student per year.
- Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI - this partnership was in development at the time of the current ELIR. The intention is to develop a master's programme aimed at experienced Gaelic-speaking theatre artists.

79 In addition, the Conservatoire has memoranda with a number of other institutions and organisations relating to a variety of collaborative work aimed at enriching the student experience and providing opportunities for links to the professions. As part of a strategic move to refine its collaborative partnerships, the Conservatoire indicated that it intends to edit and update these agreements during 2012-13, which is clearly an important and useful activity.

80 The Conservatoire has effective arrangements in place for securing the academic standards of its collaborative provision. This view is supported by reports from external examiners and professional body accreditations.

81 The Conservatoire is the lead institution for the BEd programme. It is managed jointly by two programme leaders, one in each institution, with the Conservatoire retaining responsibility for oversight. The programme is professionally accredited by the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS). Where modules are developed and delivered by the University of Glasgow, they are approved jointly by both institutions. Entry requirements are now aligned with those of the University, and the module size adopted by the Conservatoire as part of its common academic framework also aligns with that of the University.

82 The partnership with the University of St Andrews is overseen by a Joint Board, which holds an annual validation review meeting to evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative arrangements. The Pro-Dean (Arts) of the University is a member of the Conservatoire's Research Degrees Committee and is responsible for monitoring all decisions on awards on behalf of the University. Individual research student's work is subject to an annual review process, and the Conservatoire indicated that the effectiveness of its arrangements was reflected in the number of on-time completions.

83 The Conservatoire has close relationships with its collaborative partners. This, and the student-centred approach promoted through the Curriculum Reform process, means the Conservatoire has arrangements which enable it to enhance the student experience on collaborative programmes.

84 In the case of the relationships with the University of Glasgow and the University of St Andrews, students are matriculated at both the Conservatoire and the relevant university, enabling the students to access the resources of both institutions. In discussions with the ELIR team, students were positive about their experiences, indicating that they benefitted from their joint matriculation status and the additional resources this provided. In particular, students were very positive about the level and quality of the support and guidance they received from the central support services in the Conservatoire.

85 Since the 2009 ELIR, the Conservatoire has appointed a Lecturer in Research post and this has facilitated a more systematic approach to staff and research student training. As the Conservatoire continues to evaluate its partnership with the University of St Andrews, there would be value in considering whether students and staff could benefit from greater access to the research training opportunities available at the University.

86 The Conservatoire highlighted that its relationship with Scottish Ballet is strengthened by the fact that the two institutions employ two of the same staff on a fractional basis: the Artistic Director of the Modern Ballet programme is also the Depute Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet and another key member of the programme team is also the Head of the Associate Programme at Scottish Ballet. These links facilitate the close management of the collaborative relationship and provide students with access to a professional resource as an integral part of the academic programme.

87 The Conservatoire has an effective approach to managing its collaborative activity. This is evident from the documentation relating to the regular quality processes and is supported by the reports from external examiners and professional bodies.

SRUC

129 SRUC does not currently have an overall strategy for, or institutional oversight of, the development of education collaborative activities, although departments, through their business development plans, are encouraged to offer suggestions for UK subject-based collaborations and/or recruitment-based international collaborations. The ELIR team learned that the Contracts Office in the Research Division offered advice on drawing up various levels of collaborative memoranda. The team saw a number of examples of these including an 'in principle enabling' Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Malawi. This paves the way for the development of specific detailed Memoranda of Agreement for a variety of areas such as e-learning delivery, research and development projects, and student and staff exchange programmes. The team also learned of the existence of a Memorandum with an institution in China relating to the delivery of golf management programmes, and understood there were likely to be additional relationships developing with other institutions in that country.

130 SRUC's legacy colleges had a number of articulation agreements in place with colleges across Scotland which related to possible specific admission procedures for appropriately qualified students to join, for example, year three of a degree programme following completion of a relevant HND. SRUC indicated that it was in the process of renegotiating these agreements with the newly formed regional colleges.

131 SRUC identified one specific education collaborative activity, its partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE). This currently involves the joint delivery of HND and BSc programmes in Horticulture with Plantsmanship, with the degree being awarded by the University of Glasgow. The relationship was established in 1995 and was governed by a Memorandum of Agreement, signed in June 2008 for a period of five years. It was reviewed as part of the Annual Meeting between SRUC and RBGE in January 2014. Consequently, an updated Memorandum has been agreed for the period from April 2014 to March 2019. SRUC acknowledged the 10-month delay between the end of the old and the start of the new Memorandum. The ELIR team noted that there had been a delay with the previous Memorandum which had been identified in the 2010 SAC ELIR report and that the former college had been asked to take steps to prevent any similar occurrence, in order to secure the quality of the student learning experience. The current ELIR team considered that SRUC had not taken these steps and further observed that the report of the annual meeting between SRUC and RBGE provided limited evidence of genuine reflection or evaluation of the partnership.

132 SRUC's quality assurance arrangements for the programme taught jointly with RBGE follow those established for the approval, monitoring and review of other SRUC programmes that lead to the awards of the University of Glasgow. Management of the programme is the responsibility of the SRUC Programme Leader for the Edinburgh-based Horticulture programmes, with both SRUC and RBGE being represented on the programme management team. SRUC nominates the external examiner for approval by the University, and receives and actions the reports as it would for its other programmes.

133 Students benefit from both the specialist horticulture facilities at the Botanic Garden and the SRUC-based laboratories and other specialist facilities to support honours projects. Additionally, RBGE staff have the opportunity to access SRUC staff development. The 2011 subject review of Horticulture included this joint programme, demonstrating it was subject to the same processes as other SRUC-managed programmes.

134 The ELIR team found the arrangements for the management of the collaborative programme with RBGE to be effective, subject to SRUC having in place robust arrangements to ensure the seamless formal continuation of the collaborative agreement on the expiry of the current Memorandum.

135 SRUC collaborates with a wide range of partners for a variety of purposes and intends to increase the number of its collaborations. There is evidence of these collaborative arrangements adding value for the students and staff. There would be considerable benefit in establishing a strategic institutional approach to collaboration in all of its forms and clarifying where in the institutional structure oversight of collaborative arrangements sits. This should include oversight of arrangements relating to awards at all levels. In doing so, SRUC should ensure that it is developing policies and practices that are in line with *Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others* of the Quality Code (see paragraphs 121 and 122).

[University of St Andrews](#)

125 The University adopts a strategic approach to internationalisation and this was illustrated by the Case Study, BA (International Honours): An Innovative Approach to International Education, submitted for the current ELIR. The University's Strategic Plan expresses the intention to increase overseas undergraduate student numbers. The University considered that its collegial approach to collaborative partnerships was illustrated by the development of the BA (International Honours) programme with a longstanding partner with which a number of student exchanges were already in place. The University recognises student mobility and international collaboration as fundamental cornerstones of its strategic vision to expand the boundaries of international scholarship.

126 The University has chosen to establish a small number of high quality, low-risk collaborations, which involve study at two or more institutions leading to a joint award. Current collaborations comprise one undergraduate programme, and 10 taught postgraduate programmes with: four UK partners, two international partners, and three European consortia. The University sees collaboration as a way of strengthening postgraduate research culture, for example through a co-tutelle approach allowing students to gain benefit from local and international researchers. There are collaborations through co-tutelle arrangements with around 20 institutions in the UK, Europe and overseas, for example through participation in the Science without Borders scheme providing links with institutions in Brazil. In the UK there are arrangements with the University of Stirling at postgraduate level in Philosophy and there is an established relationship with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

127 Subsequent to the 2011 ELIR, the University reviewed the effectiveness of its collaborative agreement to validate and award research degrees for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), giving particular consideration to the effectiveness of the reporting links between the two institutions. The University continues to enhance its links with RCS. Primary responsibility for the relationship now lies with the Provost (who leads on research matters), supported by a smaller, more focused group than before. There are annual meetings, chaired by the Provost, which include the Director of CAPOD & Quality Monitoring, to discuss sharing of resources, staff collaborations and how RCS students can engage in St Andrews' activities, such as the GRADskills programme and St Leonard's College. In 2013-14, the St Andrews Music Centre initiated a music research seminar and invited the RSC Director of Postgraduates along with a group of RCS postgraduate students to attend and contribute.

128 The BA (International Honours) programme represents a longstanding and close collaboration with the College of William and Mary, Virginia, USA. This is deemed to be a

truly integrated joint undergraduate programme in which students spend two years at each institution studying Economics, English, History or International Relations. At the time of the current ELIR, the programme was in its fourth year of operation, with the first cohort due to graduate in summer 2015. Students who met the ELIR team attested to the wide-ranging academic and social benefits of this programme. The University acknowledges that, given the complexity and challenge of such a programme, a long-term commitment was vital and so the programme was conceived as having an initial 10-year duration. The benefits of already having established relations with the College through teaching and research collaborations was viewed as essential to the process.

129 Erasmus partnerships and research relationships have led to participation in the Masters Mundus programmes, as well as a new initiative to offer a joint Masters in German and Comparative Literature with the University of Bonn. This is a two-year degree programme involving two semesters of study in both institutions and is in line with models elsewhere in Europe. The Collaborations & Study Abroad (CSA) team have oversight of 42 school undergraduate programmes and 13 St Andrews Abroad Programmes. Every school, except Medicine, has either its own programmes or participates in St Andrews Abroad.

130 Since the 2011 ELIR, the University has developed a new framework for the monitoring and review of collaborative programmes which is a five-step process focused on: approval, implementation, first review, annual monitoring and review, and agreement renewal review. Approval processes for new collaborative programmes now align with *Chapter: B10* of the Quality Code and should include: a comprehensive review of existing links with the institution; an assessment of the suitability of the partner(s), in particular the ability of the partner to provide a high quality academic experience to complement the St Andrews education; details of the arrangements for partnership operation; and an assessment of the sustainability of the projected collaboration. Approval documentation also requires details of the partner's procedures for module approval and review, along with strategies for enhancement at the partner institution.

131 New collaborative programmes are discussed by the Curriculum Approvals Group and require comments from external examiners. Proposed programmes are considered and approved by the Proctor's Office with final 'sign off' provided by the Vice-Principal (Enterprise and Engagement). Registry holds a centrally-approved list of collaborations and is responsible for updating this. The Collaborations and Study Abroad team, based in Registry, are responsible for facilitating the approval and 'setup' processes with the partner, as well as coordinating the various processes and colleagues to ensure the smooth operation of the collaboration.

132 Each partnership programme has an academic lead based within the relevant school, and it is the school's responsibility to ensure good relations with the partner institution, aligning their collaborative arrangement with wider curriculum provision. The Collaborations and Study Abroad Office is ultimately responsible for the operational management of collaborative programmes, however, responsibility for academic standards rests with schools and this is reviewed through the University's annual monitoring processes. In meetings with academic staff it was clear that colleagues who held direct responsibility for specific programmes were well informed about student progress and development of the programme. However, it was less clear to the ELIR team where overall academic oversight for collaborative provision rested within the University.

133 Each school is required to report on their collaborative activity as part of the Annual Academic Monitoring (AAM) process. Examples of AAM reports provided to the ELIR team evidenced that some schools did report on collaborative provision, however, this was 'light touch' in nature and some schools did not comment on their collaborative provision at all. The University has recognised this variation in practice and has committed to updating the

AAM template, from 2014-15, to request reflections on collaborative programmes where relevant and to make it explicit that this should include consultation with students. The ELIR team would endorse this development, and would encourage the University to ensure that all schools with collaborative provision engage with the process.

134 An annual report on collaborative activity is considered by the Academic Monitoring Group. The report is produced by the Collaborations and Study Abroad Office and covers all reviews of collaborative provisions, making recommendations on continuing, amending or terminating a partnership as appropriate. The sample reports provided to the ELIR team evidenced strong statistical information about institutional provision but provided limited evaluation of the student experience.

135 Each collaborative programme is required to host a Joint Committee including staff from the partner institution. In addition to the Joint Committee, the William and Mary Partnership hosts an internal Academic Board, which considers all academic matters and maintains institutional oversight of that partnership. The ELIR team's reading of this documentation confirmed that there is an insightful and evaluative consideration of the student experience on that programme.

136 The University emphasised that its new five-step framework for monitoring and reviewing collaborative programmes is intended to be a proportional process that can be adapted to suit the complexity and scale of the collaborative provision under consideration. However, it has not yet been made explicit how much flexibility there is for schools in adapting the framework to suit new partnerships.

137 Approval and monitoring of study abroad programmes is managed through the Collaborations and Study Abroad team. Schools are responsible for assessing curriculum alignment and suitability and can choose to work with any new student abroad partner the University has established a link with. The University believes this process has enhanced study abroad provision within the Faculty of Science by matching partner institutions within specific disciplines. Monitoring of study abroad is overseen through the AAM process and a site visit is required every three to five years. The Collaborations and Study Abroad Office have also established a Student-Staff Consultative Committee as a formal means of gathering feedback on study abroad programmes and services. A student internship placement has also been established to lead on projects and contribute to a peer support service for inbound and outbound students.

138 The University stated that students on collaborative programmes are fully integrated into the community, taking part in academic and extra-curricular activities in the same way as other students. The University also stated that this experience is to be replicated in partner institutions. The University has processes in place to track various student cohorts on collaborative programme, however it does not currently carry out systematic monitoring of cohort progress and achievement compared with students on the same modules/programme who are not on a collaborative route (paragraph 94).

139 While appreciating the benefits of studying in two (or more) institutions, both from a personal and academic point of view, students on the BA (International Honours) programme indicated that they had encountered some challenges in integrating into the St Andrews community, suggesting that the St Andrews approach was academically and socially more 'hands off'. In particular, these students believed that William & Mary had a more structured approach to transition. The students had established a Student Partnership Group to ease transition between the two institutions and reported that this initiative had been very well received by staff at St Andrews. Students confirmed that the University is very receptive to student feedback and had made changes to support their learning experience.

140 Students undertaking study abroad programmes acknowledged the benefits of these, confirming that they had been well prepared for the experience. Students with experience of studying abroad were clear about who to approach with problems, including health and welfare as well as academic issues. The Collaborative and Study Abroad team was seen as an important conduit for student support while students were abroad.

University of Stirling

23 The total student population has remained stable since the 2011 ELIR. There was a total population of 9,262 (FTE) in 2010-11 and 9,023 (FTE) in 2014-15. In 2014-15, there were 7,432 undergraduate, 1,232 taught postgraduate and 358 research postgraduate students. Included in this total are 1,299 overseas students (outside Europe). In 2014-15 the University had 493 students studying on transnational programmes and 107 students studying on the joint venture with INTO. The University's strategic aims are to increase student enrolments in areas that are currently under-represented, including: international undergraduates; international and EU taught postgraduates; and research postgraduates.

26 In line with the University Internationalisation Strategy 2014-19, current postgraduate student recruitment is focused on improving conversion rates across all markets and subject areas, and fostering relationships with key agents and partners. To maintain growth in the research postgraduate population, and to meet Strategic Plan objectives, the University aims to recruit a minimum of 135 FTE new research students during 2015-16.

28 The University is committed to offering students flexible routes for accessing higher education as reflected in its portfolio of articulation arrangements with other institutions, including INTO and Forth Valley College (see paragraphs 130 and 131). The University also operates an Access Course.

72 The E-Learning Liaison and Development Team (part of the Information Services Academic Liaison and Development Team), together with HR&OD, develops and delivers events through an E-Learning Forum. They also coordinate the Teaching Bites sessions aimed at sharing good practice (see paragraph 65). In addition, the E-Learning Liaison and Development Team provides online E-Learning Forum sessions that are accessible to staff teaching on remote campuses, covering topics such as electronic marking. The team publishes a helpful blog that provides useful advice and information about e-learning provision, conveys reports from attendees at national level conferences and advertises the Teaching Bites sessions.

124 The University's Strategic Plan 2011-16 includes the priority to 'connect locally and globally to students', and highlights ambitions to 'develop a focused set of international partnerships which expand the University's reach in research and education'. More detail is provided in the University's Internationalisation Strategy 2014-19, which identifies collaboration, in particular through strategic partnerships, as one of six key strategic focus areas. In 2015 the University created the role of Dean of Internationalisation to assist the University in taking forward its international partnership agenda.

125 Recognising that expansion of its portfolio of collaborative partners would benefit from a more systematised approach, the University was, at the time of the current ELIR, in the process of revising its arrangements for the approval and monitoring of collaborative partnerships. The ELIR team considers the development of the more structured approach to be timely and highly desirable, given the University's stated intention to increase this activity.

126 At the time of the current ELIR, the University had recently established an Institutional Partnership Development Committee (IPDC) to provide support and advice to staff developing and managing collaborative provision. The IPDC reports to the Internationalisation Steering Group and to the Education and Student Experience Committee

(ESEC). The Internationalisation Steering Group is chaired by the Deputy Principal (Education and Students) and provides strategic oversight of the development of collaborations. It reports to ESEC (also chaired by the Senior Deputy Principal), which has responsibility for the approval and monitoring of academic partnerships.

127 The IPDC had discussed the revised policy and procedures relating to the management of collaborative provision. The ELIR team learned that the proposed new arrangements would be reported to ESEC for approval during the current academic year, with the intention that a new framework for the approval and monitoring of collaborative provision would be introduced in September 2016. The new approach would include: revised templates for proposals and agreements; enhanced annual reporting for collaborative programmes; and the establishment of enhanced arrangements for institutional oversight of student performance.

128 The International Affairs Team of the Development and External Affairs Directorate is responsible for the coordination of collaborative activity. Within this team there are two dedicated International Partnership Managers who provide support to schools when developing collaborative arrangement proposals, and also support the monitoring and oversight of the arrangements once they are running. The International Affairs Team maintains oversight and tracking of Memoranda of Agreement end dates to ensure that periodic review is scheduled before Memoranda of Agreements end if the arrangement is to continue. Procedures for the approval and monitoring of collaborative partnerships are set out in the Quality Handbook and meet the expectations of the Quality Code. At the time of the current ELIR these procedures were identified as under review.

129 The University has undertaken to invest in its business intelligence reporting, which is likely to enhance the effectiveness of reporting on collaborative provision from the University's systems. A central register of collaboration-related contacts with other institutions has been created including student exchange programmes, Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Agreement. New templates have been developed to facilitate improved reporting and reviewing of partnerships.

130 At the time of the current ELIR, the University had 23 collaborative arrangements, including 12 with overseas partners. In 2014-15 there were 805 students enrolled across all collaborative programme types. In 2013-14, the University developed a partnership with INTO University Partnerships to create two INTO Stirling centres: one in Stirling and one in London. The Stirling INTO partnership is overseen by a Joint Venture Management Group comprising University and INTO representatives. The INTO Stirling centre is based on the main University campus and offers a range of foundation and diploma pathway programmes, including an English language course. The pathway programmes provide a direct route for students into years two and three of undergraduate degree programmes, and into Stirling master's degrees. The London centre is based within the INTO World Education Centre in East London and offers a range of master's degrees specialising in business, finance, management sport and education, as well as preparatory courses for UK postgraduate study. Teaching in London is delivered by a combination of staff appointed through the joint venture, who are based in London, and 'flying faculty' from the University of Stirling. Students in London use the University VLE as a key interface with Stirling-based staff. Students studying at the London centre who met the ELIR team spoke positively about their learning experience.

131 The University's work on widening access is supported by a number of articulation arrangements, including an established partnership with the local college sector institution, Forth Valley College. Working in partnership, the University and Forth Valley College have developed four programmes on a fully integrated model where the programmes are jointly designed, developed and delivered by the college, University and industry partners.

Students enrol at both the College and the University and are encouraged to make use of learning and student support facilities on both campuses. The partnership is led by a joint project board, supported by a cross-functional team whose role is to support students and provide a suite of University interactions for students during their time at the College. In September 2015, the first cohort of 42 students from this partnership made the transition into year three in two of the integrated programmes. The ELIR team noted the careful planning that had gone into this activity and the strong desire to ensure a smooth transition for students.

132 The University has effective arrangements in place for securing the academic standards of its current collaborative provision.

133 Currently, every new collaborative proposal must be approved-in-principle by ESEC before a detailed report is initiated. A University panel will visit the proposed partner if the proposal involves a validation or franchise arrangement. The panel report will be considered by ESEC. The ELIR team noted that, on a number of occasions, chair's action had been taken to approve reports on collaborative arrangements and it was not always clear whether there had been any discussion of these reports at ESEC or elsewhere in the committee structure (see paragraph 123).

134 A draft Memorandum of Agreement is prepared for each collaborative arrangement using a standard template, and is considered by the International Affairs Office. The full proposal is scrutinised by the relevant International Partnership Manager and forwarded to relevant service areas for comment. The draft Memorandum of Agreement is sent to the University Secretary for comment. When all feedback has been collated, the proposal is considered by ESEC. If changes are made to the Memorandum of Agreement, these are discussed with the proposed partner institution before the agreement is finalised. A copy of the signed agreement is held in the central register of collaborative provision. Though differing in detail according to the nature of the partnership, each Memorandum of Agreement provided to the ELIR team comprehensively covered the requirements, expectations and responsibilities in respect of admissions, registration, programme structure, programme delivery, assessment, awards, quality assurance, complaints, appeals and marketing, in addition to the financial arrangements underpinning the partnership. The Memoranda of Agreement explicitly state that the University has ultimate responsibility for the academic standards and quality of its awards, while, in some partnerships, operational responsibility is delegated to the partner, provided they operate according to the University's regulations and quality arrangements.

135 Under Stirling Ordinance 21, teaching on University academic programmes must be undertaken by persons formally recognised as teachers of the University. There is a screening process for the appointment of staff from a partner institution who will teach on a University programme, to ensure that only University approved teachers can teach. The recommendation comes from the University programme director and must be signed off by the relevant Head of School. This recognition as an approved University teacher is confirmed in writing for a defined period of time. The ELIR team considered the 'recognition' arrangements to be a positive measure and would encourage the University to include reference to this important quality assurance mechanism in the Quality Handbook.

136 Programmes offered in conjunction with collaborative partners are subject to ongoing monitoring, which includes external examiners and their reports, module review and annual programme review. These processes are supported by regular visits by flying faculty. While the arrangements to obtain student feedback are generally robust, the University acknowledged that a number of modules included in the annual programme review had received no feedback responses from students. Taking the view that online student surveys

might be responsible for lowering the response rate, the University had reverted to a paper-based student feedback survey instrument in an effort to improve response rates.

137 A report to ESEC in February 2015 noted that an analysis of student performance on collaborative programmes had revealed that students based in one overseas location generally performed less well than students based at Stirling, and highlighted that action would be undertaken in 2015-16 in the relevant schools to address concerns and to monitor improvement, for example reviewing feedback policies and mechanisms, providing enhanced guidelines to students and staff, and reviewing different ways of assessing students. The ELIR team regarded it as positive that the University was able to recognise disparity in student performance and was seeking to take action accordingly.

138 From 2015-16 the University requires that the annual programme review report to ESEC must include all collaborative programmes. In addition, each school Learning and Teaching Committee is now required to provide an overarching annual report on collaborative programmes, rather than a separate paragraph within the wider report. The ELIR team regarded these as positive measures to provide greater institutional oversight of collaborative activity.

139 A key strategic focus of the University's Internationalisation Strategy 2014-19 is the student experience, and the University recognises the need for equivalence of the student experience whether programmes are offered in the UK or overseas. This includes access to IT and library resources, access to academic staff, the provision of student support, engagement with the Students' Union and opportunities to provide feedback. The University indicated that these aspects of the student learning experience are considered and agreed during the partnership development process, and, 'where required', are detailed within the Memorandum of Agreement. In the sample set of Memoranda of Agreement provided to the ELIR team the content varied; for example, one Memorandum did make reference to the provision of student support, including library and IT access, while another Memorandum did not make any reference to who provides student support. As the University introduces its revised framework for collaborative provision, there would be value in making the equivalence of student support arrangements an explicit statement in all Memoranda of Agreement.

140 The University requires each of its collaborative partnerships to establish a joint programme committee (or equivalent) to manage the collaborative programme(s). Collaborative programmes are subject to the same quality assurance arrangements as the rest of the University's awards, that is: student feedback on modules; annual monitoring; periodic review; and external examining processes. Schools consider the annual reports and submit a summary report to Academic Registry and Governance Services each year. Academic Registry and Governance Services prepares an annual aggregated report for consideration by ESEC.

141 In discussions with the ELIR team, students expressed general satisfaction with the level of contact that they had with University staff and the effectiveness of the VLE, known as SUCCEED. Students also reported that they had appropriate access to University resources such as library e-journals and other student support.

142 Overall, the University has an effective approach to managing its current collaborative arrangements. It has introduced arrangements to improve institutional oversight of its collaborative activity, which are positive. To support the strategic intention to expand its collaborative activity, the University plans to introduce a revised framework for the approval and review of collaborative provision. The ELIR team encourages the University to progress its plans for implementing the revised arrangements for the start of 2016-17.

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18 There is a growing international student population, in line with the University's internationalisation strategy and the aim of increasing the postgraduate research student population by approximately 230 to a total of 1,600 by academic year 2015-16. International students currently account for 14 per cent of undergraduates, 46 per cent of postgraduate taught and 30 per cent of postgraduate research numbers. A further dimension to the internationalisation strategy is the development of international articulation routes, such as the provision of facilitated entry to year three of undergraduate programmes for students from partner institutions in countries such as China, India, Malaysia and Pakistan.

36 The University has provided support for students with significant additional requirements to participate in the ERASMUS exchange programme, including exchanges for deaf and blind students. Few students with disabilities currently choose to participate in ERASMUS. However, the institution considers that recent successful exchanges and action taken in light of evaluations of these will encourage further international mobility for this student group.

103 The University has ambitious strategic plans to grow and extend its collaborative activities. These include increasing international collaborations and articulations, increasing Scottish entrants from colleges, promoting widening access initiatives, and increasing formal industrial collaborations including through the University's Technology Innovation Centre.

104 The University currently operates a number of types of collaborative activity including articulation with further education colleges in Scotland, and internationally with five universities in China, Malaysia, India and Pakistan. In 2012-13 these partnerships involved 124 students. In September 2013 the University also entered into a partnership with the private provider Study Group UK, and launched the Strathclyde International Study Centre. The Centre is based at the University and currently has 73 students studying on foundation programmes which have been designed to prepare international students for entry to undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. The University also offers a master's degree programme in collaboration with Aalborg University in Denmark and Hamburg University of Technology in Germany, as well as a Master of Science programme with the International Prevention Research Institute in Lyon.

105 In addition, Strathclyde Business School delivers a range of postgraduate taught programmes on international branch campuses. The University has service level agreements with local education partners who provide administrative support and teaching facilities, and manage students' daily requirements. Teaching is delivered by academic staff from the University who visit the centres for intensive teaching onsite. In 2012-13, the University had seven service agreements with a total intake of 370 students.

106 The University currently has one collaboration with an industrial partner to provide research degree programmes for the partner's employees through a combination of work-based learning and joint professional and academic research supervision. This collaboration currently has 29 employees of the partner plus 33 newly-recruited research students. The University is discussing the initiation of similar programmes with other industrial partners.

107 The University has effective arrangements in place that meet sector expectations including those set out in the UK Quality Code.

108 The University has taken action to review its approach to managing collaborative provision, as recommended in the 2010 ELIR. This has included undertaking a series of audits of collaborative provision and revising University policy and the code of practice on collaborative provision, which sets out the approach to assuring its academic standards and the quality of provision. The ELIR team reviewed the most recent set of Annual Faculty

Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Reports and these indicated specific and detailed consideration of collaborative provision.

109 The University's mapping against *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code indicates the University is meeting the Expectation, and identifies action points against three of the Indicators. The sample of evidence considered by the ELIR team confirms the outcome of this mapping. The University is encouraged to follow up, as intended, the small number of action points that it has identified.

110 The University has effective arrangements in place to enhance the experience of students on collaborative programmes, and has a range of activities to communicate information about collaborative programmes to staff and students. The Reflective Analysis described a number of initiatives, for example, articulation arrangements through which international students are admitted to programmes, that are extensively used in parts of the University, and in particular, in the Faculty of Engineering. There is recognition of the challenges of integration and support for students admitted through these routes, and the Faculty has supported a number of practices, including induction, evening classes and intensive short courses to improve the experience of this group of students.

111 The University has undertaken a sequence of institution-level audits of collaborative activity which have increased institutional oversight, and brought about the development of its revised policy and code. Consideration of collaborative activity in annual reporting supports institutional oversight and sharing of approaches. The University should continue to use these processes to promote enhancement of the student experience in its collaborations, and to identify and share approaches that are effective.

112 The University has an effective approach to managing its collaborative activity. It seeks to grow this activity both on account of its widening participation strategy and its internationalisation strategy. The University has emphasised its commitment to both strategies and has included actions in each to support students on collaborative programmes.

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101 Historically the University's collaborative activity has been largely with local and regional colleges to facilitate access to higher education. Around 12 per cent of the University intake each year is provided by articulating students and this is a key element of the University's commitment to widening participation. Previously the University favoured franchised programmes with college partners. However, the current strategy is for a move towards adopting a validation model with its partners. This was described by the University as a natural development, with college staff wishing to take on the responsibility for delivery of programmes. It is the University's intention to validate partner programmes that complement its own provision and also to have a phased reduction in articulating students, particularly those studying on a fees-only basis. The ELIR team recognised that the reduction in articulating students and franchised programmes would free resource for international expansion. There would be value in the University considering the potential impact of this change on its widening participation policy, particularly given the institution's success in providing education to many traditionally 'difficult to reach' student groups.

102 As set out in the Corporate Strategy 2014-20 and 'Global Reach' Enabling Plan, the University has ambitious plans to expand transnational education (TNE). At present, the University has agreements with an institution in France for dual delivery of a master's programme and, in the latter half of 2014, agreements were completed for delivery of master's programmes in Malaysia, Ghana and Russia. Recruitment to these programmes

was just commencing at the time of the ELIR visits and was intended to accelerate during 2015. At present the University is also considering setting up a campus in Dubai.

103 The University's Corporate Strategy sets challenging targets for the expansion of TNE with 3,000 students enrolled by 2019-. In addition the strategy outlines the target of 20 per cent of the student population on its domestic campuses being non-EU students. The current figure is 3 per cent. In meetings with staff, the ELIR team was told that schools had existing Enabling Plans that covered international expansion and outlined targets at school level. Senior managers explained that these plans would be revised to accommodate the Global Reach objectives and KPIs.

104 To promote and facilitate the rapid expansion of TNE, the University reviewed its international activity in 2013. It has now established an International Centre and appointed senior staff to lead and manage the activity. It has also appointed Associate Deans International (ADI) who will have a pivotal role in progressing the expansion of international activity in the schools. All plans for international activity in schools will be channelled through them. The ADIs meet very regularly on a formal basis with the Vice-Principal International. In order to inform planning for expansion, the University has recently completed an international benchmarking project with the University of Tasmania. The ELIR team considered that this systematic approach would result in carefully controlled management of the expansion of international activity.

105 Guidance on the arrangements for establishing, monitoring and reviewing collaborative provision are set out in a substantive chapter of the Quality Handbook. Oversight of the development, management, and enhancement of the quality and standard of collaborative provision is provided through the Collaborative Forum. The International Advisory Committee has a strategic remit and the Collaborative Forum a more operational remit through close liaison with schools and departments. Initially collaborative proposals are considered and signed off by the Academic Planning Group. Minutes of meetings and approval documentation seen by the ELIR team indicate that the University has effective arrangements for establishing and approving collaborative partnerships. The ongoing monitoring of academic standards is also carefully considered and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken. The team noted that the University had conducted an analysis of the performance of articulating students which found that continuation rates were similar to those of students entering through other routes.

106 Arrangements for the approval and review of collaborative provision meet sector expectations for example, there is alignment with *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code. International programmes are also aligned with other external reference points, for instance, requirements of UK professional bodies. With the expansion of international provision, the ELIR team would encourage the University to explore the potential for using international reference points (see also paragraph 84).

107 Oversight of the enhancement of the student learning experience is provided through the Joint Programme Panel for validated programmes and through the Collaborative Forum where there is an opportunity to share good practice. Student views are gathered through student-staff liaison groups for collaborative programmes and also through module feedback. Minutes of meetings of these groups reviewed by the ELIR team showed close attention to enhancing the provision, sharing good practice and giving careful consideration to student views.

108 As noted earlier (see paragraph 30), the University grants associate student status to students studying on franchised programmes at partner colleges which gives them access to UWS facilities. Staff from partner colleges are also offered support to gain fellowship of the Higher Education Academy as part of their professional development.

109 Communication with students studying at partner institutions is through student representation and student-staff liaison groups that have equivalence with arrangements on the home campus sites. Staff communication is through the Joint Programme Panels and Collaborative Contact meetings where, for example, the University's intention to move to validated models of programme partnership was discussed.

110 The Business School has piloted a model which ensures that support for the collaborative student experience is considered both in the school and across the support departments. The ELIR team noted the consistency in identifying the needs of a collaborative proposal arising from this approach. There would be value in the University giving consideration to building on this model as it moves into a phase of rapid expansion of international activity.

111 The University has an effective approach to managing collaborative activity through the regular formal meetings of Assistant Deans International and the Vice-Principal International, the strategic oversight provided by the International Advisory Committee and the sharing of information and practice through the Collaborative Forum. Recently completed approval and review processes for collaborative provision are thorough with robust action plans for improvement. Joint Programme Panels and Student-Staff Liaison Groups are effective for considering student and staff opinion.

112 The KPIs set out in the Corporate Strategy and 'Global Reach' Enabling Plan for expanding TNE are challenging (see paragraphs 24 and 102-103) and there would be benefit in keeping the arrangements for their implementation under review. In meetings with staff there was some disquiet about achieving the KPI targets. The ELIR team noted that similar concern had been expressed by a School Forum and, in the minutes of a School Board, by an international champion.

113 Given the pace of change required to meet stretching targets for international expansion in collaborative provision, the University is encouraged to ensure that robust processes are in place for evaluating, monitoring and reviewing the planned expansion and its impact on the student learning experience, both for existing and new students experience of studying abroad were clear about who to approach with problems, including health and welfare as well as academic issues. The Collaborative and Study Abroad team was seen as an important conduit for student support while students were abroad.

141 The University has made progress since the 2011 ELIR to enhance the effectiveness of its frameworks for managing and monitoring collaborative programmes. A new five-stage process has been introduced which has the potential to be effective. The University intends that the five-step framework should be used flexibly, in proportion to the nature of the collaborative provision in question. Given the early stage in its introduction at the time of the ELIR visit, the ELIR team was unclear how this proportionate approach would operate in practice and, in particular, it was not explicit how much flexibility would be permitted.

142 It is clear that collaborative programmes are managed carefully at school level, particularly the William and Mary collaboration. The Joint Council and Academic Board provide strong management at the strategic and operation level with detailed evidence of any arising issues being resolved in an effective manner. However, the University is strongly encouraged to ensure that there is clear academic oversight of all collaborative activity at the institutional level. Currently, there is a possibility of this becoming distributed between schools. Schools are required to review collaborative programmes through the Annual Academic Monitoring and University Review of Learning and Teaching processes but, as the University has recognised, reports from these processes do not always include explicit reflection on academic standards or the student experience on collaborative programmes.

The University intends to include a prompt for this in a revised template from the current academic year, and the ELIR team would strongly support that development.

143 The experience the University has gained from its partnership with William and Mary will be valuable to inform the establishment of future collaborative programmes as well as the institution's approach to internationalisation more generally. The University is encouraged to ensure that learning from the William and Mary experience is reflected on as part of future developments.

144 The University has a successful approach to promoting and supporting student mobility through its study abroad arrangements, including the wide range of partner institutions with which it has agreements in place. As noted earlier in this report, the University also has systematic arrangements for recognising learning undertaken elsewhere (paragraph 93).

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18 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 6NU
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel: 0141 572 3420
Website: www.qaa.ac.uk