



Joint Academic Stage Board

Working party on collaborative arrangements

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Present:

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1 Introduction

Representatives of the Joint Academic Stage Board (the Board) conducted a number of inspection visits to institutions in Malaysia in April 2007. One of the purposes of the visits was to update the Board as to the current arrangements the Malaysian institutions had with universities in England and Wales relating to Qualifying Law Degrees (QLDs). A report was produced for each institution inspected.

At its meeting on 7 June 2007, the Board discussed the reports and noted that the most common arrangement was where students would enrol as Year 1 students of the Malaysian institution (called the programme presenter in the QAA Code of Practice on Collaborative Arrangements) and would not then enrol with the awarding institution until Year 2 or 3.

The Board decided that further information should be sought from the awarding institutions about their arrangements with the programme presenters and a working party should be established to consider their responses and other issues surrounding these types of arrangements.

2 Taxonomy of collaborative arrangements

From the documentation provided by the awarding institutions, it was clear that collaborative arrangements can exist in many forms. The following taxonomy

captures the principal categories, ordered according to the level of control exercised, but the working party would ask whether there are other kinds of collaborative arrangement of which it should take account. The terminology used by the QAA in its Code of Practice on Collaborative Arrangements has been adopted here.

2.1. *The awarding institution has satellite campus(es) where the programme is delivered*

In this situation, the awarding institution delivers its own courses, using its own staff, at its own premises which are, however, remote from the main campus.

Strictly, this is not a collaborative arrangement, but it has features in common with collaborative arrangements, in that quality assurance is carried out from a distance and the human and physical resources used in delivering the programme are different from those used in the main part of the institution.

2.2. *The awarding institution has franchised its programme to the programme presenter*

In this situation, the programme is delivered by a different institution from the awarding institution (the programme presenter), but it is the same programme as that which the awarding institution delivers at its own premises.

Students are typically registered with the awarding institution for the award, but are enrolled with the programme presenter, who will be the body charging the fees, providing academic and pastoral support, etc. The students' level of access to the resources of the awarding institution (especially electronic resources) will depend on the specific contractual arrangements between the two institutions.

Franchise agreements thus vary in how far the students are integrated with the awarding institution. As well as access to resources, franchise arrangements vary according to the level of input to delivery by the awarding institution. Some awarding institutions send "flying faculty" to deliver some or all of the programme; others may confine their role to quality assurance only.

2.3. *The awarding institution has validated a programme delivered by the programme presenter*

In this situation the programme is approved by the awarding institution as suitable to be an award of that institution. Typically, however, the programme is designed by the programme presenter and is not the same as any programme belonging to the awarding institution. As in the franchise arrangement, the students are registered from the outset with the awarding institution as candidates for the relevant award, but enrolled with the programme presenter for tuition and academic and other support.

2.4. *Articulation arrangements*

In this situation, the awarding institution undertakes to accept students on a particular level on a particular programme, provided that they have achieved specified outcomes (which may be a completed award, or part of an award) at another institution.

The students are not registered with the awarding institution until they are accepted on to the programme.

Articulation arrangements can apply at different levels: they may guarantee entry to the first year of a degree programme, or the second year (the 1+2 arrangement) or the third year (the 2+1 arrangement). Clearly, different considerations apply according to the level at which the student is accepted on to the awarding institution's programme.

2.5. Credit transfer

In this situation, the awarding institution permits students to count credits awarded by another institution for the purposes of its award. An example would be where a student completes Year 1 of a Law degree at the University of X but moves to Y University for Years 2 and 3.

This is normally done on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the awarding institution's rules and procedures.

2.6. Accreditation of prior learning achievement (APLA)/Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL)

APLA is comparable to credit transfer, in that other qualifications are accepted as equivalent to some part of the awarding institution's award. APEL is an extension of this, where experiential learning is accepted as equivalent to some part of the awarding institution's award.

The QAA has produced Guidelines on the Accreditation of Prior Learning (2004).

3 A Statement of Compliance with QLD requirements

The working party considered that, in order to be clearer about the level of involvement of the awarding institution with the programme presenter and to ensure the assessment process of the programme presenter is equivalent to the awarding institution's own process, the awarding institution would be expected to sign a Statement of Compliance with QLD requirements at the beginning of the process.

In the Statement, the awarding institution would be asked to certify that they would comply with the following requirements concerning:

- the involvement of the professional bodies in the internal validation event, the representatives of which would verify the quality of the staff and resources and that the course design complies with the Joint Announcement;
- the involvement of an internal moderator from the awarding institution in relation to every subject assessed, at whatever level the assessment takes place;
- the appointment of an external examiner from a different QLD institution from Year 2;
- the programme of study which must include 40 credits of foundation subjects at the awarding institution;
- the assessment regulations of the programme presenter which must be the same as the awarding institution;
- the involvement of the professional bodies in subsequent periodic reviews.

4 Consultation

The working party considered that it should consult with QLD providers on the proposal to introduce a Statement of Compliance with QLD requirements. The QLD providers should be advised that the professional bodies needed to be assured that all students were sufficiently competent in the foundations of legal knowledge, whatever route taken.

Due to the variance of the requests for recognition of different arrangements being received, the professional bodies also needed to act consistently and appropriately whilst recognising the good practice already in place.

A list of collaborative arrangements which the professional bodies were aware of should be circulated with the consultation document.

5 Timescale

The consultation document would be presented to the Board at its September meeting for approval. If approved, the consultation period would last for 3 months. The new arrangements would come into force from September 2010.