

# Third Party Arrangements Procedure

## Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to provide detailed direction regarding the delivery of Victoria University Higher Education (HE) courses in partnership with other providers in Australia and offshore locations.

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

- a. formal delivery arrangements with domestic and international partners involving Higher Education (HE) award and non-award courses offered by Victoria University (VU);
- b. formal delivery arrangements with domestic and international partners involving research training courses;
- c. courses, staff and students of designated VU Campuses
- d. courses, staff and students of wholly owned subsidiaries of VU
- e. staff involved in course delivery in partnership with other providers
- f. partner institution staff involved in course delivery on behalf of VU
- g. students undertaking VU and externally-registered courses delivered in partnership with other providers (this does not include partnerships where the partner is delivering their own courses in conjunction with VU delivery)

(3) This Procedure applies to all face to face delivery methods, including burst or block delivery.

(4) This Procedure does not apply to:

- a. Online delivery partnerships, including VU Online
- b. Vocational Education and Training courses, whether award or non-award (see [Third Party Arrangements - VET Third Party Arrangements Procedure](#));
- c. Commercial activity that does not involve an award or non-award course;
- d. Research partnerships involving individual research projects, research funding or researcher collaborations;
- e. Articulation and credit recognition arrangements (see [Credit Policy](#));
- f. Dual and Joint Award arrangements (see [Courses Lifecycle - Dual and Joint Awards Procedure](#)); and
- g. Student and staff mobility arrangements.

## Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(5) [Third Party Arrangements Policy](#)

## Section 4 - Procedures

## Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer	<p>Approve any variation to VU policy needed for a particular partnership</p> <p>Oversight of VU Learning and Teaching Quality Standards Framework in educational delivery with all partnered arrangements</p> <p>Oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement</p> <p>Oversight of VU's partnership arrangements with all offshore partners and domestic partners with international students</p>
Executive Deans	<p>Ensure the achievement of approved learning outcomes in course and unit levels</p> <p>Oversee work of Site Coordinators from a College perspective</p> <p>Final approval of all teaching staff to be involved in delivering College content</p>
Chief Student Officer	<p>Oversight of student admissions and enrolments</p> <p>Oversight of student support</p>
Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships	<p>Establishment, development and continual improvement of relationships with Colleges, central departments, key partners and other stakeholders to ensure high levels of academic and service delivery.</p> <p>Management of VU course delivery across Colleges at offshore sites and any other delivery arising out of third party arrangements.</p> <p>Provision of academic guidance in relation to learning and teaching matters arising out of partnerships.</p>
Campus Director and Principal, VU Sydney and VU Brisbane	<p>Management and operation of VU Sydney and VU Brisbane across its academic and administrative functions, as well as contributing to defining its future strategic direction.</p> <p>Management of the provision of student support, facilities, and orientation at VU Sydney and VU Brisbane.</p> <p>Management of the creation and distribution of the Orientation Guide for VU Sydney and VU Brisbane.</p>
TNE Program Manager	<p>Management of the relationship between VU and the partner institution, including monitoring the progress of the agreement</p>
Site Coordinators	<p>Coordination of VU course delivery for a College at a nominated site arising out of VU third party arrangements. This includes:</p> <p>Support for the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships in managing TNE VU staff (TNE Unit Convenors and VU visiting teaching staff)</p> <p>Monitoring the quality of teaching and unit coordination</p> <p>Organising and conduct Assessment and Progress Boards to ensure timely release of results.</p> <p>Reporting dually to the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships and the Executive Dean of the College or nominee</p>
Educational Quality Coordinator (TNE & External Delivery), Partnerships	<p>Ensuring that partnership delivery complies with VU policies and procedures and with Australian and host countries' legislation</p> <p>Management of the Annual Quality Reviews and the Triennial Quality Reviews</p> <p>Coordination of the collation and analysis of data for monitoring and improvement</p>
TNE Unit Convenors	<p>Coordination of the delivery of a unit at a site or sites arising out of third party arrangements. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design, validation, production and maintenance of all unit teaching materials for the relevant Study Period.</li> <li>- Supporting the administration, management and coordination of the unit's delivery</li> <li>- Supporting the conducting, moderation and monitoring of assessment and student progress</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<p>Overall coordination of site and student support for partner delivery</p>
Academic Quality and Standards	<p>Oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement, including annual and comprehensive course monitoring, review and improvement processes</p>
Student Administration	<p>Management of student admissions and enrolments</p>
Integrity Office	<p>Oversight and management of student complaints and misconduct matters</p>

Roles	Responsibilities
Business Intelligence	Conducting of student surveys Provision of data and analysis to Partnerships, the Colleges, Academic Board, and the DVC and Senior Vice President as required

## Part B - Establishing Third-Party Arrangements

(6) The University will only enter into a collaborative arrangement with another institution or organisation whose quality of provision, vision, mission and values are compatible with its own.

(7) All courses will comply with all external and internal regulatory requirements of both Australia and the host country (if delivered outside of Australia).

(8) All award and non-award courses proposed for third-party delivery will go through the prescribed stages for assessing new VU courses or new ways of delivering courses:

- a. [Concept Proposal](#)
- b. [Business Case](#)
- c. [Course Approval](#)

(9) No third-party delivery arrangement will be entered into without the completion of due diligence checks, and the development and signature of a formal contract between VU and all partners.

(10) No extensions of existing contracts will occur (for example to additional sites or countries) without passing through the prescribed stages at (9) above.

(11) All contracts will be developed in accordance with the [Contracts Policy](#) and [Contracts Procedure](#).

## Part C - Student Selection and Support

### Student Selection, Admission and Enrolment

#### Entry qualifying requirements

(12) Admission requirements are established in the partnership agreement and will align with the admission requirements established through the University's course approval process. This includes English language requirements and any approved pathway arrangements.

(13) The Country Education Profiles hosted on the Federal DET website, <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/services-and-resources/services-for-organisations/pages/services-for-organisations.aspx> which sets out comparability of overseas and Australian qualifications as well as other publicly available data about institutions' standing, may be used to assist with the assessment.

(14) When a partner organisation introduces new qualifications, the equivalence determination, with reference to agreed standards such as the Country Education Profiles list and with advice from VU Global and Academic Quality & Standards, will be made by the Educational Quality Coordinator (TNE & External Delivery), Partnerships.

(15) Students must show evidence of [English proficiency level](#) (e.g. IELTS, TOEFL or other acceptable English test results or previous qualifications using English as a medium of instruction) at the required level as specified in VU's advice.

(16) If an applicant undertakes a VU English course to achieve an English Language Proficiency result, Partnerships is responsible for ensuring evidence is provided to Student Admissions to show that the student has successfully

completed the required level for entry to the intended course.

(17) If an applicant studied previous qualification(s) in a country recognised as offering English-language programs, English language proficiency need not be assessed. A list of countries where qualifications are deemed to be in English is maintained by VU Global.

(18) Partnerships is responsible for ensuring admission requirements (academic, English and professional experience) in the partnership agreement and marketing material accurately reflect course requirements approved by Academic Board.

### **Admission process**

(19) Partner staff are responsible under the terms of Agreements for assessing applications against the approved admissions criteria. Where applications involve non-standard elements, the Site Coordinator consults with the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships and the relevant College, who may make a determination with reference to the approved criteria in the Agreement.

(20) Applicants who have been made and accepted offers can enrol using MyVU, including those assessed by a partner with a delegated authority (if applicable) from the PVC Students.

(21) Letters of offer issued to students will include the following information:

- a. confirmation that applicants will be enrolled as VU students should they accept the offer;
- b. award courses in which students are to be enrolled; and,
- c. Credit or Recognition of Prior Learning assessment result (if applicable).

(22) Applicants may request reasons for an admission decision if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.

### **Credit, Pathways and Advanced Standing**

(23) All arrangements for course credit and advanced standing, and any pathway arrangements, for students will be managed in accordance with the [Credit Policy](#), the [Credit - Academic Credit Procedure \(HE\)](#) and the [Credit - Pathways Procedure](#).

(24) Advanced Standing results are included in letters of offer issued to applicants.

### **Enrolment process**

(25) The PVC Students, via the Student Administration team, is responsible for ensuring enrolment occurs in a timely manner after approval and that enrolment records are maintained accurately in VU Connect.

(26) Partnerships is responsible for providing Student Administration with the academic calendars for each partner.

### **Orientation**

(27) Student Administration is responsible for producing the Offshore Student Guide.

(28) The TNE Program Manager is responsible for providing the Offshore Student Guide to the Partner for distribution during student orientation, with copies provided to the Director Learning and Teaching, Partnerships, the Educational Quality Coordinator (TNE & External Delivery) and Site Coordinators.

(29) The Site Coordinator must provide evidence of orientation having occurred on a regular basis.

(30) The Campus Director and Principal, VU Sydney and Brisbane is responsible for producing the VU Sydney and VU Brisbane Orientation Guides.

(31) Partners, with support from the TNE Program Manager and Site Coordinator, are responsible for ensuring that orientation programs in each teaching period are provided for commencing students. Orientation material may cover:

- a. study related information
- b. policies and procedures relevant to Learning and Teaching
- c. Student Complaints, Appeals and Advocacy procedures
- d. learning resources, including the use of the LMS (VU Collaborate) and VU's online library resources
- e. student support services available
- f. facilities and access to physical, online and teaching resources

(32) Partnerships and the Educational Quality Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the agreement with a partner institution covers the provision of facilities to support learning and teaching, including:

- a. classrooms and other learning spaces as necessary
- b. learning resource centre spaces and collections
- c. laboratories and technical facilities (if applicable)
- d. facilities for student support services
- e. adequate teaching resources
- f. IT infrastructure and software adequate for the requirements of the Learning Management System (VU Collaborate)
- g. suitable facilities to conduct assessment.

### **Student Progress**

(33) The Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships, Site Coordinator, the College and the Partner Course Chair Coordinator work collaboratively to monitor student progress and provide support as necessary in accordance with the [Academic Progress Regulations 2016](#) and Procedures.

(34) Students must be given access to VU's Academic Progress model as specified in the Regulations and Procedures.

(35) Offshore Show Cause Panels consist of the Discipline Leader or the equivalent person in the offshore institution nominated by the Executive Dean or equivalent of the partner institution, a senior academic from VU, and the VU Site Coordinator.

(36) Records of the outcome of student progress matters must be reported to Student Administration for adding to the student's academic record.

### **Student Evaluations**

(37) Partnerships is responsible for ensuring partnership agreements include appropriate student surveys

(38) The TNE Program Manager advises VU Business Intelligence when student evaluation surveys should be opened, and advises the partner that the survey is available.

(39) Once the survey is complete, Business Intelligence undertakes the processing of survey forms, the analysis of responses and the creation of reports. Business Intelligence provides SEU (Student Evaluation of Unit) and SET (Student Evaluation of Teaching) reports to the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships and the Educational Quality Coordinator (TNE & External Delivery.) They are then provided to the Director Learning and Teaching of the relevant College.

(40) The Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships and Site Coordinator are responsible for actions arising out of

these reports. The partner institution may administer its own survey instruments. In this instance, the partner provides feedback to the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships through the quality reviews for delivery improvement.

## **Student Support**

(41) Partnerships is responsible for consulting with Student Administration to ensure that the partnership agreement covers provision of student support services in the partner institutions by appropriately qualified personnel.

(42) The partner institution is responsible for the provision of support services required under the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(Cth\)](#) and the learning and support needs of students based on advice from the Site Coordinator and relevant student support services (e.g. academic support, counselling) as specified in the Agreement. Services may include:

- a. orientation and transition support
- b. ongoing academic language and learning support, including an appropriate range of generic and discipline specific support services and development activities that are available to onshore students.
- c. access to online support from VU Library
- d. personal support such as counselling, health, welfare, accommodation and career services.

## **Student Complaints Resolution**

(43) Students in VU courses delivered by partners will have access to VU's Student Complaints Resolution and Student Appeals processes, as specified in the [Student Complaints Policy](#) and [Student Complaints Procedure](#), and the [Student Appeals Regulations 2019](#) and [Student Appeals Procedure](#).

(44) In certain cases, the partner's complaints mechanism may apply as an alternative to, or adjunct to, to VU's complaints system:

- a. if it is functionally equivalent to the VU model and compliant with the requirements of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(Cth\)](#); and
- b. it is a more expedient and immediate way to provide students with access to appropriate resolution of their concerns.

(45) The Partner Course Chair must nominate a member of staff to be the first point of contact in helping students resolve any complaints relating to their studies. The allocated staff may liaise with any concerned parties, including the Site Coordinator and Unit Convenors.

(46) The complaints mechanism which will apply must be specified in the Agreement and approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, in consultation with the General Counsel.

## **Staff Complaints Resolution**

(47) Should disputes arise during course delivery, VU and Partner teaching staff should raise concerns with the Site Coordinator in the first instance.

(48) If the matter remains unresolved, the staff member is able to raise and, if preferred, formalise their concerns with the Director Learning and Teaching, Partnerships.

(49) If still unresolved, the Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships, will consult with People and Culture (P&C) (as appropriate).

(50) People and Culture (P&C) will maintain statistics on nature and number of complaints, and statistics on outcomes of complaints.

## **Application of VU Policies**

(51) Wherever possible, all VU policies, procedures and processes will apply to students and staff in third-party delivery arrangements.

(52) In a case where VU policies need to have their application modified to suit the needs of partnership arrangements or locations, all variations from standard VU policies must be brought to the attention of the relevant Policy Owner and Risk and Compliance.

(53) Explicit exceptions to University policies must be approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

(54) Exceptions are not permissible if they will compromise VU's standards, reputation or assets.

(55) The Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships is responsible for ensuring that current versions of VU Policies and Procedures are provided to partners and regularly updated.

## **Part D - Quality Assurance and Equivalence or Learning**

### **Curriculum standards and customisation of curriculum**

(56) The Executive Dean is responsible for ensuring the achievement of approved learning outcomes in course and unit levels.

(57) The Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships is responsible for ensuring resources provided offshore are comparable to those available to VU Melbourne staff for learning, teaching and related assessment activities.

(58) Internationalisation and/or customisation of curriculum at the unit level may be required to ensure the relevance of learning outcomes in a local context. This may include:

- a. inclusion of local case studies and examples
- b. inclusion of comparative studies
- c. opportunities for students to consider issues and problems from a variety of cultural perspectives
- d. adjustment to teaching and learning strategies and assessment modes to accommodate students' various learning approaches
- e. course delivery customisation in line with partner academic calendars.

(59) With regard to internationalisation and/or customisation of curriculum, the Director Learning & Teaching, Partnerships together with the Director Learning and Teaching of the relevant College and the Unit Convenor, ensures:

- a. internationalisation and/or customisation is consistent with learning outcomes and assessment of a unit
- b. the same overall academic standard is maintained
- c. units of study are delivered entirely in English
- d. course learning outcomes are at the same AQF level for courses offered onshore and offshore.

(60) The Unit Convenor is responsible for ensuring that unit guides are consistent with the approved unit. The Unit Convenor will provide unit guides used to teach in a partner institution. If any issues arise these will be addressed by the Course Chair in the first instance. Matters which cannot be resolved by the above process will be referred to the Executive Dean.

(61) The Courses Committee of Academic Board endorses curriculum arrangements prior to course delivery.

(62) The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer is responsible for oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement.

### **Assessment processes**

(63) The Site Coordinator and Unit Convenors are responsible for making sure that assessment is undertaken in a transparent and robust manner. This includes provision of the following items to students:

- a. assessment criteria
- b. samples of marked assessment task from past delivery
- c. timely feedback to assist students in understanding their learning progress.

(64) VU's [Assessment for Learning Policy](#) and all associated Procedures will apply to assessment of students in third-party delivery arrangements, unless otherwise specified in the Agreement and with the explicit approval of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

### **Security of examination papers and assessment documents**

(65) The Chief Student Officer, via the Student Administration team, is responsible for the administration and security of examinations wherever the examinations occur, both prior to and after the examination has taken place.

(66) Where this involves the transfer of examination papers from VU Melbourne to another location and administration at a partner location, the partner's Examination Officer or equivalent will be responsible as specified in the agreement for the security of the papers once in their custody.

(67) Courses Committee endorses assessment arrangements prior to course delivery as approved by Academic Board. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer is responsible for oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement.

### **Academic Integrity**

(68) The Director, Learning and Teaching, Partnerships, the Site Coordinator and Unit Convenor, in collaboration with partner teaching staff, are responsible for ensuring that partner staff and students are aware of the University's requirements regarding academic integrity, and what this entails.

(69) Consistent with the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [Academic Integrity Guidelines](#), VU and Partner teaching staff are responsible for:

- a. including information on citation requirements and preferred referencing style on the unit guide;
- b. equipping students with language and writing skills to prevent them from committing plagiarism;
- c. providing samples of past students' work that demonstrates academic integrity;
- d. introducing tools to help students learn about proper citation techniques;
- e. referring students to the resources available on the VU Library website;
- f. educating students on the definitions of plagiarism, contract cheating and collusion, and the consequences of engaging in these activities, and
- g. using strategies in detecting plagiarism in checking assessments.

(70) Staff must report to the Site Coordinator, who will include this information in wider University reporting:

- a. Marking and moderation reports indicating plagiarism issues;
- b. Reports on annual investigated cases.



(71) TNE Unit Convenors report examination breaches to Site Coordinators.

## **Course Approval**

(72) The Executive Dean is responsible for ensuring that a new course delivery:

- a. complies with all aspects of VU's course approval process as specified in the Courses Lifecycle Policy and its Procedures, and
- b. is Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) compliant.

## **Periodic reviews**

(73) Courses within the scope of these Procedures are subject to Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) and Comprehensive Course Review (CCR) processes as set out in the [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#) and Procedures.

(74) Academic Quality and Standards is responsible for oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement, including annual and comprehensive course monitoring, review and improvement processes.

(75) Correlation analysis between student pass rate and RPL assessment results will be provided by approved institutions. Business Intelligence will be responsible for analysing this data to be provided to Academic Quality and Standards.

(76) Annual and triennial quality reviews of third-party arrangements will be conducted by Partnerships in accordance with the Reviews of [Third Party Arrangements Procedure](#).

(77) Strategic reviews of third-party arrangements will be conducted under the instruction of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer in accordance with the [Third Party Arrangements - Review of Third Party Arrangements Procedure](#).

# **Part E - Staffing Requirements**

## **Qualifications and requirements of teaching**

(78) The Director, Learning & Teaching, Partnerships is responsible for recommending VU and partner teaching staff and ensuring they:

- a. are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching; and
- b. have a standard of English proficiency (IELTS) at least one level higher than that required for students in the course.

(79) The Executive Dean of the relevant College (or nominee) is responsible for approving teaching staff for all delivery of College content.

(80) The Site Coordinator coordinates timely approval of new partner teaching staff and ensures that approved CVs are lodged with People and Culture (P&C) and Partnerships upon approval.

(81) Staff must be qualified to at least one AQF or equivalent qualification level higher than the course of study being taught, or possess equivalent professional experience according to VU's established criteria. Requirements are outlined in detail in the [Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards - Equivalence of Professional Experience to Qualifications \(Staff\) Procedure](#).

(82) Staff must have the capacity to deliver the course in the English language to an adequate level of proficiency.

## Teaching staff induction

(83) The Site Coordinator, with advice from the partner Course Chair, is responsible for ensuring a briefing is provided for VU teaching staff who will undertake teaching or knowledge transfer with a partner institution.

(84) The briefings include information on:

- a. relationship between VU and the partner institution;
- b. teaching arrangements in the partner institution;
- c. travel arrangements if required;
- d. communication protocols.

## Learning and teaching information

(85) The Site Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Partner teaching staff are provided with sufficient information to deliver a unit of study or components of it.

(86) Requirements for achieving equivalence in learning outcomes:

- a. course structure;
- b. course learning outcomes;
- c. course-relevant information for students;
- d. marking rubrics;
- e. marking standard and moderation process;
- f. specific requirements in teaching a unit, e.g. the use of specific software;
- g. [Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards Policy](#) and Procedures;
- h. [Assessment for Learning Policy](#) and Procedures;
- i. [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and Guidelines.

(87) The following will also be provided to support delivery:

- a. teaching material and assessment tasks;
- b. pedagogical advice in delivering the particular unit, including teaching students for whom English may not be the first language;
- c. advice on approaches to internationalisation;
- d. learning and teaching resources available through VU Collaborate.

## Ongoing academic support for partner teaching staff

(88) Ongoing staff support will be facilitated through:

- a. peer to peer interactions with VU colleagues through site visits and/or use of technology;
- b. guidance from Unit Convenors regarding VU curriculum design, teaching materials and preparation and moderation of assessment;
- c. opportunities to participate in curriculum design;
- d. opportunities to contribute to customisation and internationalisation of the curriculum;
- e. opportunities for participation in research activities, including supervision of research projects.

## Part F - Monitoring and Ending Third-Party Arrangements

(89) Third party delivery is monitored on an annual and triennial basis. The details of the three kinds of reviews conducted (Annual Quality Review, Triennial Quality Review and Strategic Review) are contained in the [Third Party Arrangements - Review of Third Party Arrangements Procedure](#).

(90) If a course is discontinued, effective teach out or transition plans for all enrolled students must be developed to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged.

(91) The cessation of a course will be conducted in accordance with the [Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition \(HE\) Procedure](#). The Academic Board will provide endorsement of the Teach Out Plan.

## Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(92) HESF: Standards 1.3 Orientation and Progression; 3.1 Course Design; 5.2 Academic and Research Integrity; 5.4 Delivery with Other Partners.

## Section 6 - Definitions

(93) Third Party Arrangements

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	13th February 2019
<b>Review Date</b>	13th August 2025
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Senior Vice-President
<b>Approval Date</b>	13th February 2019
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310 <hr/> Academic Quality and Standards

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Third Party Arrangements"** - A third-party arrangement is a formal agreement between VU and one or more educational institutions for the purposes of the partner institution wholly or partly delivering VU units or courses on VU's behalf.