SECTION I: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

1 General Considerations

1.1 This section describes the processes and procedures involved in the validation of collaborative provision (CP) proposals associated with the delivery of University credit by an approved partner institution under the categories of CP contained within section 2 (below). Guidance in relation to work-based learning, placements, and study abroad arrangements will be as defined in the Managed Work Placement guidance document.

1.2 It is recognised that CP arrangements need to reflect a diversity of local circumstances and it is essential to establish a framework of principles and procedures which define and protect the interests of the institutions involved. In the context of the proliferation of CP agreements such procedures are the principal means by which the University can assure the quality of the courses delivered by external institutions on its behalf and the learning experience of University students studying these courses.

1.3 In order to ensure the integrity of CP agreements the partner institutions must undertake a commitment to maintain procedures for quality assurance and control, identifying appropriate channels of communication, authority, accountability, and executive action.

1.4 Onward or subsequent contracting of any University award to a third party (sometimes referred to as serial franchising) is not permitted under any circumstances.

1.5 All marketing and publicity information pertaining to the collaborative agreement issued by the collaborating institution will require the specific prior approval of the relevant School on behalf of the University.

2 Categories of Collaborative Provision

The University operates the following categories of collaborative provision:

2.1 Franchise
A franchise describes the arrangement whereby the whole, part of (for example one year of a two year course), or discrete parts (such as individual modules) of a course are delivered in an institution other than the University by academic staff not employed by the University.

2.2 Designed and Delivered
Designed and delivered describes the arrangement whereby a programme of study is developed by an external institution and presented for validation by the University as an award of the University. Once validated, the delivery of the award is undertaken by the external institution.

2.3 Off-campus Delivery of University Provision Led by University Staff (ODUPLUS)
This describes an arrangement whereby a course validated by the University and taught by University staff is delivered at an off-campus location. It is the role of the partner institution to support student learning through provision of an appropriate range of learning resources, including library and computing facilities, and administrative, promotional and marketing services. The proportion of teaching by
University staff must constitute at least one third of the total taught delivery for each module. All learning materials must be produced by the University of Huddersfield.

2.4 Joint Awards
A joint award is a single course devised and delivered jointly between two or more institutions and leading to the conferment of a single award in the name of all partners. Arrangements for the validation of joint awards are detailed separately in this Handbook.

2.5 Articulation
An articulation arrangement describes the situation whereby the University and an external institution enter into a formal joint agreement to confirm that the learning outcomes and standards required for the award of University credit can be satisfactorily demonstrated through successful completion of the external institution’s own award or credit. Such an agreement would allow entry to an identified University award with advanced standing. Arrangements for the validation of articulation arrangements are detailed separately in this Handbook.

3 Administrative Procedures for the Validation of Collaborative Provision Activity
Not all of the following considerations will apply to all proposals. An initial consultation with colleagues in the Registry will clarify which elements require completion depending on the categorisation of the proposal presented and existing contracts with the partner institution in question.

3.1 Indicative Approval

3.1.1 The initiative to enter into a collaborative arrangement with another institution is taken by the School owning the course. The proposed financial and resource arrangements must be approved by the Dean of the School. Curriculum or academic matters in relation to collaborative provision must be approved by the School Teaching and Learning Committee, or Accreditation and Validation Panel (where separately constituted). Where the course includes modules delivered by another School on a servicing basis, the prior written agreement of that School must also be obtained.

3.1.2 For all proposals, written confirmation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor that the proposal satisfies the University’s indicators necessary for progressing a new collaborative arrangement must be obtained before the proposal is progressed.

3.2 Business Case

3.2.1 The Dean will submit a formal business case of approximately 5 pages to the University’s Standing Committee for Collaborative Provision (SCCP) giving a brief description of the nature of and rationale for the proposal, detailing the general proposals for its costing and resourcing, including the costs of validation and revalidation in addition to any standard annual costs that may apply. Where the University has no existing links with an external institution, the case made by the Dean should include explicit references to the institution’s mission, existing provision and strategic aims.

3.2.2 The documentation must include an initial financial statement agreed by Financial Services indicating the costs/charges to be borne by each partner.
3.2.3 Where the external institution has no current collaborative links with the University, the Business Case must be supported by the report of a rapporteur’s visit to the proposed partner undertaken by a member of the School submitting the proposal.

3.2.4 The rapporteur’s visit is undertaken as part of the initial development, and the report should provide information under the following headings:
   i) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure;
   ii) a brief summary of the course to be franchised;
   iii) anticipated demand for the course;
   iv) resources available for the course, both human and physical;
   v) proposals for staff development;
   vi) arrangements for quality assurance, including appointment of external examiners;
   vii) other relevant information.

3.2.5 The Business Case must be supported by signed statements from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), the Head of Registry, the Director of Finance and, where the external institution is overseas, the International Office.

3.2.6 For overseas institutions, any local or in-country government approvals which are required must be identified as part of the Business Case presentation with an indication of likely timescales and processes for these to be satisfied. The SCCP should be assured that appropriate actions will be taken to confirm such approvals which will need to be secured before the course can begin operation.

3.2.7 The University reserves the right to require a visit by a representative of its Computing and Library Services at any point if deemed necessary.

3.3 Institutional Approval

3.3.1 Where the University has no previous relationship with the proposed partner institution, an institutional approval event shall be organised to establish that the educational objectives and methods of the proposed partner are compatible with the University’s strategy and objectives.

3.3.2 Information in support of institutional approval should include reference to the following at the strategic and managerial level – where the partner institution has particular strengths which do not fall into the categories below, these should also be included:

   i) general introduction to the partner institution:
   ii) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure, and if overseas, its position within the local higher education system
   iii) history of relationship with the University (if any) and/or other experience of HE provision;
   iv) organisation and Management of the partner institution:
   v) approaches to academic management and development
   vi) Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies
   vii) procedures for resource allocation and monitoring
   viii) management of standards
   ix) Quality Assurance processes
   x) approaches to quality enhancement
The documentation should include copies of relevant internal policies, procedures and plans.

3.3.3 The proposed arrangements will be scrutinised by means of an approval event at the institution concerned, which will be organised by the School. The process of approval must include consideration of the facilities and resources which will be accessed by the proposed collaboration.

3.3.4 The approval process is undertaken by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (or nominee) and the Head of Registry (or nominee). The SCCP has the authority to request additional members (such as a representative of Computing and Library Services) as necessary.

3.3.5 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event for approval at SCCP. The report will indicate whether or not the approval is to be supported, any recommendations to be considered in the development of the relationship and any specific issues to be addressed by subsequent course validations.

3.3.6 Institutional Approval programme will usually be a separate event completed in advance of any course validation. In exceptional circumstances, it may be the first part of a combined event looking at both institutional approval and course validation. This largely (but not exclusively) depends on the scale of collaboration with the partner institution and the logistics of organisation. Where a joint event is arranged, the documentation for Institutional Approval and course validation may be submitted as a joint document.

3.3.7 Institutional approval is granted for a period of five years.

3.4 Course Validation Documentation

3.4.1 The purpose of this element of the collaborative provision validation process is to allow the validation panel to establish that the proposed course is of an appropriate standard for the award of the University to which it is intended to lead.

3.4.2 The programme of study must be a validated course of the University. For courses proposed for franchised and ODUPLUS delivery, it is likely that this exercise will already have been undertaken to allow delivery of the course at the University. A validation exercise will have considered and approved the academic standards and structure of the course. Where this has happened the documentation submitted as part of the validation process shall include the validated programme specification and module documentation.

3.4.3 Where course validation has not been previously addressed and confirmed (for example, in the case of a Designed and Delivered proposal), the approval event shall include the submission of the programme specification document and related appendices (as outlined in section B of this Handbook) by the partner institution for approval by the validation panel.

3.4.4 Where the proposed collaborative provision includes modules delivered by another School on a servicing basis or deemed to be part of a subject area owned by another School, the agreement of that School must also be obtained.
3.5 Rationale Document

3.5.1 The validation of the proposed collaboration shall include consideration of documentation and discussion to indicate that the requisite teaching experience and expertise is available, that the physical resources are appropriate and sufficient for the anticipated number of students, that the support services are able to meet the needs of the course, that the learning opportunities offered to students and the environment in which the course is delivered is appropriate to HE provision.

3.5.2 The external institution or (in the case of ODPLUS) the team seeking the collaboration must prepare a written submission providing information under the following headings:

i) the institutional setting, namely range of provision, size, and management structure, and if overseas, its position within the local higher education system

ii) history of relationship with the University (if any) and/or other experience of HE provision;

iii) the rationale for the proposal;

iv) anticipated demand for the course;

v) statements on resources available for the course, both human and physical (including curricula vitae of the programme team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course);

vi) proposals for delivery of the course including student support arrangements

vii) procedures for the management of the course and details of the quality assurance interface with the University (at the level of both the School Teaching and Learning Committee and the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee) including external examining arrangements, annual evaluation and revalidation;

viii) other information relevant to the provision.

3.6 Delivery Mechanism

3.6.1 The validation of previously approved courses already being delivered at the University will have been completed on the basis of a stated delivery mechanism - usually a weekly class contact. Explicit approval is required for the delivery of a previously validated course in a format other than the one described at validation.

3.6.2 The School seeking validation for the delivery of a course overseas must prepare documentation to support an alternative delivery mechanism as follows:

i) appropriateness of course for the proposed method of delivery,

ii) details of the delivery at the University (if delivered at the University),

iii) details and breakdown of the delivery at the host institution, including details of the proposed pattern of delivery,

iv) details of staff allocation to modules and tutorial support (both University and partner staff as relevant)

v) key features of the validated course,

vi) any changes required to accommodate the local context;

vii) signed statement from the Director of Computing and Library Services to confirm that any demand on this Service has been fully costed and approved;

viii) mechanisms for communication, student support (including pastoral care) and administrative support.
3.7 Staff Involved in Academic Support, Course Delivery and Summative Assessment

3.7.1 Collaborative proposals may include an element of support from academic staff who are not employed by the University. Explicit approval is required for all staff involved in the delivery, support or assessment of the proposed provision who are not employed by the University.

3.7.2 Documentation to support the inclusion of non-University staff in the delivery, support or assessment of provision shall be submitted as part of the validation event and shall include the CVs of the proposed team, indicating research interests and professional development activities relevant to the course. The documentation shall clarify the roles and responsibilities of all staff from the partner institution involved in the course including administrative and pastoral functions.

3.7.3 The CVs of staff not employed by the University who are subsequently appointed to the delivery team shall be approved by the relevant School Board before participation in the course commences.

3.8 Location and Premises of Delivery

3.8.1 The location and premises for the delivery of courses have to be explicitly confirmed as appropriate for the operation of HE provision.

3.8.2 Documentation describing the physical environment and resources available for learning shall be submitted as part of the validation event and shall include details of any specialised facilities or equipment required by the proposal.

3.8.3 A tour of the facilities available to the course and the students shall be included as part of the panel’s validation schedule.

3.8.4 Where a change of location or premises is required following the completion of an event, the Designated Academic Liaison Officer shall be required to undertake a site visit and submit a separate report and recommendation regarding the continuation of the collaboration to the SCCP.

3.9 Collaborative Provision Validation Event

3.9.1 The proposed arrangements will be scrutinised by means of a validation event at the institution concerned, which will be organised by the School. If the delivery of the course is proposed at a multi-campus institution, the process of validation must include a full evaluation of each campus at which it is proposed that the course will be offered.

3.9.2 The validation panel will discuss the submission with representatives of the institution, including representatives of the institution’s senior management and key members of the proposed teaching team – no more than one member of staff from the University should be present in support of the local teaching team (normally the University’s designated liaison officer). The panel will require to be shown the physical and learning resources that will be made available to the course. Where possible the panel should meet potential students or students from existing related programmes already in operation at the institution.
3.9.3 The membership of the validation panel must include:
i) a representative of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee who will act as chair of the event and who will not be drawn from the proposing School,
ii) one or more academic subject specialists,
iii) a representative of Computing and Library Services (Computing and Library Service reserve the right to request one of the academic subject specialists to act on behalf of the Service),
iv) at least one member who is an external subject specialist. CVs for the proposed external panel member(s) must be approved on behalf of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) in advance of a formal invitation being extended.
v) the Head of Registry or nominee.

3.9.4 Panel members shall be provided with, and will be expected to familiarise themselves with:

i) the Handbook for Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards;
ii) the proposed or validated programme and module documentation;
iii) the rationale document outlining the specifics of the proposed collaboration;
iv) the report of any previous stage of the validation process (such as the Institutional Approval report);
v) the report of any other previous event relevant to the course(s) or modules;
vii) the draft programme and administrative arrangements;
vii) any other relevant documentation that has been supplied.

3.9.5 The normal expectation is that the validation event will be held at the institution concerned. However, when submitting the Business Case to the SCCP, the School may choose to request that the validation event should take a form other than a visit by the panel – for example, an event held at the University with a video link to the external institution or an event held at the University with representatives from the external institution attending. Where such a request is made, a full justification for the exception should be included.

3.9.6 Panels are encouraged to identify strengths as well as weaknesses in the course(s) and modules under consideration

3.9.7 While oral reports on events may be made by the chair of a panel to representatives present at an event, the definitive report is as presented to the University’s SCCP.

3.9.8 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event for submission for approval by the Standing Committee for Collaborative Provision (SCCP). The report must provide an indication of the nature of the discussions and of the views of the panel on issues relating to the proposal. Where the panel stipulates conditions which must be complied with and/or recommendations which must be carefully considered, these must be clearly defined in the report.

4 Contract of Collaboration and Financial Schedule

4.1 Once a collaborative proposal has been approved, the Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a Contract of Collaboration detailing the academic and administrative arrangements for the course.

4.2 The Contract of Collaboration will be signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Principal of the external institution. The original documents
the Contract of Collaboration will be valid for the period of validation only and will be re-issued at each re-validation point.

4.3 The financial arrangements will be the subject of a formal financial schedule as an appendix to the Contract of Collaboration, an annual agreement between the School and the collaborating institution, and a copy will be lodged with Finance. The financial schedule must be approved by the Director of Finance (or nominee) before being issued.

5 Financial Arrangements

5.1 The financial arrangements for each collaborative activity are negotiated between the School and the external institution, although the School must consult with the Director of Finance to ensure that the proposed arrangements are acceptable to the University. The financial arrangements must cover both the School's costs and the University's central costs.

5.2 The cost of the validation is borne by the collaborating institution and the current scale of charges can be obtained from Registry. The School, in consultation with Financial Services, is responsible for the collection of the validation fee and its disbursement as appropriate, and all incidental expenses.

6 Annual Evaluation

6.1 Timetable for Annual Evaluation

Evaluation reports on collaborative courses will be prepared by the relevant body collaborating institution and sent to the Dean of the School owning the course (or nominee) at the start of the following academic session for inclusion in the Annual Evaluation process. For ODUPLUS courses, it is likely that the majority, if not all, of the report will be written by the University-based team. The Dean of the School (or nominee) will ensure that a copy of the report is submitted to the Head of Registry or nominee.

6.2 Contents of Annual Evaluation Reports

A report including information as specified in Section L.2 of the University's Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards should be produced for each course. A report written by the University's designated liaison officer must be appended, detailing:

i. the number of visits undertaken by staff at the University to the partner institution in the period covered by the report
ii. the number of visits undertaken by staff at the partner institution to the University in the period covered by the report
iii. the nature of contact between the two institutions
iv. a summary of any issues raised and dealt with – or any issues that remain outstanding
v. confirmation that all publicity has been seen and approved
vi. a critical evaluation of the activities that formed part of the annual evaluation visit

6.3 Monitoring Visits

A designated liaison officer will visit the external institution at least once a year until the first cohort has graduated and at least every two years thereafter.
7  Mid-term Review

7.1  The Function of Mid-term Review

Mid-term review is the mechanism through which the University reviews the compliance of an individual collaborative arrangement with the requirements of the quality assurance framework. The SCCP is responsible for ensuring that that each collaborative arrangement is normally subject to a mid-term review in the third year of the five year approval period.

7.2  Mid-term Review Process

7.2.1  Mid-term review will be undertaken by means of an event at the University, which will be organised by the School and undertaken by a representative of the SCCP and a member of Registry staff. The event will examine the standard documentation which supports the quality assurance framework - such as records of Student Panel meetings, Course Committee minutes, external examiner reports and responses, annual evaluation reports, approval of additional staff from the partner institution teaching on the provision, minutes of DALO visits and Annual Executive meetings.

7.2.4  The member of Registry staff will prepare a report on the event. The report will be submitted to the School for comment and the both the report and the School's commentary will be submitted for approval by the SCCP.

8  Collaborative Revalidation

8.1  The Function of Collaborative Revalidation

Revalidation is the mechanism through which the Senate reviews and assesses the quality of its academic provision and, as part of this, the revalidation event will consider the appropriateness and achievement of the general and specific aims and the objectives of the course. The University's Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for ensuring that each collaborative arrangement normally is subject to revalidation at least once every five years.

8.2  Collaborative Revalidation Process

8.2.1  Revalidation will be undertaken by means of an event at the external institution, which will be organised by the School and will mirror the procedures, panel membership, documentation and the issues identified for initial approval with the additional requirement that a critical appraisal will be submitted by the delivery team analysing the performance of the course and the experience of the students in the validation period. The programme specification and module specification documents should also be reproduced - with proposed changes or additions highlighted where these documents are written by the partner institution.

8.2.2  As part of the revalidation event the panel shall meet students currently registered on the course or recently graduated from it.

8.2.3  The normal expectation is that the revalidation event will be held at the institution concerned. However, the Dean may choose to make a request to the SCCP that the revalidation event should take a form other than a visit by the panel – for example, an event held at the University with a video link to the external institution or an event held at the University with representatives from the external institution attending.
Where such a request is made, a full justification for the exception should be included.

8.2.4 The Head of Registry or nominee will prepare a report on the event. The report will be submitted for approval by the SCCP.

9. Termination of Agreement

9.1 Decisions to terminate agreements may be initiated either by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), as a result of strategic decisions about the future of the collaborative provision or as a result of concerns expressed about its operation, or by the Dean of the School identified as having responsibility for the course in the Contract of Collaboration in consultation with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

9.2 A decision to terminate must be approved by either the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in consultation with SCCP.

9.3 Arrangements for the support of students who have yet to complete an award will be submitted to the SCCP for approval.