

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS – PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC APPROVAL

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Summary/Description:	
<p>This document sets out the procedures that shall be applied to the academic approval of an Articulation Agreement. An Articulation Agreement is an agreement whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advanced standing to a University of Winchester programme.</p> <p>A summary of changes to this document appears below.</p>	

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2015/16. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

Implementation date	Changes Approved by Senate
5 October 2016	No changes

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1. INTRODUCTION

The University may determine it is advantageous to enter into Articulation Agreements with regional, national, or international Higher Education providers. The definition of 'Articulation' is given in Section 2 of this document.

Articulation Agreements fall under the remit of Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code. Procedures for the Institutional Approval (essentially covering due diligence) of articulation proposals are detailed in the *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy*. The Academic Approval of an articulation proposal set out in this document proceeds from Institutional Approval. Despite this, it is prudent for the proposing Department/Faculty in the University to begin preparing the documentation detailed in Section 4 of this document at the same time as preparing the documents for Institutional Approval.

2. DEFINITION OF ARTICULATION

This document adopts the definition of articulation provided by Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code:

*A process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are **automatically entitled** (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree-awarding body. These arrangements, which are subject to formal agreements between the parties, normally involve credit accumulation and transfer, so that credit achieved for the approved study at the first provider is transferred to contribute to the programme and award completed at the second (the degree-awarding body). The two separate components are the responsibility of the respective organisations delivering them but, together, contribute to **a single award** (of the degree-awarding body). Students normally have a contractual relationship with the organization which delivers the first component and subsequently with the degree-awarding body.¹*

'Advanced standing' means that an applicant is normally admitted to either Level 5 or Level 6 of an Undergraduate Honours degree. This advanced standing is entered clearly on the student's Higher Education Achievement Report. Through the approval process in this document the University assures itself of the standards of the programme from which students are automatically progressing and the academic articulation between the programme of the Partner and the programme of the University.

The difference between a Progression Agreement (Advanced Standing) and an Articulation Agreement is that in the former the applicant has no guarantee of admission and their application may or may not be accepted by the University, whilst in the latter the applicant who has completed a programme articulated onto a University of Winchester programme is *guaranteed* acceptance.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide the procedures that apply to the entire process of approval of articulations:

1. All Articulation Agreements shall be entered into only after appropriate due diligence procedures carried out at the institutional level – this is covered in the *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy*;
2. All Articulation Agreements shall be entered into following full curriculum mapping, externally scrutinised;
3. All Articulation Agreements shall be appropriately approved, monitored and kept under review.

¹ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B10.pdf> (emphasis added).

4. ACADEMIC APPROVAL OF ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

The stages of Academic Approval are detailed in this section. Academic Approval follows from Institutional Approval.

4.1 Documentation for Academic Approval

The following portfolio of documents shall be completed by the proposing Department/Faculty and submitted to Quality Office according to an agreed Academic Approval schedule.

1. Outline of the proposal and rationale (for information);
2. A document(s) detailing: the programme delivered at the Partner (presented in a Programme Specification, Definitive Document, or equivalent); staff involved in the delivery of the programme at the Partner (this could be through the presentation of CVs); the academic standards of the Partner's programme; and the frameworks of the Partner that secure academic standards (this can be extracted from the Institutional Approval documents);
3. The Programme Specification and the Module Descriptors of the validated University of Winchester programme onto which articulation is proposed;
4. Documents detailing the articulation between the Partner's programme and the University of Winchester programme. This is the **mapping document**, which must demonstrate clearly that applicants entering from the Partner's programme will have achieved equivalence in terms of learning outcomes, academic credit accumulation, and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in relation to University of Winchester students enrolled on the articulated programme at the same point. Marking and grading criteria used by the Partner must be supplied, as well as samples of assessed work by the Partner, and external examiner reports (or equivalent). As detailed in the criteria considered by the Approval Panel this mapping document must set out the content, level, and volume of the Partner's programme;
5. A document detailing any PSRB requirements or considerations incumbent upon the University of Winchester programme, if any.

Quality Office shall append to this documentation the Site Visit Report (presented previously as part of the Institutional Approval process); minutes of the Institutional Approval Panel; and the draft Articulation Agreement. This document (*Articulation Agreements – Procedures for Academic Approval*) and the *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy* shall also be supplied by Quality Office.

4.2 Academic Approval Panel scrutiny and outcomes

An Academic Approval Panel shall be assembled and approved by the Director of Academic Quality and Development to scrutinise the documentation. This Panel shall act on behalf of Senate Academic Development Committee. Panel membership is defined as follows:

- A senior academic member of the University outside the proposing Faculty, and normally with experience of Collaborative Provision (Chair);
- An academic member of staff outside the proposing Faculty (and normally distinct from the Faculty in which the Chair is based);
- An external academic, normally the external examiner of the University of Winchester programme onto which articulation is proposed;
- A student from the University;
- Quality Officer (Collaborative Provision), as Officer.

The key criteria against which the Panel reports to Senate Academic Development Committee are as follows:

1. That the articulation between the two programmes is clear and robust;
2. That the programme of the Partner has been clearly mapped onto the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;

3. That based on the evidence supplied (the work of students, the application of the grading criteria, and the reports from external examiners) the University may be assured that the outputs of the work of the Partner's students meets UK Higher Education thresholds for academic standards, as defined by the UK Quality Code, and that the content, level and volume of study meets UK Higher Education expectations;
4. That the quality assurance framework of the Partner is sound, and the monitoring processes of the University are robust;
5. That the draft Articulation Agreement is comprehensive and protects the interests of students, and of both parties.

Members of the Panel shall contribute electronically, and the Quality Officer (Collaborative Provision) shall draw up a report with Recommendations, agreed with the Chair. Before completion of the Report it is recommended that the Chair, the Quality Officer, and the University proposer from the Department/Faculty meet to ensure good understanding of the proposal.

The Panel has two options:

1. It may approve the Articulation Agreement for a set period of time (normally defined at the Institutional Approval stage), with Recommendations;
2. It may **not** approve the Articulation Agreement on academic grounds, giving clear feedback to the proposing Department/Faculty.

Following agreement of the report by the Chair, an Executive Committee of Senate Academic Development Committee will set any Conditions and Recommendations as appropriate. Conditions are required to be met if the Articulation Agreement is to be signed. Recommendations require a response from the proposing Department/Faculty.

When all Conditions are met to the satisfaction of the Chair the Articulation Agreement shall be signed by both parties, normally the Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) and the equivalent senior officer from the Partner.

The Articulation Agreement shall be signed by both parties prior to any advertising of the articulation opportunity by either the University or the Partner.

The Academic Approval report shall be submitted to Senate Academic Development Committee.

4.3 Record keeping and public information

The final version of the Articulation Agreement shall be kept on file by the Quality Officer with responsibility for Collaborative Provision, with copies distributed electronically to Student Recruitment and Admissions, Registry, and the relevant Department/Faculty.

All documentation relating to the approval of the articulation shall be retained by the Quality Office.

Details of the Articulation Agreement shall be recorded in the Register of Collaborative Provision maintained by Quality Office and posted on the public webpages.

5. AGREEMENT REVIEW

Details of the Annual Review and Institutional Review (the latter when the period of the Articulation Agreement is close to its renewal point) of Articulation Agreements is covered in the *Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy*. If re-approved institutionally the Academic Approval process will be run again.