

Policy Title: Third-Party Arrangements – Educational Partnerships

Policy Owner: Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor

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Dual or Jointly-Badged Awards**

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1. INTENT

This policy relates to the delivery of ECU courses or programs whether in Australia or overseas, wholly or in part, in a delivery arrangement with a third-party education provider and sets out the requirements and responsibilities for ensuring compliance with relevant higher education legislation, standards and regulatory requirements.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

2.1. This policy applies to formal Educational Partnerships or arrangements/agreements:

2.1.1. Involving the delivery of award and non-award courses offered by ECU either in Australia, overseas (by means of a transnational education program) or online including: higher education courses; Jointly Badged Awards; licensing of course materials; short courses; training events; single subject study; delivery of workshops or events; and co-provider arrangements for training services associated with training package qualifications and VET accredited courses; and

2.1.2. Where there is an arrangement with a Third-Party to provide services such as program or course delivery (teaching, learning and assessment); facilities; student admission services; library services; information services; student support services and/or any other relevant services required to support the delivery of the course or program.

2.2. This policy does not apply to:

2.2.1. Commercial activity that does not include the delivery of ECU award or non-award courses (see [Joint Arrangements Policy](#));

2.2.2. Joint Doctor of Philosophy Programs (see [Joint Doctor of Philosophy Programs Policy](#));

2.2.3. Research Agreements or collaborative research (see [Research Agreements, Collaborative Research and Conflicts of Interest Policy](#));

2.2.4. Arrangements where the University participates in academic cooperation but does not undertake any form of educational delivery (including but not limited to credit transfer; articulation; student and staff mobility; study tours); and

2.2.5. Arrangements involving industry partners that the University enters into to facilitate activities such as work placements; internships; research training or accreditations.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Due Diligence	The process of investigation pursuant to which the University assesses the suitability of a Third-Party prior to entering into an Educational Partnership.
Educational Partnership	Partnerships or arrangements/agreements involving delivery of Edith Cowan University courses or programs whether in Australia, overseas or online, wholly or in part, in a delivery arrangement with a Third-Party.
Jointly-Badged Awards	An award which is developed and delivered in collaboration with another institution (being the Third-Party) and which is jointly- badged with the crest of ECU and the Third-Party institution.
Third-Party	Means a legally established entity separate from the University with which the University has a formal relationship for the purposes of delivering programs or courses and associated support services to students.
VET	Vocational Education and Training

4. POLICY CONTENT

4.1 Principles

The following overarching principles will apply to an arrangement with a Third-Party for an Educational Partnership:

- All students enrolled in a University program or course are entitled to the same rights and responsibilities regardless of delivery arrangements for the program or course;
- Academic standards and learning outcomes of courses and programs delivered through an Educational Partnership must be equivalent to those provided directly by the University;
- The University has ultimate responsibility for the quality of its programs and compliance with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency regulated Higher Education Standards, Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 and all other relevant regulatory standards and requirements; and

- When developing and approving Educational Partnerships, the University should be guided by the following key considerations:
 - Alignment with the strategic direction and values of the University;
 - Enhancement of domestic and international reputation and brand of the University;
 - Compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements;
 - Sustainability with due consideration of financial and business risk;
 - Maintenance of quality standards of the University;
 - Equivalence of curriculum, assessment and graduate outcomes; and
 - Regular evidence-based review, benchmarking and continuous improvement.

4.2 Development, Approval and Renewal of Educational Partnerships

- 4.2.1. All Educational Partnerships must be formalised by a legally binding third-party agreement.
- 4.2.2. Negotiations for the establishment of a proposed Educational Partnership can only be undertaken with the prior approval of:
 - a. In the case of Educational Partnerships involving delivery overseas, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) in accordance with the requirements of the Transnational Education Agreement Procedures Handbook;
 - b. In the case of Educational Partnerships (including Jointly-Badged Awards) involving delivery in Australia or online, the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
- 4.2.3. Persons seeking to involve the University in an Educational Partnership must undertake a due diligence process (including risk assessment) involving input and advice from the following areas:
 - a. Relevant school(s);
 - b. FBSC, SSC, IO, Library, CLT, SSC, SGSC and any other relevant service centres; and
 - c. Any additional stakeholders e.g. accreditation bodies.
- 4.2.4. All Educational Partnerships must be reviewed and endorsed by the Academic Board before any agreement or arrangement is entered into and must be reported to the University Council for noting.
- 4.2.5. Educational Partnership agreements must be approved and executed in accordance with University Delegations and Authorities.
- 4.2.6. Major changes to, and renewal of, an Educational Partnership requires the same approvals process as a new arrangement and must consider the principles outlined above. A major change will include the addition of new courses or programs; the addition of new delivery locations; changes to the Third-Party which affect their ability to maintain the partner suitability requirements; and changes to the Third-Party that affect their ability to achieve the same outcomes under the Educational Partnership.
- 4.2.7. All University policies, procedures and guidelines related to teaching, learning, courses, programs and student support apply to the delivery of all programs leading

to an Edith Cowan University award. All Educational Partnerships must operate in accordance with all such policies and procedures.

4.3 Monitoring and Review of Educational Partnerships

4.3.1. The University will maintain a database of the details of its Educational Partnerships.

4.3.2. A report will be provided to Academic Board on each Educational Partnership annually;

a. in the case of Educational Partnerships involving delivery overseas, by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) and in the case of Educational Partnerships involving delivery in Australia or online, by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor; and

b. the reports will include:

- i. Evidence of academic quality, equivalency, and regulatory and legislative compliance;
- ii. Evidence of the strategic value of the partnership;
- iii. Student enrolment and performance data (including comparisons with similar ECU cohorts);
- iv. Outcomes of survey data for students enrolled in the partnership (including comparisons for similar ECU cohorts); and
- v. Financial performance.

4.3.3. An audit of each Educational Partnership will be conducted periodically in accordance with the University's Quality Review Framework, with an audit to be completed, endorsed by Academic Board and noted by Council (via the Quality, Audit and Risk Committee) at least every 5 years.

4.4 Termination of Educational Partnerships

4.4.1. Termination of an Educational Partnership must be carried out in a manner that ensures ECU's interests are protected, including the interests of ECU's students.

4.4.2. When making decisions on the termination of an Educational Partnership, the University will consider:

- a. Teach out responsibilities to students;
- b. Legal, financial and reputational implications;
- c. Other areas of the University involved in the partnership; and
- d. Compliance with relevant regulatory and legislative requirements.

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following

Policy Owner

The Policy Owner, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

Contact Person

The Manager, Academic Governance and Standards is responsible for the maintenance of this policy.

Staff are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

All members of the University community are expected to comply with University Policy.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1 The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:

- [Transnational Education Agreement Procedures Handbook](#)
- [Jointly-Badged Awards Guidelines](#)

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

Policy Owner	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
All Enquiries Contact:	Manager, Academic Governance and Standards
Telephone:	08 6304 2179
Email address:	j.mccaffrey@ecu.edu.au

8. APPROVAL HISTORY

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