



Link Tutor Guide

1. Introduction

This purpose of this guide is to outline the main areas of support that UoL Link Tutors will be expected to provide to partners. Activities may vary according to the partner and the category of collaboration, but the core purpose of a Link Tutor remains the same; to act as a main point of contact between the partner and UoL.

2. Definition

A **Link Tutor** is the lead contact within a Department/School Faculty at the University of Liverpool for a particular collaborative partner, or for a programme/suite of programmes within a strategic partnership.

3. Role of the Link Tutor

The Link Tutor is an academic member of UoL staff, within the corresponding Department/School/Faculty, who acts as a main point of contact between the partner and the University, keeping communication open and signposting to other departments where required. They play a vital role in the collaborative student journey, from application to graduation, and are key figures in helping to ensure that the experience of such students is at least equivalent to that of those on-campus.

Link Tutors also have an important part to play in assuring the quality of provision delivered in partnership with other institutions and organisations, enabling the University to maintain oversight of the arrangement, as well as encouraging and promoting opportunities for enhancement.

4. Appointment of Link Tutors

4.1 Appointment

It is the responsibility of the Dean of the relevant School or Head of Department to nominate a Link Tutor. For potential new partners, the nominated Link Tutor should be identified in the partner proposal (Form A) which is submitted to the Due Diligence Panel for consideration. AQSD will confirm Link Tutor details annually, however, the Dean of School/Head of Department must inform both AQSD and the collaborative partner if the Link Tutor changes during the course of the academic year. The Link Tutor is expected to advise AQSD and other relevant colleagues of any changes of personnel at the partner.

It is important that the Link Tutor is afforded sufficient time to undertake the duties associated with the role, and this should be incorporated into workload allocations as appropriate.

4.2 Criteria

Link Tutors should have an in-depth knowledge of the arrangement and should ideally have experience working with collaborative partners. They must be able to establish strong working relationships with external colleagues and have familiarity with requirements of Higher Education sector external regulatory and advisory bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the Office for Students (OfS), the Competition and Markets Authority, as well as any relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), for example the General Medical Council, the British Psychological Society and the Engineering Council.

In addition, they should be conversant with internal processes, procedures and regulations, particularly those related to collaborative provision, such as Institutional Review and Annual Monitoring. AQSD can provide advice and guidance on these, as required.

Link Tutors need to be both proactive, engaging in advance planning through the academic year, and reactive, able to resolve issues as they arise, through timely intervention.

5. Responsibilities

The main focus of a Link Tutor is to act as the key point of contact for queries relating to the relevant partnership. They should also raise awareness of the partnership among colleagues in the School/Department/Faculty.

The list below is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, as activities may vary across individual partners and categories of partners.

5.1 Quality assurance

- Attend and be involved in, the preparation for Institutional Reviews/Joint Validation/Revalidation Events, including completion, or supporting the partner in the completion of the Self-Evaluation Document and collation of relevant documentary evidence.
- Respond to issues raised by UoL's External Examiner in relation to the partnership. Advise External Examiners of the relationship and share External Examiner reports with the partner, where appropriate.
- Share relevant and up to date UoL policies, procedures and regulations, providing advice and guidance on the implementation of these, or directing partner colleagues to AQSD where necessary. Explain any changes/updates that will affect the partner.
- Monitor adherence to the Code of Practice on Assessment for franchise, joint and dual award arrangements.

- Ensure that the partner is using the correct version of the Code of Practice on Assessment, and is made aware of any updates or changes.
- Ensure the terms of the Operational Framework (where appropriate) are upheld. Where Operational Frameworks exist, these can be requested from AQSD.
- Advising the partner, where relevant, on the procedures for dealing with Academic Integrity issues, appeals, complaints and discipline.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place for the moderation of assessments (where appropriate).
- Ensure the programme(s) operate in accordance with the Institutional Agreement and Quality Assurance Operational Framework (QAOF) (where applicable).
- Advise partner institutions of the Faculty process for establishing Recognised Teacher Status for relevant staff.
- Ensure students have the opportunities to meet the expectations of PSRBs (where appropriate).

5.2 Curriculum

- Where appropriate, provide support and advice to the partner in curriculum development during the approval process.
- Conduct curriculum mapping, as part of the initial partner approval process, as well as whenever material changes are made to the curriculum at either institution, and at Institutional Review (Year 0, 2+2 and articulation arrangements), liaising with the partner, to ensure students are suitably prepared for their studies at UoL.
- Liaise with the partner with regards to curriculum reviews, design, modifications and revalidations. Advise the partner of any upcoming changes to the curriculum or structure of the programme(s) that might impact on the students. Manage the relevant programme through UoL approval processes where appropriate.
- Liaise with partner with regards to PSRB requirements and compliance
- Where relevant, involve the partner in design workshops for revalidations and new provision and also in IPRs.
- Advise the partner on subject specific areas, assisting with curriculum development where appropriate.
- Advise on learning and teaching issues.

5.3 Monitoring

- Completion and submission of the Annual Monitoring (AMR) Report to the University via AQSD, using the template provided. The AMR **must** be signed off as approved by the Head of Department and Dean of School before submission.
- Ensure that any issues or points for Department/School/Faculty action are raised to the appropriate level.
- Review and approve the partners' public information related to UoL e.g. student handbooks, websites and marketing materials. Confirmation of this is requested in the AMR.
- Monitoring of student performance and achievement both at the partner and after transfer to UoL (where applicable), to ensure that students on programmes with a collaborative element are given the tools they need to succeed in their studies.
- Ensure that partner staff who are associated with the UoL award are appropriately qualified for the role, and where appropriate have been approved by UoL as recognised teachers / supervisors prior to the commencement of their role. Whilst staff delivering on articulation arrangements do not require UoL approval, the Link Tutor should have an overview of the experience of the staff involved in the programme.
- Maintain an oversight of the process of approval of the UoL approved staff list at the partner.

5.4 Visits and meetings

- Attendance at Joint Liaison Groups (JLGs) /Joint Management Groups (JMGs) where appropriate.
- Minimum of two meetings with partner programme teams per academic year, either via video-conferencing or in the form of a visit to the partner, where feasible.
- Attendance at partner Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies where required for the confirmation of marks and awards for joint awards.

5.5 Student Experience & Enhancement

- Play an active role in recruitment, enrolment and induction, where relevant and required under the institutional agreement.
- Ensure that the information provided to students who are progressing to UoL is accurate, and that students are provided with sufficient and appropriate information to ensure a smooth transition to the University

- Periodically review the partner’s admissions procedures and ensure that they remain in compliance with the Institutional Agreement and UoL admissions policies.
- Investigate any issues with access to resources, facilities and services to which partner students and staff are eligible. Liaise with AQSD and UoL Professional Services.
- Share good practice and innovation.
- Encourage enhancement activities such as guest lectures, taster days and social events.
- Respond to issues raised by partner programme teams, students and professional services staff. Report issues to the UoL Department/School and to AQSD, where necessary.
- Review student feedback.
- Provide guidance for partners on ensuring that there is appropriate student representation
- Where appropriate, provide support for the process of closure of the partnership

6. Indicative timeline of activities/checklist

Many of the Link Tutors’ duties are ongoing throughout the year; however, certain tasks must be performed at specific intervals to ensure the continued success of the partnership. Dates are indicative: timings will vary between partners and some tasks may not apply to all partners or categories of partner.

Date/ Frequency	Action	Responsibility	Date(s) completed	Partner Category
June	Boards of Examiners	Chair of BoE – Link Tutor attendance required		Joint Awards, Branch Campus, Franchise
July	Review partner student handbooks to ensure information is accurate and up to date. Ensure all references to UoL or to the partnership are correct.	Link Tutor		All

August	Reassessment period			
September	Boards of Examiners (reassessment)	Chair of BoE – Link Tutor attendance required		Joint Awards, Branch Campus, Franchise
September	Enrolment/Induction – bespoke sessions at UoL, involvement in induction at the partner (e.g. conveying the nature of the arrangement).			Franchise/Joint/ Dual
	Support transition to UoL (where applicable)	UoL Department, led by Link Tutor		Articulation
	Advise partners of any changes to CoPA			
December/July	Graduation Ceremonies	Provide partners with links to information for staff and students where appropriate		
December	Module Evaluation	Link Tutor confirms the partner has completed.		All
January	Annual Monitoring Report	Link Tutor. Sign off required by Dean of School/Institute.		All
January/February	Assessment Period			
January/February	Moderation	Link Tutor/ appointed moderator		Articulations (early stages), Franchised Modules/Programmes
January/February	Boards of Examiners	Chair of BoE – Link Tutor attendance required		Joint Awards, Branch Campus, Franchise
May	Assessment Period			
Minimum once per year	Joint Liaison Group	AQSD – attendance required by Link Tutor		

At least biannually	Meetings with the partner programme team (face-to-face or video-conferencing)	Link tutor, UoL programme team, partner programme team, professional services where appropriate.		All
Whenever material changes are made to the curriculum at either institution, and as part of the documentation required for Institutional Review	Curriculum Mapping – endorsement via Curriculum Board and approval by School Scrutiny Panel, then reported to Collaborative Provision Committee. Curriculum Mapping must include external review	Link Tutor Secretary of relevant CB and SSP		Articulations, Year 0, 2+2
5-year cycle	Institutional Review/ Joint Revalidation Event	AQSD, assistance in preparation, attendance and participation by Link Tutor		All

7. Useful Links

External

QAA UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Partnerships

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships>

Office for Students

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA): Higher education: consumer law advice for providers and students

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students>

Internal

University of Liverpool Code of Practice on Assessment

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-on-assessment/>

Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/collaborative-provision/policies-and-procedures/>