

Academic Due Diligence Procedure

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Policy Supported:

[Transnational Education via Partnerships Policy](#)

Audience:

Staff

Objectives:

- To maintain and enhance the reputation and resources of Murdoch University by:
 - providing a process for conducting academic due diligence;
 - ensuring potential risks to academic standards associated with the provision of transnational education (“TNE”) via a third-party partnership are researched, assessed and monitored; and
 - ensuring third-party partner providers are able to deliver courses and units to a standard equivalent to that at Murdoch University’s in Perth and provide a suitable student experience.

Definitions:

Any defined terms below are specific to this document. The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms.

- “Collaboration Agreement” means an agreement between Murdoch University (or subsidiary) and a Third Party Provider, under which that Third Party Provider delivers courses and/or student services on behalf of Murdoch University.
- “Third Party Provider” means a third party that delivers courses and/or student services on behalf of Murdoch University, or is proposed to do so, as the context requires.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Different levels of University staff have different levels of responsibility in relation to this procedure as outlined below:

- Pro Vice Chancellor (Transnational Education), Deans Academic Operations and Deans International, or their respective delegates, collaborate with the

Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy Office to undertake academic due diligence activities.

- The Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy Office conducts, or in the case of external review coordinates, academic due diligence activities in collaboration with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Transnational Education), Deans Academic Operations and Deans International, or their respective delegates.
- The Academic Quality Committee considers academic due diligence reports and makes recommendations for remediation in respect of material issues with the potential to impact academic standards or the student experience.

Implementation Steps:

What is Academic Due Diligence?

1. Academic due diligence is an assessment of the ability of a Third Party Provider to deliver courses, units and services to Murdoch University's academic standards and to provide a suitable student experience.
2. Without limiting the general effect of item 1, in the case of a prospective Third Party Provider, academic due diligence must include assessing:
 - 2.1 whether the Third Party Provider has a legal mandate or authority to enter into a Collaboration Agreement with the University or its subsidiary;
 - 2.2 previous experience of the Third Party Provider in partnering with a university (or its subsidiary);
 - 2.3 independent academic references provided by the Third Party Provider;
 - 2.4 whether the Third Party Provider has a track record of successfully delivering tertiary education courses;
 - 2.5 the legal certification, course accreditation and registration requirements that the Third Party Provider must meet for the purpose of delivery of Murdoch University courses and services in the relevant jurisdiction(s);
 - 2.6 the existence, details and outcomes of relevant audits conducted by regulatory agencies;
 - 2.7 the policies and processes of the Third Party Provider as they relate to learning, teaching, research and research training, student management, student well-being, equity and diversity, complaints, grievances, timetabling and fee setting;
 - 2.8 the academic governance and academic quality assurance arrangements of the Third Party Provider, including: (a) course management; (b) evaluation of teaching; and (c) monitoring of student progress and performance;
 - 2.9 the availability and quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources to be used by the Third Party Provider for learning, teaching, research and research training, student welfare, academic support, communication and records management, including a consideration of health and safety; and
 - 2.10 the ability of the Third Party Provider to make accurate and sufficient information available students and prospective students.

3. In the case of continued due diligence following entry into a Collaboration Agreement as set out in item 7, academic due diligence will include an assessment of the capacity of the Third Party Provider to fulfill its obligations under the Collaboration Agreement relating to the delivery of courses, units and services.
4. Academic due diligence processes may include a site visit, document review and other relevant fact-finding activities.
5. Where the Third Party Provider is delivering, or will deliver, Murdoch University's courses in a language other than English, academic due diligence will need to consider the Third Party Provider's ability to procure the expertise and capacity required to translate materials for academic provision and quality assurance purposes.

Who Carries Out Academic Due Diligence?

6. The Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy Office, in collaboration with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Transnational Education) , Deans Academic Operations and Deans International, or their respective delegates, will undertake (or, in the case of an external review, coordinate) academic due diligence.

When is Academic Due Diligence Conducted?

7. Academic due diligence must be conducted:
 - 7.1 prior to establishing or renewing a Collaboration Agreement with a Third Party Provider;
 - 7.2 when there has been a significant change in the circumstances of an existing Third Party Provider;
 - 7.3 as a part of all relevant thematic reviews and curriculum health checks;
 - 7.4 as a part of an internal review in the second year, and then every fourth year following, of each Collaboration Agreement; and
 - 7.5 as a part of an external review in the fourth year, and then every fourth year following, of each Collaboration Agreement.

Outcomes

8. The Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy Office will periodically report the outcomes of due diligence activities to Academic Quality Committee.
9. Reports received by Academic Quality Committee are distributed to Deputy Vice Chancellor (International), Pro Vice Chancellor (Transnational Education) and Management Boards of the relevant operational locations.
10. The Academic Quality Committee will consider periodic reports received under item 8, monitor academic standards, and make recommendations to Academic

Council on the remediation of material issues with the potential to impact academic standards or the student experience.

Performance Indicators:

- Completed and approved due diligence reports may be used as a basis for making decisions about Third Party Providers and proposed Collaboration Agreements with those Third Party Providers.

Related Documents:

[Internationalisation Policy](#)

[Language of Instruction Procedure](#)

[Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy](#)

[Recordkeeping Policy](#)

[TNE Contract Management Procedure](#)

[TNE Course Offerings with Partners Procedure](#)

[TNE Financial Management Procedure](#)

References:

There are no references.

Approval and Implementation:

Approval Authority:	Director International Director Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy
Responsible Officer(s):	Manager Quality Assurance
Contact Officer:	Manager Quality Assurance

Revision History:

Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date Approved	Effective Date	Next Review Date	Resolution No. (if applicable)
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