Partnerships and Programmes Review and Development Policy (PPRDP)

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Author:	Head of Academics
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Linked policies/ documents:	Risk Management Policy Risk Register Partnership and Business Development Panel (PBDP) Strategic Advisory and Planning Board (SAPB), Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel (APREP), Academic Board (AcB)
External reference	OfS Conditions of Registration [https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/] QAA Quality Code Core Practices
Audience:	BoG, Senior Management Team

1 Contents

1 Introduction

Oxford Business College is committed to being entrepreneurial and proactively pursuing opportunities to expanding the College's offerings. The Partnership and Programme Review and Development Policy (PPRDP) outlines our approach to establishing and fostering new partnerships and/or programmes of study, ensuring alignment with our strategic plan, developments in the Higher Education (HE) Sector, regional and national labour market needs, and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

The policy is closely connected to the Risk Management Framework, which encompasses the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Register. These documents address the risks related to the expansion of the College's provision through partnership development.

New partnerships and programmes undergo a thorough assessment for quality, scalability, and appropriateness. This is achieved through due diligence and validation processes carried out by both the College and its respective partners, ensuring the highest standards are met and maintained throughout the collaboration.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Partnership and Programme Review and Development Policy (PPRDP) and its objectives, which are focused on ensuring that any new partnership or academic programme is thoroughly assessed for academic suitability and viability. The policy describes the implementation process, policy framework, and core practices for maintaining quality and standards in higher education. It also details the procedure for developing new programs and partnerships, identifying necessary changes to existing programs, and the approval process for these changes.

3 Scope

- Establishing a clear framework for identifying, assessing, and developing new partnerships and programmes of study, ensuring alignment with Vision, Mission and Values of OBC and continue with UK HE sectors, regional and national labour market needs.

- Outlining the procedures and processes for evaluating new partnership and programme opportunities, including due diligence procedures carried out by the College.

- Describing the roles and responsibilities of various committees and stakeholders in overseeing and approving new partnerships and programmes.

- Detailing the risk management approach concerning partnership development, including identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential risks associated with new partnerships and programmes.

4 Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Partnership and Programme Review and Development Policy (PPRDP) is to identify methods and procedures for ensuring that any new partnership or programme is vetted for academic and strategic suitability and viability.

- To provide the Partnership and Business Development Panel (PBDP), Strategic Advisory and Planning Board (SAPB), Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel (APREP), Academic Board (AcB) with guidance on how to evaluate new partnerships and programmes under consideration so they are in line with the College's strategic plan and its learning, teaching and assessment strategy.

- To ensure that the College scrutinises all new partnerships and programmes according to agreed criteria.

- To coordinate the decision-making processes of the Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel which reports to the Academic Board, with the Partnership and Business Development Panel that reports to the Strategic Advisory and Planning Board and, thereby, ensure that academic and business needs of the College are evaluated before the Board of Governors (BoG) give their approval.

- To ensure that before any new partnership or programme is introduced at the College, the needs of current and future students are prioritised.

5 Flow Chart for New Partnership Development

Any new partnership should be considered for its academic and strategic suitability, this is done in the following order and with independence between panels and boards before final approval by the Board of Governors.

Stage 1 - The Partnership and Business Development Panel to consider strategic suitability.

Stage 2 -The Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel to consider academic suitability.

Stage 3 - The Partnership and Business Development Panel that reports to the Strategic Advisory and Planning Board for oversight and approval.

Stage 4 - The Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel which reports to the Academic Board for oversight and approval.

Stage 5 - The Strategic Advisory and Planning Board and the Academic Board reports to the Board of Governors for final approval and sign off.

Stage 6 – The Board of Governors review recommendations and authorise organisational approval.

6 Programme and Partnership Development

6.1 Approach to Partnership Development

The College believes that partnerships are vital to the long-term success of the organisation and places significant importance on partnerships.

The Senior Management Team are encouraged to network and actively search for partnerships that would be beneficial to the College and align to its strategic vision. They should not be hindered by bureaucracy, nor should it be a barrier to securing a successful outcome. However, in this regard the Senior Management Team still need to ensure that any partnership proposal has been carefully considered and presented for consideration at the appropriate panels, committees, and boards.

7 Approval Procedures

The College has procedures for approving new programmes and new partnerships and for making any changes to existing programmes on a case by case basis.

Pre-Proposal Stage

- Strategic identification and needs analysis for new programs.
- Identifying changes to existing programs
- Complete a business case proposal (Template in 7.1)

Partnership and Business Development Panel (PBDP) actions:

- Review alignment to OBC strategic and business goals.
- Review supporting evidence of the business case for new programs or partnerships.
- Complete strategic due diligence checklist (Template in 7.2).
- Approval or Recommendations on new programs, partnerships, or changes to existing programs.

Academic Planning Review & Enhancement Panel (APREP) actions:

- Review alignment to OBC academic priorities.
- Review alignment with FHEQ levels, qualification descriptors and core practices of UK Quality Code
- Complete academic due diligence checklist (Template in 7.3).
- Approval or Recommendations on new programs, partnerships, or changes to existing programs.

Strategic Advisory and Planning Board (SAPB) actions:

- Receive recommendations for actions from PBDP for consideration.

- Review business case and due diligence and oversight has been completed.
- Review effectiveness of business resource planning.
- Approval or Recommendations on new programs, partnerships, or changes to existing programs.

Academic Board (AcB) actions:
- Receive recommendations for actions from APREP for consideration.
- Review academic quality assurance and oversight has been completed.
- Review effectiveness of academic resource planning.
- Approval or Recommendations on new programs, partnerships, or changes to existing programs.

Final Approval Board of Governors (BoG) actions:
- Receive reports from the AcB and SAPB for oversight review.
- Consider presented recommendations and grant organisational approval if appropriate.

New Programme Approved

7.1 Needs Analysis for New Programmes

The proposer should draw from the following sources of information when researching the need for any new partnership or programme at the College:

- Market intelligence such as current student demographics, census data and marketing reports. This information is used to identify appropriate locations and programmes/courses that prospective students would want to join.
- The College aligns its aims in terms of student recruitment and partnership development with the priorities of local enterprise strategies.
- The College establishes new partnerships and programmes that align with our strategic objectives and priorities.
- Analysis of student and staff feedback on existing programmes ensures that the College is able to identify what future programmes would benefit communities.
- Suggestions from stakeholders may also enable the College to identify a need for a new programme.
- Consultation with employers to identify employability competencies by local businesses.
- Analysis of global markets and trends such as digitalisation and artificial intelligence,

in the development of provision.

7.2 Approval Flow: Business Case Template

1. Overview Information	
Proposed course and award title/s	
Proposed University Partner	
OBC Proposer's name	
OBC Proposer's contact details (email and phone)	
Proposed University Contact Details	
Location of delivery i.e. campus	
If this replaces existing provision, list the current provision being replaced	

2. DELIVERY			
Course titles	**Mode of delivery FT/PT/DL etc.**	**Start date** **Intake Starts**	**Duration**

3. NEW ENTRANT TARGET NUMBERS				
Course titles	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**

If the target numbers above have previously been associated with existing provision, please provide the course code/s and title/s and the impact on target numbers				
HECOS code insert link				
Tuition fee				
Type of tuition fee				
Funding source				

4. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

New or existing partner?	
Category of Partnership, e.g. Franchise, Validation etc.	
Is this approval of an existing University course, a new University course or validation of OBC's provision	
Who will be teaching the course, OBC staff or University staff?	
Who is providing Library resources, OBC or University ?	
Is this Direct or Indirectly funded?	
Who will return the student numbers?	

5. a) RATIONALE and MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Why is the provision being proposed?	
Where does this proposal fit within the current OBC portfolio of courses?	
Provide an overview	

of market intelligence that supports this proposal.	
Identify the main client groups and from where they will be recruited	
Identify regional, national or international opportunities for recruitment and employment	
Identify any external and internal competitor courses:	
Provide evidence of career opportunities for graduates of the course	
Consider the entry requirements for the proposed provision, and how these relate to competitors	
6. RESOURCES	
Are resources provided from current provision? **Will additional new library resources be required?**	
Will the proposal require additional teaching staff, technical or administrative staff?	

Identify any impact on staffing resources (academic and professional)	
Provide an indication to the pedagogic approaches to be used for this proposed course and consider the impact of (or demand for) new teaching resources	

7.3 Approval Flow: Strategic Due Diligence

#	Criteria/Action	Comment/Source
1	Assess the potential partner's alignment with the Colleges mission, vision, and long-term strategic objectives.	
2	Conduct a comprehensive financial analysis of the potential partner, including an assessment of their financial health, solvency, and long-term viability.	
3	Evaluate the partners ability to provide the necessary infrastructure, resources, and staffing to support the partnership, as well as any additional investments required.	
3	Examine the potential partner's organisational structure, governance, and management systems, ensuring they align with the Colleges values and standards.	
4	Identify any legal or regulatory issues that may impact the partnership and develop a plan to	

#	Criteria/Action	Comment/Source
	address them.	
5	Perform a background check on the potential partner, including an analysis of any negative press, social media activity, or controversies.	
6	Assess the potential partner's ranking in the HE Sector, as well as any subject-specific or international rankings.	
7	Evaluate the potential partner's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as their approach to environmental sustainability and social responsibility	
8	Consult with internal and external stakeholders, including academic boards, faculty members, students, alumni, and industry partners, to gather feedback on the proposed partnership.	
9	Incorporate stakeholder feedback into the partnership proposal and decision-making process.	
10	Establish a clear implementation plan for the partnership, including timelines, responsibilities, and milestones.	

7.4 Approval Flow: Academic Due Diligence

#	Criteria/Action	Comment/Source
1	Ensure that the curriculum design of all academic programmes at the College are fully aligned with the levels and qualification descriptors of the FHEQ	
2	Identify any synergies between the potential partner's academic strengths and the Colleges	

#	Criteria/Action	Comment/Source
	areas of expertise.	
3	Determine if the proposed partnership addresses the needs of the College, its students, and other stakeholders.	
4	Verify that the partnership does not conflict with or undermine existing partnerships or academic programs.	
5	Confirm the potential partner's degree-awarding powers, accreditation, and other relevant qualifications.	
6	Review the potential partner's most recent QAA/QSR report and TEF Award status, as well as any subject-specific accreditations or quality indicators.	
7	Analyse the potential partner's track record in student success rates, retention, and employability outcomes.	
8	Assess the potential partner's approach to teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as their commitment to innovation and continuous improvement.	
9	Consult with internal and external stakeholders, including academic boards, faculty members, students, alumni, and industry partners, to gather feedback on the proposed partnership.	
10	Incorporate stakeholder feedback into the partnership proposal and decision-making process.	