

# Partnerships and Programmes Review and Development Policy

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<b>Linked policies, documents and panels:</b>	<p>Risk Management Policy</p> <p>Risk Register</p> <p>Partnership and Programmes Review and Development Policy</p> <p>Corporate Planning Board (CPB)</p> <p>Academic Planning Review &amp; Enhancement Panel (APREP)</p> <p>Academic Board (AcB)</p>
<b>External reference</b>	<p>OfS Conditions of Registration</p> <p>[<a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/</a>]</p> <p>QAA Quality Code Core Practices</p>
<b>Audience:</b>	BoG, Senior Leadership Team

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# 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 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 programmes 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), Corporate Planning Board (CPB), 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 Corporate 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 Corporate 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 Corporate 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 Partnership and Programme Development**

The College has established comprehensive procedures for the approval of new programmes and partnerships, as well as for making changes to existing programmes on a case-by-case basis. These procedures follow a structured approach to ensure alignment with strategic, academic, and business priorities.

### **6.1 Pre-Proposal Stage**

The process begins with a strategic identification and needs analysis to determine the necessity for new programmes or changes to existing ones. This includes the completion of a detailed business case proposal, using a standardised template provided in section 7.1.

### **6.2 Partnership and Business Development Panel (PBDP)**

The PBDP plays a critical role in the review and evaluation process. This panel assesses the alignment of proposals with the College's strategic and business goals and examines the supporting evidence provided in the business case. The panel completes a strategic due diligence checklist (template in section 7.2) to ensure all relevant factors have been considered. Based on these evaluations, the panel provides either approval or recommendations for

proposed programmes, partnerships, or changes.

### **6.3 Academic Planning Review and Enhancement Panel (APREP)**

The APREP focuses on ensuring that proposals align with the College's academic priorities and adhere to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), qualification descriptors, and the core practices of the UK Quality Code. The panel uses an academic due diligence checklist (template in section 7.3) to evaluate the academic integrity of the proposal. After their review, the panel makes recommendations or approvals for further consideration.

### **6.4 Corporate Planning Board (CPB)**

The CPB receives recommendations from the PBDP and ensures that all business and strategic due diligence processes have been thoroughly completed. This board evaluates the effectiveness of business resource planning and provides final recommendations or approvals from a corporate perspective.

### **6.5 Academic Board (AcB)**

The Academic Board reviews recommendations from the APREP, ensuring that academic quality assurance and oversight processes are completed. This board also assesses the effectiveness of academic resource planning before granting recommendations or approvals.

### **6.6 Board of Governors (BoG)**

The final stage of the approval process involves the Board of Governors, which receives comprehensive reports from the Academic Board and Corporate Planning Board. The BoG considers these recommendations and, following an organisational review, grants final approval for new programmes, partnerships, or changes to existing ones if appropriate.

### **6.7 Needs Analysis for New Programmes**

When proposing a new programme or partnership, a thorough needs analysis is conducted. This analysis draws upon several key sources of information, including:

6.7.1 **Market Intelligence:** Data on student demographics, census information, and marketing reports are used to identify locations and courses of interest to prospective students.

6.7.2 **Local Enterprise Strategies:** The College aligns its recruitment and partnership goals with local enterprise priorities to enhance relevance and impact.

6.7.3 **Strategic Objectives:** New partnerships and programmes are established in alignment

with the College's overarching strategic objectives and priorities.

6.7.4 Feedback Analysis: Student and staff feedback on existing programmes helps identify areas where future programmes could address gaps or community needs.

6.7.5 Stakeholder Input: Suggestions from stakeholders, including industry representatives, provide valuable insights into the demand for new programmes.

6.7.6 Employer Consultations: Discussions with employers highlight employability competencies and skills sought by local businesses, ensuring programmes meet industry requirements.

6.7.7 Global Trends: Analysis of global market trends, including advancements in digitalisation and artificial intelligence, informs the development of cutting-edge educational provisions.

This structured, evidence-based approach ensures that all new programmes and partnerships are strategically relevant, academically robust, and aligned with both local and global demands



## 7. Templates:

### 7.1 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				
<a href="#">HECOS code</a> 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	

## 7.2 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 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.	
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## 7.3 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 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 record of accomplishment 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.	