



Principles for Approval of Northumbria Awards

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Principles for Approval of Northumbria Awards

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1. Principles for Approval of Northumbria Awards

Definitions:

Threshold academic standards: “are the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. For equivalent qualifications, the threshold level of achievement is agreed across the UK and is described by the qualification descriptors set out in the national frameworks for higher education qualifications” (QAA Code for Higher Education Part A October 2013)

Academic standards: “are the standards that individual degree-awarding bodies set and maintain for the award of their academic credit or qualifications. These may exceed the threshold academic standards”. (QAA Code for Higher Education Part A October 2013)

Northumbria academic standards: are the standards for Northumbria awards defined and maintained by Northumbria to ensure that awards meet the requirements of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and QAA expectations.

Programme: Any stand-alone, approved curriculum followed by a student, which carries academic credit or otherwise and contributes to an award of Northumbria University.

Approval: The formal process by which Northumbria University agrees that the programme complies with Northumbria academic standards and can be delivered to students.

Overarching principles for approval of all Northumbria programmes:

1. The ultimate responsibility for the academic standards of Northumbria awards / programmes regardless of mode or place of delivery will rest with Northumbria as the degree awarding body and will never be delegated.
2. All Northumbria programmes will be approved through the Single Approvals Framework (see figure one).
3. All gateways of the Single Approvals Framework will be successfully completed prior to progression to the next gateway.
4. The main unit of consideration of the approvals process will be at the level of the programme in terms of its coherence as a learning experience and its compliance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), applicable subject benchmarks and Northumbria academic standards.
5. A programme specification will be completed for all Northumbria programmes specifying the programme learning outcomes (PLOs) and the assessment required to attain the award.
6. The programme specification will be the definitive record and will be updated to record the evolution of any changes to the programme.
7. Programme specification documents will include programme learning outcomes for each level / stage of the programme. For example, standard three year undergraduate programmes will contain programme learning outcomes for levels 4, 5 & 6 or specified PLOs for each stage of a linked award.

8. Financial / business case approval will be considered through the approved Northumbria process; such consideration will be independent of consideration of academic quality and adherence to Northumbria academic standards.
9. Where required, programmes will comply with external / Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements but any such requirements must be additional to those of Northumbria and must not compromise Northumbria academic standards for the award.
10. All programmes will conform to the Modular Framework for Northumbria Awards and Northumbria principles for programme design.
11. Award and progression regulations for the Northumbria award will be those of Northumbria University as set out in Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards (ARTA).
12. Approval of all programmes will include external academic opinion to confirm that UK threshold academic standards are maintained.
13. All modules contributing to a Northumbria award will be taught and assessed in English except where the award comprises only modules at level 4 and 3 when at least half the qualifying credits must be taught and assessed in English, or where the subject area of the award or specified modules is another language.
14. All programmes will be subject to regular routine annual monitoring.
15. All programmes will be subject to regular review by either:
 - a. Periodic review (6 yearly) and / or
 - b. Periodic re-approval as determined by the approval process.
16. Delivery of any programme at a distance to Northumbria University or in partnership with another education provider will be approved through the Single Approvals Framework.

Stage zero – initial concept development and Faculty formulation of strategic proposal:

- New Northumbria Programme/Discipline/Subject or TNE/EPWO Partner
- Expansion of portfolio at London or existing partner
- Proposals for new Programmes must include full market/sector/planning analysis provided by Insight and Planning departments and business case
- Proposals for new TNE/EPWO partners must include Legal/Financial/Risk due diligence
- APG may receive early progress reports on new Disciplines/Subjects

	Faculty Annual Plans		Annual Sector Analysis marketing / planning		Faculty-initiated proposal from APVC Strategic Planning and Engagement		Faculty-initiated proposal from corporate client
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Stage One - Initial concept development and Faculty formulation of strategic proposal:

- New Northumbria Programme/Discipline/Subject or TNE-EPWO Partner
- Expansion of Portfolio at London or existing partner
- Proposals for new Programmes must include full market/sector analysis provided by Strategic Planning and Marketing Departments and business case
- Proposals for new TNE-EPWO Partners must include Legal/Financial due diligence
- APG may receive early progress reports on new Disciplines/Subjects

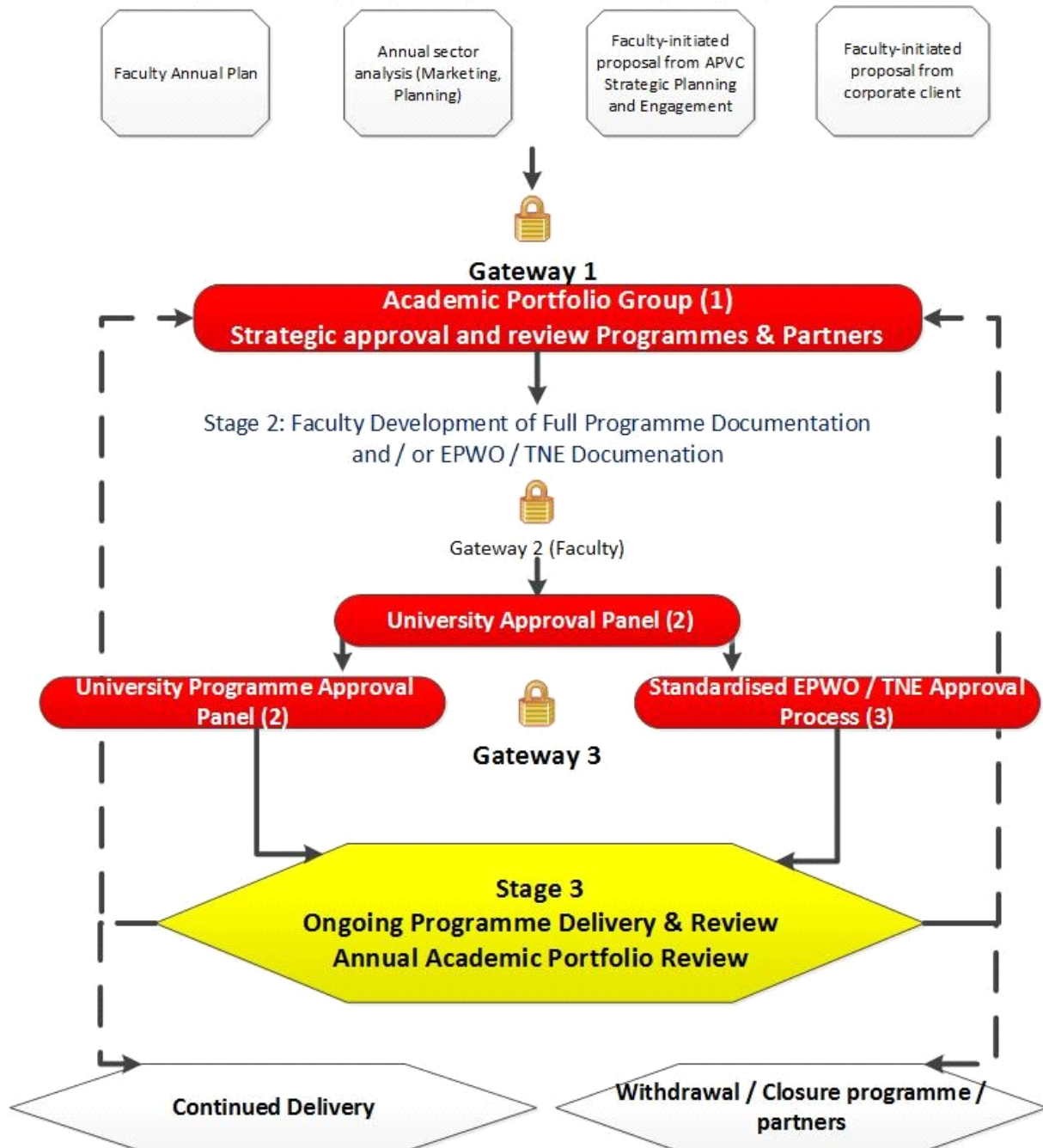


Figure one – New Northumbria SAF Programme Development

2. Principles for Approval of Northumbria Joint Awards

A Joint programme (Masters or Bachelor) is an integrated international study programme (180-240 credits for Masters and 360-480 credits for Bachelor) with an integrated curriculum with a single set of programme learning outcomes leading to a (double/multiple or joint) degree which is delivered by a consortium of Northumbria and at least one other HEI.

1. All participating HEIs must be a Bachelor and/or Master degree-awarding institutions.
2. The total duration of Joint programmes will be 180 or 240 (90 or 120 ECTS) Credits for Masters and 360-480 (180-240 ECTS) Credits for Bachelors (max. 60 Credits per Semester, 120 Credits per Year).
3. During the study period of the Joint Programme students are registered at Northumbria and at the partner(s).
4. Joint Programmes are a shared enterprise and are jointly designed with a fully integrated academic curriculum (i.e. with a single set of programme learning outcomes).
5. Joint Programmes are a shared enterprise and require joint management and oversight and each degree-awarding body involved is jointly responsible for the award (i.e. the academic standards and regulations for the joint Programme will be jointly developed and agreed in a manner which is consistent with the academic standards of each partner).
6. Students are required to successfully complete the entirety of credits covered by the Joint Master or Bachelor to complete the programme to meet the joint programme learning outcomes.
7. Successful completion of the joint Master or Bachelor programme leads to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single degree certificate issued on behalf of Northumbria and the partner HEI(s)), a double degree (i.e. two degree certificates) or a multiple degree (three or more degree certificates).
8. All Degree Certificates and Diploma Supplements/transcripts issued in respect of Joint Programmes will clearly indicate the joint nature of the programme and the contributions of consortium members.
9. Joint Programmes will meet the following criteria:
 - a. In most cases the study period of the Joint Programme must take place at Northumbria and at the partner(s) and must include a minimum of 60 Credits of study (1 Semester) at each partner HEI for Masters at Level 7 or equivalent and a minimum of 120 Credits of study (1 Year) at each partner HEI for Bachelor. *

OR

- b. In some cases, (e.g. where the Joint Programme is being set up in locations with a “developing” HEI infrastructure or as an extension of relationships with former Franchise partners) mobility is not involved and the study period of the Joint Masters or Bachelor programme may not involve study of Northumbria credit (through physical or virtual mobility or via Northumbria Delivery at the partner HEI).

Such arrangements are limited to Northumbria and one other HEI in another country and in these cases the jointness/integration in the academic content and methodology of the programme consists in the shared design, approval and oversight of the joint programme. Successful completion of this jointly designed, assured and assessed program programme leads to the award of either a joint degree or a double degree.

* The minimum of 60 Credits of study at each partner HEI for Masters (1 Semester) and 120 Credits of study at each partner HEI for Bachelor (1 Year) may be undertaken via:

- Physical Mobility (Study at Northumbria, at the Partner)
- Virtual Mobility (i.e. cross-border e-learning, when a student follows distance learning courses offered by a higher education institution abroad) which may or may not involve onsite facilitation institution as appropriate

3. Principles for approval of Northumbria Dual Master and Bachelor Degrees

A Dual Degree programme (Masters or Bachelor) refers to a period of combined study period (180-240 credits for Masters and 360-480 credits for Bachelor, at Northumbria and another HEI leading to two degrees being awarded individually, attesting the successful completion of two separate programmes (with distinct programme learning outcomes) at Northumbria University and at the partner HEI. Although there may be overlap and efficiencies in course-taking each institution retains responsibility for its own degree.

1. Dual Degree Partner HEIs must be a Bachelor and/or Master degree-awarding institutions.
2. The total duration of combined study on Dual Degrees will be 180-240 (90-120 ECTS) Credits for Masters and 360-480 (180-240 ECTS) Credits for Bachelors (max. 60 Credits per Semester, 120 Credits per Year).
3. During the study periods at Northumbria and the partner HEI students are registered at and subject to the student regulations of the appropriate partner.
4. Although the overall arrangement of the Dual Degree is a shared enterprise that requires elements of joint management and oversight the two programmes do not have a fully integrated academic curriculum (i.e. there two sets of distinct programme learning outcomes, one for the Northumbria programme and one for the partner HEI programme).
5. Although the overall arrangement of the Dual Degree is a shared enterprise that requires elements of joint management and oversight each degree-awarding body is responsible for its own award (i.e. the academic standards and regulations for the Northumbria award will be those of Northumbria University, the academic standards and regulations for the partner award will be those of partner HEI).
6. Successful completion of the requirements of both programmes (at Northumbria and at the partner HEI) leads to the award of two institutional degrees, one for each of the two separate qualifications, granted by each of the awarding bodies involved.
7. All Degree Certificates and Diploma Supplements/transcripts issued in respect of Dual Awards will make it clear that the two awards are from the Dual programme of study.
8. Dual Degrees will meet the following criteria:
 - a. In most cases the study period of the Dual Degree programme must take place at Northumbria and at the partner HEI and must include a minimum of 60 Credits of study (1 Semester) at each partner for Masters at Level 7 or equivalent and a minimum of 120 Credits of study (1 Year) at each partner HEI for Bachelor at Level 6 or equivalent. The learning within the minimum 60 credits for Masters and 120 credits for Bachelor will ensure that the Northumbria programme learning outcomes are met in full when combined with outcomes for the partner programme and that the partner programme learning outcomes are met in full when combined with outcomes for the Northumbria programme. *

OR

- b. In some cases, (e.g. where the Dual Degree is being set up in locations with a “developing” HEI infrastructure or as an extension of relationships with former Franchise partners) mobility is not involved and the study period of the Dual Masters or Bachelor Degree may not involve study of Northumbria credit. In such cases the dual-ness/integration in the academic content and methodology of the programme consists in the shared design, approval and oversight of the Dual degree programme. Successful completion of this co-designed, assured and assessed program programme leads to the award of dual degree. The learning at the partner will be validated to ensure that the Northumbria programme learning outcomes are met in full by outcomes for the partner programme.
9. Master’s dissertations (or equivalent) within Dual Awards will meet the requirements for the Northumbria award but may be studied and assessed at the partner HEI.
- * The minimum of 60 Credits of study at each partner HEI for Masters (1 Semester) and 120 Credits of study at each partner HEI for Bachelor (1 Year) may be undertaken via:
- Physical Mobility (Study at Northumbria, at the Partner)
 - Virtual Mobility (i.e. cross-border e-learning, when a student follows distance learning courses offered by a higher education institution abroad) which may or may not involve onsite facilitation institution as appropriate.

4. Principles for Approval to Deliver Northumbria Educational Programmes with Others (EPWO) including Transnational Education (TNE)

A programme of study designed and validated by Northumbria leading to an award or credit being conferred by Northumbria University delivered by, at or in partnership with another education provider.

1. The ultimate responsibility for the academic standard of Northumbria awards / programmes regardless of mode or place of delivery will rest with Northumbria as the degree awarding body and will never be delegated.
2. The programme of study delivered, at, by or with the partner institution will be directly comparable with the same programme of study delivered at Northumbria and will be consistent with Northumbria academic standards for the level of study of the Northumbria award. Any variation from the Northumbria delivery of the programme will be documented within the programme specification delivery supplement.
3. The proportion of learning, teaching, student support / supervision & primary marking provided by Northumbria will vary according to the level of risk associated with the partner's experience of higher education, quality assurance history, subject expertise and learning and teaching resources and will be clearly articulated within the operations manual and will be consistent with the following:
 - a. **Delivery by the Partner** (Franchise) Programme content, designed and provided by Northumbria is delivered and supported by the partner.
 - b. **Delivery at the Partner** (Distance delivery) Programme content is primarily delivered and supported by Northumbria, initially in the proportion of no less than 80% Northumbria and no more than 20% the Partner. As the partnership develops this proportion may shift but will never be less than 51% Northumbria or more than 49% the partner. Any change will be monitored by the Northumbria faculty and approved as a modification to the programme.
 - c. **Delivery with the Partner** Programme content, designed and provided by Northumbria is delivered jointly by the partner and Northumbria in a proportion no greater than 50% Northumbria.
 - d. Access to Northumbria learning resources will be agreed at approval and will be clearly articulated within the operations manual for the programme.
4. The academic standards for the Northumbria award will be those of Northumbria University.
5. Award and progression regulations for a Northumbria programme delivered by or at the partner institution will be those of Northumbria University.
6. Marking, moderation and external examining processes will be those of Northumbria. Primary marking and moderation processes may be those of the partner but Northumbria will quality assure these process by second moderation and external examining in accordance with Northumbria standards. These processes will be agreed at approval and clearly articulated within the operations manual for the programme.

7. All learning activity contributing to the Northumbria programme will be taught and assessed in English except where the award comprises only modules at level 4 and 3 when at least half the qualifying credits must be taught and assessed in English, or where the subject area of the award or specified modules is another language.
8. Students undertaking a Northumbria programme at a partner will be specifically enrolled at the partner institution and may be subject to the student regulations of the partner institution provided they do not compromise adherence to Northumbria academic standards.
9. All marketing / publicity material will be monitored and approved by Northumbria prior to information being published / issued to students.
10. All transcripts and parchment(s) issued in respect of Northumbria awards delivered by, at or with a partner institution will make it clear that award was undertaken at the specified partner institution.

5. Principles for Validation of a Partner Institution's Programme/s Leading to a Northumbria Award

A programme of study designed and created and delivered by another educational institution/provider without degree awarding powers, assessed and approved as being equivalent to the academic standard and quality for a Northumbria award.

1. Validated programmes leading to a Northumbria award will only be developed when:
 - a. Northumbria and the partner institution have established provision in the subject area at the required academic level. **(N.B Northumbria must hold specific subject knowledge and be actively engaged in the delivery of directly related programmes within the subject area of the partner programme)**
 - b. **The partner institution does not hold degree awarding powers.**
2. The ultimate responsibility for the academic standard of Northumbria awards / programmes regardless of mode or place of delivery will rest with Northumbria as the degree awarding body and will never be delegated.
3. The programme of study provided by the partner institution will be consistent with Northumbria academic standards for the level of study of the Northumbria award.
4. The academic standards for the Northumbria award will be those of Northumbria University.
5. The student regulations for the validated programme may be those of the partner Institution provided they do not compromise adherence to Northumbria academic standards.
6. Award and progression regulations for the Northumbria award will be those of Northumbria University.
7. Learning & teaching resources required to support / deliver the programme will be those of the partner institution. Any access to Northumbria learning and teaching resources will be discussed within the programme planning process and agreed at approval and clearly articulated within the operations manual for the programme.
8. All credit contributing to the Northumbria validated programme will be taught and assessed in English except where the award comprises only modules at level 4 and 3 when at least half the qualifying credits must be taught and assessed in English, or where the subject area of the award or specified modules is another language.
9. Primary marking and moderation processes may be those of the partner. Northumbria will quality assure these processes by second moderation and external examining in accordance with Northumbria standards. These processes will be agreed at approval and clearly articulated within the operations manual for the programme.
10. Master's dissertations within validated master's programmes will meet the requirements for the Northumbria award but may be marked and accredited by Northumbria and the partner institution.
11. Students undertaking a validated programme will be specifically enrolled at the partner institution and will be subject to the academic discipline of the partner.

12. All marketing / publicity material will be monitored and approved by Northumbria prior to information being published / issued to students.
13. All transcripts and parchments issued in respect of validated awards will make it clear that the award was undertaken at the specified partner institution.

6. Principles for Periods of Approval to Deliver Northumbria Awards

The period of time for which approval is granted to deliver a validated Northumbria, award, programme, or credit bearing activity.

1. Approval to deliver periods will be considered and determined by the approval panel and will be set in accordance with Northumbria approval principles and the level of assessed risk.
2. Periods of approval to deliver Northumbria awards wholly at Northumbria or at a Northumbria campus or virtually (distance learning) will not be time limited, but all such programmes will be subject to:
 - a. Annual programme monitoring
 - b. Periodic review in accordance with Northumbria principles of review
 - c. Out of cycle triggers as determined by Northumbria which may include performance against key performance indicators such as:
 - i. Recruitment and retention
 - ii. Student satisfaction
 - iii. Good degrees
 - iv. External examiner dissatisfaction
 - v. Percentage change / modification to the programme between review periods.
3. Periods of approval to deliver Northumbria awards by, at or with a partner institution (EPWO and TNE) will be time limited and all such awards will be subject to periodic re-approval:
 - a. Initial periods of approval will normally be set at three years or one year longer than a full programme cycle to allow performance / output data to be considered at the re-approval event e.g.
 - b. two-year Foundation degree = three years' approval to deliver
 - c. one-year completion degree = three years' approval to deliver
 - d. three year undergraduate honours degree = four years' approval to deliver
 - 3.1 Second and subsequent re-approval periods will be set by the re-approval panel following evaluation of the programme / partnership against agreed performance indicators in accordance with the following but will not exceed six years.
 - 3.2
 - a. High risk / satisfactory performance = three-year re-approval period
 - b. Low risk / high performance = six-year re-approval period.
 - 3.3 Where multiple Northumbria programmes (single / cross / multi faculty) are delivered in partnership with a single partner, approval / re-approval periods will be consolidated to enable consideration of the partnership as a whole. For example, when a new programme is to be added to a portfolio of approved Northumbria activity at an established partner the approval to deliver period for the additional programme will be aligned with the re-approval of the existing programmes.
 - 3.4 A programme start date will be agreed by the approval panel and It is expected that programme delivery will commence on the approved start date, or no later than one year later.

- i. If the start date is, for any reason, deferred by up to one year then the approval end-date will automatically be deferred accordingly to provide the agreed approval period.
- ii. If the start date for programme delivery is postponed beyond one year, the Faculty must provide a rationale to APG/Standing Approval Panel who will decide whether delivery can commence and under what conditions.
- iii. If the start date is postponed, the programme team may request that APG/Standing Approval Panel extend the deadline for meeting any time limited conditions of approval (having previously consulted the panel chair). If no such request is made, then the time limits specified by the panel remain unchanged.

7. Principles for Approval of Advanced Entry to Northumbria Programmes

Advanced entry refers to any agreement whereby students are granted entry to a Northumbria programme at any point other than the normal start point of the programme by gaining credit against Northumbria programme modules via their previous or current study. This includes entry to one-year completion programmes.

1. In order to gain advanced entry, the previous study should be mapped against the Northumbria programme to which advanced entry is sought.
2. The aim of the mapping is for the faculty to assure itself that students joining the programme with advanced entry are equally enabled to achieve the programme learning outcomes when compared to a student who has followed the programme from its normal starting point.
3. Requests for advanced entry may arise from different parts of the University. Approval of the business case for advanced entry must be given by the faculty against whose programme advanced entry is sought. Approval for the 'quality' case must be given by the faculty or the University as described below.
4. The mapping will consist of two components:
 - a. The level of previous study
 - b. The content of previous study.
5. The level of previous study will be calibrated against the level of the modules of the Northumbria programme against which advanced entry is sought. (For example, an HND will be viewed as potentially giving advanced entry against modules at level 4 and level 5.) The level of the previous study should be referenced against nationally recognised qualification frameworks or against information provided by national agencies (e.g. NARIC) responsible for providing information and advice about how qualifications and skills from overseas compare to the UK's national qualification frameworks.
6. The mapping of the content will require consideration of the previous study syllabus and outcomes, against the modules on the Northumbria programme against which advanced entry is being sought. This process should include the consideration of assessed student work; the language of its completion should not be a barrier to scrutiny. The mapping should be in sufficient detail for the faculty to assure itself that a minimum of 80% content and/or module learning outcomes can be mapped as equivalent and that the level of assessment is equivalent.
7. Where the mapping process shows equivalence of level and content
 - a. If the previous study represents a recognised end qualification, a letter of recognition can be issued to institutions offering the qualification stating that the qualification meets the requirements for entry to the Northumbria programme at the agreed level.
 - b. If the previous study does not represent a recognised end qualification, an articulation agreement will be required.
8. Letters of recognition can be approved within the structures of the Faculty Student Learning and Experience Committee, and must be appended to relevant programme specifications. The relevant mapping must be retained for reference purposes.

9. Articulation Agreements must be approved by the University's committee. Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLE).
10. Where the level of the previous study cannot be mapped against the level and / or content of the modules of the Northumbria programme against which advanced entry is sought, and where the faculty wishes to proceed with consideration of advanced entry, proposals for a 'bridging' programme to enable the mapping to be completed must be brought to the University's Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLE).
11. The performance of students entering Northumbria programmes with advanced entry will be reviewed by the Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLE) on an annual basis.

8. Principles for Approval of Distance Learning (Academic) Support Centres

The following principles were approved by the Programme Approvals Sub-Committee (PASC) on 20 June 2013.

1. All Northumbria distance (open) learning programmes are designed and approved as self – contained learning processes, providing a complete learning experience including the required range and level of student support to successfully complete the programme.
2. Any academic support provided by a Distance Learning Support Centre (DLASC) is additional to the programme support provided by Northumbria University and is therefore purely optional and not required to undertake or complete the Northumbria programme.
3. Any additional academic support provided by a DLASC will be reviewed, monitored and approved by the proposing Faculty prior to consideration by SLE.
4. Delivery of Northumbria (DL) curricula / programme or module content is not within the remit of DL(A)SC approval. This will require full approval via the Northumbria Single Approvals Framework for partner delivery of a Northumbria programme.
5. All distance learning support centres will be visited by an academic staff member from the proposing Faculty or University International Development Office prior to approval to ensure suitability of location and premises. Photographic evidence indicative of suitability of location and premises will be submitted with approval documentation for consideration by SLE.
6. All marketing material will be monitored and approved by the relevant Northumbria Faculty in liaison with the appropriate Marketing team prior to circulation to prospective students.
7. All marketing material will be reviewed annually by relevant Northumbria Faculty.
8. All marketing material will clearly state that any additional support is optional and is not required to undertake the Northumbria DL programme.
9. Fee structures will clearly differentiate the fee payable for the Northumbria programme and that payable for the optional additional support.
10. The approval period for all DLASC will be three years.
11. Student performance will be reviewed annually by the Faculty; performance data will include comparative analysis to standard DL cohorts and where applicable Northumbria taught cohorts.

How Northumbria University works with External Centres in the support of Northumbria Distance Learning Programmes / Distance Learning Academic Support Centres (DLASC) & Distance Support Centres (DLSC)

Roles Northumbria University DL Academic Support Centre (DLASC) DL Support Centre (DLSC)

Marketing

- Markets and builds global awareness of its brand and distance learning programmes
- Has oversight and final approval of DLSC marketing material in relation to Northumbria and its programmes
- Markets Northumbria programme and its support for Northumbria Distance Learning Programmes
- Markets Northumbria Programme and its support for Northumbria Distance Learning Programmes

Admissions

- Admits and registers students onto Northumbria University distance learning programmes
- Collects Northumbria University fees
- Supports students through the application and registration process to Northumbria programmes
- Collects their fees for additional support
- Supports students through the application and registration process to Northumbria programmes
- Collects their fees for additional support

Curriculum

- Designs and approves programme structure / content / assessment.
- Develops and publishes on-line learning materials

Academic Support

- Provides on-line learning / tutorial support
- Provides written, individual feedback for all assessed work
- Agrees and monitors local teaching / formative assessment support provided by DLASC to contextualise Northumbria on-line learning materials
- Develops and delivers locally relevant support to contextualise Northumbria on-line learning materials
- Provides opportunities for additional formative assessment and feedback

Learning Facilities

- Provides access for Northumbria students to electronic learning resources via e-learning portal and online e-library
- Provides online subject specific academic tutorial support
- Provides access to library, IT and other physical resources
- Provides venue and opportunities for local student peer support network
- Offers pastoral care
- Provides access to library, IT and other physical resources
- Provides venue and opportunities for local student peer support network
- Offers pastoral care

Assessment

- Designs / sets / approves all examinations / summative assessments
- Marks, moderates and externally moderates all assessed work
- Provides written, individual feedback for all assessed work
- Contextualises and explains Northumbria assessment feedback

Completion

- Issues all programme certification and transcripts
- Provides a collection point / postal address for Northumbria documentation
- Provides a collection point / postal address for Northumbria documentation

Oversight /review

- Monitors student performance / satisfaction annually
- Re-approves DL(A)SC agreements every three years
- Provides updates re the agreed academic support
- Provides evaluative / performance data to Northumbria annually
- Provides updates to Northumbria re any changes to availability of support

9. Principles for approval of additional / alternative delivery sites

Where programmes are delivered at sites that are external to Northumbria, the venue of study is approved as part of the approval process. Any variation from the approved location of study must be approved by Northumbria in order to ensure the adequacy of the learning environment.

Prior to any publication or communication of student offer, all teaching premises must be approved and must adhere to the following principles approved by the Programme Approvals Sub-Committee (PASC) on 19 June 2014:

1. The proposed additional / alternative delivery site must be visited by a member of Northumbria staff, normally a member of the academic team responsible for the delivery of the programme/s at the partner, with sufficient subject knowledge to ensure that all learning resources, (physical and IT (including any specialist equipment)), required to deliver the programme are available and appropriate.
2. Documentary evidence of the visit must be provided on the Review of Premises checklist and approved by FSLE prior to consideration by SLE.
3. Where Northumbria staff will be required to teach at the proposed additional / alternative delivery site the visit should also confirm that appropriate staff accommodation is available within a reasonable travel time of the location.
4. The approval to deliver at the proposed additional / alternative premises **MUST** be completed prior to:
 - Inclusion in any promotional / market information.
 - Any information / offer being provided to prospective or current students re the programme being delivered at the proposed premises.
 - Any requests for approval of additional / alternative delivery sites outside this timescale will be considered “high risk” and will not normally be considered.

10. Quality Assurance Processes for Approval and Review of Recognition Agreements for Working with Others (QAA B10)

Type of Agreement	Definition	Authority for approval	Approval process	Review process	Renewal process
Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) <i>with international organisations</i>	<p>General co-operation which may include one or more academic activities such as consultancy, research, teaching, curriculum development, staff and/or student exchanges.</p> <p>The standard period of approval is 3 years.</p>	<p>FAPVC Learning and Teaching</p> <p>IDO</p>	<p>International Development Office processes for signature by PVC (L&T).</p> <p>Issued by IDO</p>	N/A	IDO process
Letter of Recognition (LoR)	<p>Recognises that students from named institutions having successfully completed specific qualifications may gain entry to a Northumbria programme at a standard entry point as specified within section 19 of the programme specification.</p> <p>Typically, LoRs recognise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Entry at Level 4 from a Foundation programme <input type="checkbox"/> Entry at level 7 from an honours degree. <p>LoRs may also be used for recognition of advanced entry into Northumbria undergraduate programmes (Levels 5 or 6) for entrants who have successfully completed specified qualification/s from the named provider.</p> <p>The standard period of approval is 3 years.</p>	<p>FAPVC Learning and Teaching</p>	<p>For entry to full programme: Faculty review and approval of specified qualification as appropriate for entry to named Northumbria award/s.</p> <p>For advanced entry: Mapping of Level 4 and 5 learning outcomes and content reviewed and approved by Faculty and signed off by FAPVC Learning and Teaching Programme specification updated to include as an acceptable entry qualification; LoR should be appended and log of changes updated</p> <p>Issued by IDO. QTE receives copy of signed letter from IDO</p>	<p>Annual Faculty level review of student performance</p> <p>Faculty annual summary of student performance across all LoRs to QTE Academic Development Officer Institutional overview</p>	<p>IDO process</p> <p>Faculty level review of student performance from all intakes covered by agreement benchmarked to Faculty & University KPIs</p>

Type of Agreement	Definition	Authority for approval	Approval process	Review process	Renewal process
<p>Articulation Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement</p>	<p>Used where the learning undertaken at the other organisation has not been recognised through the award of a terminal qualification. Unless an articulation agreement is requested specifically by the partner or is a national requirement, a letter of recognition will normally be used where the qualification at the other organisation has been completed successfully.</p> <p>Typically, Articulation Agreements are used for the recognition of such learning as providing sufficient quantity and quality of credits at level 4 and 5 for entry to the final stage (level 6) of a Northumbria award i.e. 2+2 or 2+1. They are also used for the recognition of learning leading to advanced entry / exemption at level 7.</p> <p>Where non-terminal learning is being recognised for entry to a Northumbria Completion (Top Up) award,</p> <p>the approval process is the same as for an Articulation Agreement but the signed agreement will be classed as a Memorandum of Agreement.</p>	<p>FSLE</p>	<p>The Mapping Process template should be completed to demonstrate that learning outcomes are appropriate for entry at the required level (or to the completion award). Students' assessed work should also be scrutinised: the language of its completion should not be a barrier to scrutiny.</p> <p>Completed Form AE1 (with Mapping Process Template appended) reviewed and approved by FSLE. The Mapping Process template is retained by the Faculty as evidence that mapping has been carried out.</p> <p>QTE receives completed Form AE1 from FSLE Secretary for approval by SLE</p> <p>Once approved, QTE produces draft Articulation Agreement (or Memorandum of Agreement for entry to a completion award) for review by Faculty and coordinates signatures.</p> <p>PVC (L&T) signs.</p>	<p>Annual Faculty level review of student performance.</p> <p>Faculty Annual Summary of Student performance across all agreements to AQ Academic Development Officer for Institutional overview.</p>	<p>SLE re-approval required.</p> <p>Completion of AE1 section 5 summarising student performance and any changes.</p> <p>SLE annual performance review</p>



Type of Agreement	Definition	Authority for approval	Approval process	Review process	Renewal process
	<p>In all cases, an alternative progression route / exit award must be available from the home provider for students not entering the specified Northumbria award. Such agreements do not guarantee entry to Northumbria programmes.</p> <p>The standard period of approval is 3 years</p>				
<p>Augmented Articulation Agreement</p>	<p>As Articulation agreement BUT where Northumbria provides substantial input to the design or delivery of the prior learning delivered by the partner.</p> <p>Augmented articulations are defined as cases:</p> <p>Where the partner learning / credit has been 'custom-made' to lead to progression to Northumbria or where there are specific PSRB requirements relating to the articulation.</p> <p>The standard period of approval is normally 3 years with effect from the first date of entry to the Northumbria programme.</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p>

Type of Agreement	Definition	Authority for approval	Approval process	Review process	Renewal process
Recognition of Distance (DL) Learning support Centres	<p>Recognises a specific organisation to provide additional support for Northumbria distance learning programmes.</p> <p>DL support typically falls into one of two categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distance Learning Support Centre (DLSC) providing generic support: specified organisation provides venue and access to computers / learning resources. Organisation may also act as recruitment agent. 2. Distance Learning Academic Support Centre (DLASC) providing additional academic support: as above + organisation provides additional specified academic / learning support for a named Northumbria distance learning programme as specified by the Faculty. <p>The standard period of approval is 3 years</p>	FSL E SLE	<p>Proposer completes Form DL(A)SC including outline of partner support programme and monitoring arrangements plus partner academic support staff CVs for review and approval by FSLE.</p> <p>QTE receives completed DL(A)SC for consideration / approval by SLE.</p> <p>QTE coordinates legal contract and signature and production of certificate, if required.</p> <p>Faculty agrees partner support programme and appropriate QA monitoring arrangements. Faculty also approves and monitors marketing material.</p>	<p>Annual Faculty level review of student performance</p> <p>Faculty Annual Summary of Student performance across all agreements to QTE</p> <p>Academic Development Officer Institutional overview</p>	<p>Completion of Form DL(A)SC section 5 summarising student performance and any changes for approval by SLE.</p> <p>SLE re-approval required, based on performance</p> <p>SLE annual performance review</p>

With the exception of MoU, all students admitted to a Northumbria programme via one of the above agreements must be identifiable on SITS. Agreements may also require scrutiny by the Head of Legal.

PVC L&T – Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching
FAPVC – Faculty Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor
QTE – Quality and Teaching Excellence, Academic Registry
IDO – International Development Office

SLE – Student Learning and Experience Committee
FSLE – Faculty Student Learning and Experience Committee
QA – Quality Assurance

Appendix 1

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA)

Expectations and Indicators

Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards

Expectation A1

In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

- a) ensure that the requirements of *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland/The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland* are met by:
 - positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications
 - ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications
 - naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications
 - awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes
- b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics
- c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework
- d) consider and take account of relevant subject benchmark statements.

Expectation A2.1

In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Expectation A2.2

Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Expectation A3.1

Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Expectation A3.2

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment
- both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.

Expectation A3.4

In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved
- the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.

B1: Programme Design and Approval: Expectation

Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

B5: Student Engagement

Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

B8: Programme monitoring and review

Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review.

B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others: Expectation

Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Specific indicators relevant to these principles

Chapter B1:

Indicator 1

Higher education providers maintain strategic oversight of the processes for, and outcomes of, programme design, development and approval, to ensure processes are applied systematically and operated consistently.

Indicator 2

Higher education providers make clear the criteria against which programme proposals are assessed in the programme approval process.

Indicator 3

Higher education providers define processes, roles and responsibilities for programme design, development and approval and communicate them to those involved.

Indicator 4

Higher education providers evaluate their processes for programme design, development and approval and take action to improve them where necessary.

Indicator 5

Higher education providers make use of reference points and expertise from outside the programme in programme design and in their processes for programme development and approval.

Indicator 6

Higher education providers involve students in programme design and in processes for programme development and approval.

Indicator 7

Higher education providers enable staff and other participants to contribute effectively to programme design, development and approval by putting in place appropriate arrangements for their support and development.

Chapter B10:

Indicator 4

Degree-awarding bodies that engage with other authorised awarding bodies to provide a programme of study leading to a joint academic award satisfy themselves as to their own legal capacity to do so.

Indicator 11

Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name. This responsibility is never delegated. Therefore, degree-awarding bodies ensure that the standards of any of their awards involving learning opportunities delivered by others are equivalent to the standards set for other awards that they confer at the same level. They are also consistent with UK national requirements.

Indicator 13

Degree-awarding bodies approve module(s) and programmes delivered through an arrangement with another delivery organisation, support provider or partner through processes that are at least as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for assuring quality and academic standards for programmes directly provided by the degree awarding body.

Indicator 15

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that delivery organisations involved in the assessment of students understand and follow the assessment requirements approved by the degree-awarding body for the components or programmes being assessed in order to maintain its academic standards. In the case of joint, dual/double and multiple awards, or for study abroad and student exchanges, degree-awarding bodies agree with their partners on the division of assessment responsibilities and the assessment regulations and requirements which apply.

Indicator 18

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that they have effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to learning opportunities delivered with others which lead to their awards. Information is produced for prospective and current students

which is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. Delivery organisations or support providers are provided with all information necessary for the effective delivery of the learning or support. When degree-awarding bodies make arrangements for the delivery of learning opportunities with others, they ensure that they retain authority for awarding certificates and issuing detailed records of study in relation to student achievement.

The certificate and/or record of academic achievement states the principal language of instruction and/or assessment where this is not English. Subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and/or the record of achievement records the name and location of any other higher education provider involved in the delivery of the programme of study. Where information relating to the language of study or to the name and location of the delivery organisation or partner is recorded on the record of achievement only, the certificate refers to the existence of this formal record.

Notes

In the interests of transparency, the certificate and/or the record of achievement clarifies, for a single jointly delivered programme (and its associated credit), whether the programme leads to dual/double or multiple awards (and certificates) of other partner awarding bodies involved, as opposed to a single award. In the case of joint awards, the (single) certificate lists the names of all awarding bodies involved in granting the award and bears the signatures of the competent authorities in each awarding body. For all jointly delivered programmes, the formal record of achievement indicates at which higher education provider the different parts of the programme were studied.