



Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

Guidelines for International Collaboration in Course Provision

Document Reference and Version No:	VM/EXB/26022005 Version 1.0
Purpose:	To set out policy and templates for WIT collaboration in course provision with international partners.
Commencement Date:	26 th February 2005
Date of Next Review:	Document subject to annual review.
Who Needs to Know About this Document:	Governing Body, Academic Council, Executive Board, Heads of School, Heads of Dept., Central Services Managers, All Staff, WIT Student Union.
Revision History	No revision to date.
Policy Author:	Dr. Venie Martin on behalf of Executive Board
Policy Owner	Executive Board

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1. Policy Statement

WIT is committed to the development of academic links with overseas Universities and Institutes in order to play its part on the world stage of higher education. WIT awards are offered under the authority delegated to it by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. WIT awards are compliant with ECTS, the European Credit Transfer Scheme.

International course provision is subject to the approval of WIT Academic Council. WIT expects that partner universities and institutes should share its mission and values and be willing to be subjected to the procedures required by Academic Council. WIT in turn accepts this requirement from any partner university wishing to offer its awards at WIT.

Where the partner university or institute is subject to the authority of a government department or agency, WIT requires evidence that this department or agency has no objection to the proposed link.

WIT must ensure that the academic standards and resources available for any course offered overseas must meet its normal criteria. The procedures and processes of course delivery, evaluation and external examining and moderation are integrated with the normal WIT quality assurance procedures.

WIT must give careful consideration to the impact of international collaboration on its own academic provision and strategic plan. Such arrangements will only be entered into where there are clear educational advantages for both partners.

2. Definitions relating to Academic Collaboration

2.1. Validation.

This is the process whereby WIT assesses a course of study offered at another institution as appropriate to lead or contribute to a qualification of WIT under the authority delegated to it by NQAI.

2.2. Recognition

This is the process by which WIT satisfies itself that an institution proposing to offer a WIT course leading to a WIT award, according to Appendix 1 of this document.

2.3. Franchise

This is an arrangement where the whole or part of a programme are delivered and assessed in a place other than the WIT campus.

3. Summary of the procedure

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| Step 1 | Initial discussions and visit leading to the signing of a general memorandum of understanding. |
| Step 2 | Preparation of a detailed proposal (CE4) to Academic Council. Panel review of the CE4. |
| Step 3 | Preparation of a legally binding Activity Agreement |

4. Step 1 : Initial Discussions and General Memorandum of Understanding

Initial enquiries regarding collaboration may be directed to a range of WIT staff. The staff member must advise his / her Head of School, the Head of Development and the Registrar of this approach. It is important that these senior managers of WIT be involved in on-going negotiations.

Preliminary and exploratory discussions will consider such matters as the background to the institution, its current educational provision and the nature of the relationship being sought. A visit to the proposed partner by the WIT negotiators or their nominees is required. The criteria listed in Appendix 1 *Recognition of Educational Institutions* will be applied and a report will be submitted to Executive Board.

When it is established by Executive Board that the proposed partner is a suitable one for WIT, a general Memorandum of Understanding is agreed and signed. A copy of a standard Memorandum of Understanding is given in Appendix 2.

The memorandum of understanding covers the following modes of collaboration.

- Entry with advanced standing or articulation arrangements at undergraduate and postgraduate levels,
- curriculum development projects,
- on-line delivery pilot programmes,
- joint conferences,
- staff and student exchange programmes,
- provision of specialised programmes to promote international understanding and language skills
- joint research and development programmes.

This memorandum will be held in the Development Office and a copy in Registry.

Following the signing of the general Memorandum of Understanding between the partners, Schools of WIT may prepare a detailed academic proposal. .

5. Step 2: Academic Proposal to Academic Council CE4

Schools of WIT who wish to enter into activity agreements involving the provision of courses off campus with partners who have signed a Memorandum of Understanding should make a submission to Academic Council for approval.

This document (CE4) should include the following information:-

1. Reason for the proposal
2. Course to be offered – title, components and schedule
3. Student applications, selection and admission
4. Resources to be provided for the course
5. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies
6. Course management arrangements, including student support and quality assurance
7. Course regulations
8. Award

Guidelines for preparing this CE4 are given in Appendix 3.

The Registrar will set up a review panel to evaluate the proposal and advise Academic Council. This panel will consider the capacity of the partner to deliver the course and to support the students to the standards normally required by WIT. It will give particular scrutiny to staff resources, physical resources, course management arrangements, examination and assessment procedures and quality assurance matters.

6. Step 3: Preparation of an Activity Agreement

When the academic approval is granted by Academic Council, a formal agreement between the partners, referred to as an **Activity Agreement**, will be drafted by the Head of development at WIT and, when agreed by both parties, will be signed by the Director of WIT and the Head of the partner institution.

Basically it contains:-

1. The academic proposal agreed and approved at Stage 1
2. The inter-institutional arrangements for monitoring the programme. Clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the partners for all aspects of the course.
3. Where a consultant or facilitator has been employed by either partner, his / her continuing role after the start of the programme will be considered and remuneration agreed.
4. Financial arrangements between the partners. This should include
 - a) details of the revenue streams (student fees, external grants etc.),
 - b) a budget for the course provision and franchising (this will normally include, *inter alia*, tuition costs, resources, student support, travel and subsistence for visiting staff, managers and examiners, examination fees, consultancy fees, franchising fees and other overheads).
 - c) tax and audit arrangements
5. A guarantee by the partners of co-operation in on going monitoring and quality assurance arrangements.
6. Date of commencement and duration of the agreement.
7. Arrangements in the event of a violation of the agreement or other dispute; this should include clarity about applicable law.
8. Arrangements for termination or renewal of the agreement.

This Activity Agreement is a legally binding document and should be reviewed by each partners legal experts before being signed off by Head of each partner organisation.

APPENDIX 1: Guidelines for the Recognition of WIT Academic Partner Institutions

1. Before WIT signs a Memorandum of Understanding with another academic institution, its Executive Board must be satisfied that
 - a) the institution has been established on a permanent basis and its buildings, equipment and financial position are satisfactory
 - b) the academic standards of the institution and the facilities to be made available for any WIT courses it might offer are satisfactory.
2. The course of study offered by a recognised institution shall satisfy the following conditions:-
 - a) It shall be conducted by teachers acceptable to WIT
 - b) The organisation of the course, the syllabuses, the teaching and assessment methods shall be approved by WIT and shall be subject to periodic review.
 - c) All fees for the course will be agreed each year by the partners and will be paid to the overseas partner.
 - d) WIT charges to the partner for its services will be agreed on an annual basis and will be paid by the partner according to an agreed schedule.
 - e) Insofar as possible, all course regulations will be agreed in advance of the commencement of the course. Where issues arise, they will be addressed on a partnership basis and both partners will act in the best interest of students.
3. The main language of tuition and assessment for WIT courses will be English. The percentage of the course which may be delivered in another language will not exceed 30% for Level 6 and 20% for Levels 7, 8 and 9. It is the duty of the partner institution to ensure that students have a satisfactory level of English for admission to the course and that English support is provided during the course.
4. It is strongly advocated by WIT that each student should spend at least one month in WIT at some stage during the course. This may take the form of a semester or year abroad, a Summer School or a supervised project. In addition to this, a work placement in Ireland may be appropriate for some courses.
5. The recognised partner institution will establish a course board for the course, in accordance with WIT procedures. The board membership should encompass those teaching on and managing the course in the partner institution. At least two meetings per year should include representation from WIT; one of these may be the examination board. This course board will have the power to comment upon and make recommendations relating to the course and to the progress of individual students. It will report to the Academic Council, or its equivalent body, in each partner organisation.

6. The assessment and examination process will be aligned with the normal arrangements for the course in WIT. Nominations for external examiners will be agreed by the partners. A member of WIT who is involved in the course delivery or management in WIT will attend the examination board.
7. A degree from WIT or from the partner institution will be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed all the course requirements.

APPENDIX 2: Sample Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

AND

WATERFORD INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

A Memorandum of Understanding made in xxx on xxx, between xxx, founded in xxx as an independent institution approved by xxx (hereinafter called xxx) and Waterford Institute of Technology, established in Waterford, Ireland by statute in 1970 under the RTC Act and re-designated in 1992 under the Irish Institutes of Technology Act. (hereinafter called WIT).

It is hereby agreed between the parties as follows:-

1. xxx and WIT have agreed to collaborate with each other to form a strategic and beneficial relationship to establish educational programmes which shall include
 - advanced standing or articulation arrangements for both undergraduate and postgraduate levels,
 - curriculum development projects,
 - on-line delivery pilot programmes
 - joint conferences
 - staff and student exchange programmes,
 - provision of specialised programmes to promote international understanding and language skills
 - technological exchange programmes,
 - joint research and development programmes.
2. Both parties shall enter into separate and detailed **Activity Agreements** which shall specify the terms and conditions of this collaboration.

3. Both parties hereby agree the proposed Activity Agreements shall contain the following provisions:-
 - a. the financial and legal obligations of the parties hereto;
 - b. the terms and conditions of the Agreement shall include but not limited to the details of its duration, the notice necessary for termination, the number of students and their scheduling, and the commencement, administration and monitoring of the courses involved:
 - c. the duties and responsibilities of the parties to the Agreement,
 - d. that the Agreement is subject to the express approval of the xxx Government, xxx Board of Directors and WIT Academic Council and that should such approval not be granted or be refused within a period to be pronounced in the Agreement, the proposed Agreement in respect of which such approval is not granted or refused will be of no further effect.
4. The parties hereto shall appoint representatives to carry out studies of academic, financial and administrative feasibility of entering into Activity Agreements contemplated herein and the parties further provide that each party will be liable for their own costs and expenses during the feasibility study process.
5. The parties shall in good faith continue the feasibility studies contemplated under this Memorandum of Understanding which shall be valid for a period of three (3) calendar years commencing from the date hereof, and the parties may, by mutual agreement between them, extend the feasibility studies for any period beyond stipulated period which they consider appropriate.
6. Either party may give three (3) months notice in writing to the other, of their desire to terminate this Memorandum of Understanding. At the end of the three (3) months period calculated from the date of the said notice, this Memorandum of Understanding shall be terminated.
7. This Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed as a statement of intent and is not binding on either party.
8. Nothing in the Memorandum of Understanding shall prejudice the right of xxx from establishing similar collaborative arrangement with Universities other than WIT and not prevent WIT from entering into similar relationship with other institutions other than xxx.

In witness whereof the parties hereto have agreed to enter in this Memorandum of Understanding on the date first above written.

SIGNED BY: -

SIGNED BY:-

For :

For: Waterford Institute of Technology

Date:

Date:

IN THE PRESENCE OF: -

IN THE PRESENCE OF:-

WITNESS:

WITNESS:

NAME:

NAME:

Date:

Date:

APPENDIX 3: Guidelines for the Preparation of a Proposal for the Collaborative Delivery of a WIT course off-campus: CE4.

This document should be prepared jointly and agreed by senior academics at WIT and the partner institution. It should be submitted to WIT academic council for validation. Some guidelines are provided below for the completion of each section.

1. Reason for the proposal

- a) State the benefits to WIT
- b) State the benefits to the overseas partner
- c) State the benefits to the students
- d) Show evidence of demand for the course
- e) Does this proposal require the approval of any other educational or government body? If so, provide evidence of this approval or state the process and timescale for obtaining it.
- f) Aims and objectives of the programme

2. Course to be offered – title, components and schedule

- a) The WIT CE2 document will be provided to the partner institution. It must be made aware that the intellectual property and copyright for this document resides in WIT and that it must not be copied or used for any purpose other than the proposed collaboration.
- b) The course may be adopted precisely as per the CE2 or it may be adapted to suit the needs of the partner organisation and the students. This may also be required because of the need for additional English support. All proposed modifications must be documented and explained. Credit may be given for any additional English which is included.
- c) Particular attention must be given to the management of research projects, dissertations or work placements.
- d) State clearly where and when and by whom each semester of the course will be delivered.
- e) The amended approved course schedule must be included as part of the submission.
- f) A course plan must be provided giving the key dates and milestones.

3. Student applications, selection and admission

- a) Admission criteria must be agreed by the partners and should be in accordance with the normal criteria for the course at WIT. In the case of overseas students, this must include the level of English required. Undergraduate programmes normally require IELTS 5.5 or equivalent.
- b) Explain how the course will be promoted. Normally this is done by both partners and any advertising should state clearly that it is a joint initiative by the named partners.
- c) Explain how and by whom students applications and selection will be handled. This is normally undertaken by the partner institution.
- d) Agree the numbers to be admitted.
- e) Agree the commencement date.
- f) Students must be registered jointly by both WIT and the partner institution.
- g) It should be clearly stated what entitlements the students have from each partner institution e.g. student cards, access to facilities and services, grants. Normally, when they are physically present in WIT, they have the same entitlements and responsibilities as WIT students and when they are attending the partner institution they have the same entitlements and responsibilities as other students there.

4. Resources to be provided for the course

- a) Human resources.
 - a. English versions of the CV's for all the teachers on the course should be provided as part of the submission CE4. The teachers qualifications must be in accordance with those of teaching staff in WIT.
 - b. Describe the levels of technical, administrative and student support services available for students on the course.
- b) Physical resources. Describe the supports available in terms of
 - a. Classrooms and laboratories
 - b. Computing facilities
 - c. Library facilities
 - d. Other equipment

5. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies

- a) Course delivery modes – lectures, seminars, practicals, self-directed study etc.
- b) Class contact hours.
- c) Student induction and preparation for the course
- d) Exchange of class materials between WIT and the partner institution.
- e) Visiting lecturers (both to and from WIT)
- f) Teacher development programmes – new learning styles
- g) Mentoring
- h) Use of on-line learning and teleconferencing.
- i) Learning support for students with difficulties
- j) Extent of alignment between partners with regard to continuous assessment and examinations. For example will the students at the partner institution sit the same examinations as those in WIT or will this be the examining and assessment role be delegated. If so, to what extent will WIT monitor the process.

6. Course management arrangements, including student support and quality assurance

- a) Course Board – membership and terms of reference, schedule of meetings
- b) Name and responsibilities of the Course Director in partner institution.
- c) Name and responsibilities of the Liaison person in WIT (this may be the WIT Course leader).
- d) Student consultation and representation
- e) Examination Board and External Examiners
- f) Arrangements for an annual review of the co-operation.
- g) All other quality assurance arrangements and reviews should be specified and may contain elements from the normal procedures of each partner, provided they are harmonised.

7. Course regulations

- a) A common set of course regulations should be drawn up, agreed and presented to all students on commencement of the course. These should encompass:-
 - a. Level of attendance required
 - b. Clarification about which institution's code of conduct (covering for example plagiarism) will apply to the student. Agree that any breaches of the code leading to penalties will be communicated to the partner.
 - c. Assessment requirements – mandatory elements, pass marks, grading.

8. Award

- a) The precise title and level (pass or honours) of the award must be agreed.
- b) Students do not normally receive awards from both institutions. If a student may receive an award from either institution, the basis on which this is decided should be specified.
- c) For WIT awards, the wording on the parchment will include reference to the study in the partner institution.

Ten copies of this document should be sent to:-

*The Registrar,
Waterford Institute of Technology,
Cork Road,
Waterford.*

It should be submitted at least 8 months before the expected commencement of the course.