



PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY

Presidency University Act, 2013 of the Karnataka Act No. 41 of 2013 | Established under Section 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956
Approved by AICTE, New Delhi

POLICY ON ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

November 2019
[Version 1.0]

[As Approved at the 13th Meeting of BOM and ratified by the BOG at its 13th Meeting, both held on
November 9, 2019]


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Table of Contents

1. PREAMBLE	1
2. SHORT TITLE AND APPLICATION	1
3. EXTENT AND APPLICABILITY	1
4. DEFINITIONS.....	1
5. ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES.....	2
6. TYPES OF ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS.....	3
7. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS.....	4
8. ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP LIFECYCLE	6
9. AMENDMENTS	12


REGISTRAR 

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. The University encourages development of collaborative arrangements with Institutions of repute both National and International. The various collaborative provisions enable a range of benefits and opportunities to be realised, both at Faculty/School and University levels. These include diversification of the cohort mix and expanding the recruitment pool of Students and Faculty, fostering, and extending research links, and enhancing reputational perceptions.
- 1.2. Opportunities for Collaboration with Institutions and Organisations have to be very carefully established, nurtured and maintained.

2. SHORT TITLE AND APPLICATION

- 2.1. This Policy shall be called the “Policy on Academic Partnership and Collaborations”.
- 2.2. This Policy shall come into effect from the date of approval by the Academic Council of Presidency University and ratified by Board of Management.

3. EXTENT AND APPLICABILITY

- 3.1. The scope of this policy applies to the University incorporating the following types of arrangements:
 - i. ‘General Agreements’ for mutual Collaborative arrangements.
 - ii. Off-Campus Delivery: Joint delivery of academic programs.
 - iii. Advanced Arrangements: Dual Degrees; Joint Degrees; Joint Research; Faculty Exchange; Student Exchange.
- 3.2. The following collaborative agreements may also come under the purview of this Policy provided the regulatory framework of the host countries of both partner Institutions and permits these:
 - i. Distance Learning
 - ii. Online/Digital Learning
 - iii. Work and Study Placements
 - iv. Study Abroad Arrangements
 - v. Pursuing Internships, Apprenticeships and Sabbaticals Arrangements

4. DEFINITIONS

- i. **“Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee” (ACPC)** means to provide strategic and operational focus for all collaboration and partnerships.
- i. **“Academic Collaboration”** means the collaboration that not only accelerates the academic excellence but also enhances the quality of the work and extends the repertoire of the partners. It is beneficial to the faculty in learning new teaching tools, and to the students in increasing the breadth of their knowledge and learning different approaches to solving a problem.

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REGISTRAR
The seal of the Registrar of Presidency University, Bangalore. It is a circular stamp with the text 'PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY' at the top, 'Registrar' in the center, and 'BANGALORE' at the bottom.

- ii. **“Academic partnership”** means strong and long-term relationships with academic partners that encompass multiple activities, including coursework programs, research training, student and staff exchange and to enhance the domestic and international reputation of the University.
- iii. **“Articulation”** is a broad term that relates to various methods whereby students can receive transfer credit for specific course work taken previously in a different program or a different institution. Through the process of articulation, institutions assess courses offered at other institutions to determine whether to grant course credit toward their own programs or credentials.
- iv. **“Articulation Agreement”** means an official agreement between two (bilateral) or more (multilateral) institutions or university that authorizes studies undertaken in specific programs at one institution to be credited toward specific programs at another institution. Articulation agreements may apply to programs within an institution as well as to external accredited partners at the local, provincial and national level.
- v. **“University”** means the Presidency University, Bengaluru (hereinafter referred to as the University).

5. ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

When developing and approving academic partnerships the University should be guided by the principles of:

- 5.1. Academic partnerships that align with the Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives of the University
- 5.2. Maintenance of the Quality Standards of the University.
- 5.3. Equivalence of Curriculum, Assessment and Learning Outcomes.
- 5.4. The University’s desirability of:
 - i. Strong and long-term relationships with Academic Partners
 - ii. Broad Academic Partnerships that encompass multiple activities, including Coursework Programs, Research Training, Student and Faculty Exchange and Articulation
 - iii. Academic Partnerships that enhance the Domestic and International reputation of the University.
- 5.5. Financially-sustainable Academic Partnerships with due consideration of business risk.
- 5.6. Compliance with relevant Legislative and Regulatory requirements.
- 5.7. Regular evidence-based review, benchmarking, and continuous improvement.


REGISTRAR 

6. TYPES OF ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

6.1. There are five main types of partnership arrangements that the University requires to put in place:

- 6.1.1. A University Course or Award that is delivered with or by a partner organisation in whole or part (e.g., Joint Degrees, Dual Degrees, Articulated Degrees)
- 6.1.2. Agreements to recognise Courses at a partner Institution for admission or advanced standing to a host University's Program.
- 6.1.3. University Student Exchange to study at a partner institution or receive students from a partner institution to study at the University leading to credit transfers.
- 6.1.4. Arrangements that confer reciprocal arrangements by the host University on a partner Educational, Research or leading to Joint research, Joint projects and holding of joint Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).
- 6.1.5. Arrangements to conduct Seminars and Conferences jointly to disseminate knowledge on leading edge topics.

6.2. Courses and Awards delivered with a partner Institution include:

- 6.2.1. Partner University delivery of a Course/Program at an external location, which is similar to the delivery of the Course/Program at the host University/ Presidency University.
- 6.2.2. Collaborative Specific Credit (delivery of part of a University Course by a partner, but not a whole Course/Program).
- 6.2.3. Collaborative Credit-bearing Short Course (credits delivered with, or by, a Partner).
- 6.2.4. Joint School (delivery of a suite of courses jointly between the University and a Partner).
- 6.2.5. Support provider (partner provides Learner Support or Facilities to Students on a University Course/Program/Research Project).

6.3. Degrees involving a partner may include one of the following:

- 6.3.1. Degrees awarded solely by the University (single award).
- 6.3.2. A dual/double degree which may lead to both the University and the Partner Institution separately conferring their own degrees.
- 6.3.3. A Joint Degree whereby the University and the Partner Institution jointly confer a single Degree.

6.4. Agreements with a Partner Institution to recognise qualifications at a partner for admission or advanced standing to the University course include:

- 6.4.1. Advanced Standing (non-guaranteed entry to the University Course with credit transfer from a Partner).



- 6.4.2. Articulation (guaranteed entry to the University Course with credit transfer from a Partner).
- 6.5. Agreements to facilitate exchange of University Students to study at a partner Institution or receive Students from a partner Institution to study at the university include:
- 6.5.1. Student Exchange.
- 6.5.2. Study Abroad.
- 6.6. Arrangement to explore discussion of topics with a partner with a view to implementing formal written agreements in future:
- 6.6.1. Cooperation agreement
- 6.6.2. Joint Research and Projects
- 6.6.3. Internships, Apprenticeships and Sabbaticals of mutual interest and agreement

7. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

7.1. Governance

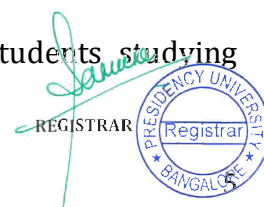
- 7.1.1. Academic Partnerships are a formal, contractual relationship between the University and the Partner Institution. While individual Members of Faculty can initiate and liaise with colleagues regarding negotiating a contractual agreement, they alone cannot approve the arrangement.
- 7.1.2. Approval is a collective decision taken in line with the University's Strategic Plans, Quality Assurance, and Financial Processes. Only individuals with the authority to sign agreement on the University's behalf may do so, and an agreement must be signed on the basis of an approval process.
- 7.1.3. The University is responsible for the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities and the student experience, where these are delivered on its behalf under an Academic Partnership arrangement that leads to a University Degree.
- 7.1.4. Responsibility for the oversight, approval, and review of Academic Partnerships, and for the maintenance of Academic Standards, Quality, and Degrees granted through an Academic Partnership lies with the University's Academic Council.
- 7.1.5. Academic Council enacts its responsibilities by delegation through the University's Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee that shall be constituted by the University.



REGISTRAR



7.2. University Level

- 7.2.1. The University shall have a well-established organisational structure in place for the management and support of Partnerships, which includes, Academic Faculties and Professional Services. Proposals for new partnerships may be initiated through strategic opportunities identified at University Management (Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Deans, or equivalent), or through Schools and Faculty initiatives.
- 7.2.2. The Dean (International Affairs), shall perform the following:
- i. He/She shall have specific responsibility for the Strategic Development of the Academic Partnerships, Nationally and Internationally.
 - ii. He/She shall be the central point of contact for advice and guidance regarding all aspects of the approval, administrative oversight, annual monitoring and review of Academic Partnerships that lead to, or involve, the award of credit and/or qualifications.
 - iii. He/She shall support the University's Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee (ACPC) to ensure that due process has been followed for all aspects of the partnership agreements that lead to a Degree of the University.
 - iv. He/She is responsible for quality, assuring the arrangement; ensuring it is delivered in line with the University's Policies. He/She works closely together with other colleagues to ensure effective implementation of University Policies and Procedures and the Operation of Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review.
- 7.2.3. The Dean (Academic Affairs), shall perform the following:
- i. Manage and implement Quality Assurance arrangements, in line with the Academic Partnerships Policy and other applicable University Policies.
 - ii. Carry out due diligence activities in terms of academic standards and quality of the proposed Partner University.
 - iii. Undertake course approval and modification activities, to include inputs into, and approval of the academic planning process for the Partnership.
 - iv. Review and comment upon agreements, as requested by the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee (ACPC).
 - v. Evaluate, Develop, and Review Academic Partnerships in accordance with applicable University Policies.
 - vi. Ensure management of partnership arrangements, and oversight of the student experience for partner students, is included.
 - vii. Provide proper response to any matters pertaining to standards and quality to be formally recorded.
 - viii. Ensure a high-quality academic experience for all students studying through Collaborative Arrangements.


REGISTRAR



- ix. Ensure commitment of appropriate Faculty Members and necessary staff and other resources to develop and manage collaborative arrangements.
- x. Deliver training for the Partner, to ensure they are familiar with University Policies, Procedures, and Practices.
- xi. Share good practice, particularly in relation to common challenges that arise.

8. ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP LIFECYCLE

8.1. OVERVIEW

- 8.1.1. There are four main stages to the lifecycle of an academic partnership:
- i. Inception and approval
 - ii. Operation and monitoring
 - iii. Review and renewal
 - iv. Termination

8.2. INITIAL INCEPTION

- 8.2.1. In the first instance, the University Faculty Member proposing to initiate an Academic Partnership should seek initial endorsement to proceed from his/her Dean/HoD and inform Dean (International Affairs) and Dean (Academic Affairs).
- 8.2.2. The proposer must then contact the “Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee (ACPC)” who will support the proposal if approved through the Office of Dean (International Affairs). The proposing Faculty Member must provide all details of the potential partnership to the ACPC.
- 8.2.3. Advice on how to structure the collaborative activity can be sought from the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee and Office of Dean (International Affairs).

8.3. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF A NEW ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

- 8.3.1. The Academic Partnerships Proposal Form must be completed by the proposer, with support provided by the Office of Dean (International Affairs). Depending on the nature of the proposal, other departments, e.g., Registrar’s Office, or members of staff, e.g., PVC, Deans, HoDs, or Finance Officer, may need to be consulted regarding practical aspects of the Partnership.
- 8.3.2. The type of partnership proposed shall be stated with the Academic Partnerships Proposal Form.
- 8.3.3. The ACPC will determine the level of due diligence required based on the type of the proposed partner institution and partnership activity. Depending on the outcome of the ACPC’s risk assessment, the Dean through its Faculty Member may be asked to complete the any additional due

REGISTRAR



diligence report/checklist and/or the site visit report/checklist for the proposed partnership.

- 8.3.4. The completed New Academic Partnerships Proposal Form (as required) are scrutinised and considered for approval by the Dean (International Affairs)
- 8.3.5. The completed forms must then be submitted to the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee for final review.
- 8.3.6. The full proposal and due diligence information must be subsequently considered by the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee.
- 8.3.7. Approved proposals will be formally approved by the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee.
- 8.3.8. Once a proposal has been approved, the development of a Memorandum of Agreement will be co-ordinated by the Office of Dean (International Affairs) after taking due consent from University's Legal Advisor. The draft agreement will be shared and negotiated with the Partner Organisation.
- 8.3.9. Approval for new programmes or courses delivered in partnership must be undertaken through the Office of Dean (Academic Affairs) and Academic Council of the University. Programme approval is required for all Joint and Double Degree Award Program, Dual Degree Program, where the University award is contingent on the Partner Institution award and Double and Joint Research Degrees.

8.4. FULL PROPOSAL DOCUMENTATION

- 8.4.1. Different types of academic partnerships will incur different levels of risk. The University shall undertake the risk assessment through the ACPC in consultation with its Finance and Legal team.
- 8.4.2. Once initial approval to develop an Academic Partnership has been given, the relevant documents must be completed and signed by the relevant parties depending on the type of partnership. The Office of Dean (International Affairs) shall prepare a complete list of documents and forms as to what is required.

8.5. OPERATIONAL AND REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.5.1. The following Operational and Regulatory issues must be considered when developing a proposal for an Academic Partnership.
 - 8.5.1.1. **Marketing and recruitment**
 - i. how the programme will be marketed, and students recruited.
 - ii. what mechanisms are in place to approve any marketing and publicity material produced by either institution.
 - 8.5.1.2. **Admissions and entry requirements:**
 - i. clarify the process for dealing with applications.


REGISTRAR


- ii. clarify any delegation of responsibility to the partner organisation.
- iii. admissions processes need to take account of both partners' Entry Criteria and Regulations, or Joint Entry Criteria may need to be developed. The entry criteria for partnership programmes should not be lower than for programmes delivered entirely by the university.

8.5.1.3. Assessment arrangements:

- i. which Assessment Regulations will apply to the course(s) or programme(s).
- ii. who will be responsible for the assessment of students and how will the equivalence of marking practices be guaranteed.
- iii. the language of instruction will normally be in English.

8.5.1.4. Financial processes:

- i. Clarification on where, when, and how tuition fees, or any other fees, will be paid and by whom.
- ii. Clarification on; Invoicing arrangements, if any.

8.5.1.5. Legal framework:

- i. All Academic Partnerships must be subject to a legally binding agreements setting out the responsibilities of each party.
- ii. All legally binding agreements must be time-limited and undergo review prior to renewal.

8.5.1.6. Management arrangements:

- i. Partnership program must be managed in the same way as any other University Degree Program.
- ii. Head of the Department must be responsible for the management of the programme including liaison with the Partner Organisation.
- iii. Clarification on how the program will be managed, e.g., by a Joint Programme Committee involving staff from the partner organisation if appropriate, and how this relates to University Management Structures.

8.5.1.7. Degree details/certification:

- i. In the case of Joint or Multiple Degree arrangements for the production and content of Degree Certificates and Transcripts must be defined.
- ii. Arrangements relating to graduation processes and/or ceremonies must be clearly laid out.

8.5.1.8. Resources:

- i. Clarification on the staffing resources required, including the academic lead, from both organisations.
- ii. Consideration of the implications for place and facilities wherever relevant.

8.5.1.9. Registration and induction:



- i. Clarification on who is responsible for registering and inducting students on the partnership programme, including the registration status of students.
- ii. In the case of Joint or Multiple Programs, students must remain registered at the University during any periods of time spent at the Partner Institution.
- iii. Clarification on whether students will remain registered at both institutions for the duration of the programme.
- iv. Consideration of any visa requirements and any requirements relating to international responsibilities.
- v. Information on the partnership programme must be made available to students, particularly around Regulations and Procedures, access to Learning Resources within both institutions, student support and assessment, and any transfer of data between the partners, e.g., personal details, transcripts.

8.5.1.10. **Student support:**

- i. Students registered at the University on a partnership programme should be entitled to the same student support services, e.g., for disability facilitation, as students on other University Degrees.
- ii. Clarification on how students moving between institutions will access these services and how support will be configured.
- iii. Clarification on how student feedback is collected, shared and acted upon by the partner institutions.

8.5.1.11. **Data transfer**

- i. Understanding on what personal data (student and/or staff) is shared with the partner institution and is any of that data special category sensitive data.
- ii. Sensitivity to data protection issues must be addressed in the Memorandum of Agreement as advised by the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee.

8.6. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT/UNDERSTANDING

- 8.6.1. Once a proposed academic partnership has been fully approved by the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee, the proposer must ensure that a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) and/or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is adapted and signed by both the University and the Partner Organisation(s) through the Office of Dean (International Affairs)
- 8.6.2. It is the responsibility of the Dean (International Affairs) to ensure that both the University and the Partner Organisation adhere to the responsibilities set out in the agreement.


REGISTRAR



- 8.6.3. The authorized signatories for Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding for Academic Partnerships shall be set out.
- 8.6.4. The Office of Registrar must retain one fully signed original copy of the MoA/MoU and another must be returned to the Partner Institution.
- 8.6.5. The Office of Dean (International Affairs) will keep central records of all Memorandum of Agreement/ Understanding, signed for Academic Partnerships under the University framework. During the Academic Year preceding the year when a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding is due to expire, the Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee shall facilitate the renewal/termination of the agreement.
- 8.6.6. To ensure that the Academic Partnership is viable and continues to provide excellent learning opportunities to the students, all necessary requirements shall be fulfilled in advance.

8.7. OPERATION AND MONITORING OF AN ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

- 8.7.1. The Committee is responsible for managing the Academic Partnerships they have, with support from the Faculty Member and any relevant professional service Departments.
- 8.7.2. Most academic partnerships (as set out in the Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding), which includes representatives from both/all institutions shall meet at least annually through Video Conference or in-person to discuss developments and issues relating to the partnership and programme.
- 8.7.3. All Academic Partnerships shall be reviewed annually.
- 8.7.4. The viability and operation of an Academic Partnership are evaluated upon the renewal of the relevant Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.

8.8. TERMINATION OF AN ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP

- 8.8.1. Termination of a Collaborative Academic Partnership may be categorised in one of three main ways as follows:
- i. Termination of the partnership by the University upon passage of the term of the Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.
 - ii. Non-renewal of the Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding when its term has expired. This may be by mutual agreement of both institutions or by one institution or the other not wishing to continue the collaboration.
 - iii. Termination by the partner organisation before the Memorandum of Agreement/ Understanding has reached its full term.
- 8.8.2. Termination of a partnership by the University may be for several reasons, for example, failure to recruit sufficient student numbers to make the partnership viable, financial matters, quality issues or government changes

in the country of the partner institution. These examples are not exhaustive.

- 8.8.3. The partner organisation may terminate the partnership with the University for a variety of reasons, some of which may be similar to those given above.
- 8.8.4. Whatever the reasons for the termination of an academic partnership, whether mutually agreed or by one partner or the other, both institutions have a duty of care to students studying and registered on a programme. The duty of care is such that students must be able to complete their programme to the normal timescales. The University should endeavour to agree an exit strategy with the partner organisation that ensures this duty of care is met for students.
- 8.8.5. Unless the Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding includes specific and clear reference to the obligation of both parties to continue to support the students even after the expiry or termination of the agreement until all students have successfully completed their programme or course, the two organisations should agree an exit strategy that ensures all current students can complete their programme. This should be a written document and may take the form of a letter. An exit strategy should also include timescales for current students to complete their programme of study and allow for the possibility of resits, deadline extensions and so forth where there are justified extenuating circumstances.
- 8.8.6. Where a partner institution cannot provide an arrangement which will provide this duty of care to students, for example, due to insolvency resulting in ceasing to trade, it is the responsibility of the University to ensure the duty of care to current, enrolled students is met. This may require alternative arrangements for teaching, assessing, and providing equivalent learning opportunities for the students.
- 8.8.7. The Academic Collaboration and Partnership Committee can offer advice and guidance on matters to do with termination, exit strategy and duty of care to students, if required.
- 8.8.8. The responsibility for termination of a collaborative partnership or a particular programme offered by a collaborative partner ultimately rests with the Vice Chancellor of the University.
- 8.8.9. Termination of a partnership arrangement must be carried out in a manner that ensures protection of the University's interests, including the interests of Students, Faculty, and Research Scholars.


REGISTRAR



9. AMENDMENTS

This policy will be reviewed periodically to rectify anomalies, (if any), and to incorporate Feedback received from the Stakeholders through impact analysis and deliberations of the Focus Groups, constituted by the Vice Chancellor.


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