UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER▦

Liaison Tutor Handbook

Contents

Section 1: The Liaison Tutor Role

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1   The purpose of this Handbook is to draw together the key information that a member of staff will need in order to understand and perform the role of Liaison Tutor.

1.1.2   The role of the Liaison Tutor provides a link between those responsible for the management and delivery of the course at the partner institution, staff based in the College at the University of Westminster and staff working in academic administration at both institutions.

1.1.3   The role can be challenging and rewarding in making a real contribution both to the development of the collaborative relationship and to individual students who pursue collaborative courses.

1.2 Overview of the Role

1.2.1   Liaison Tutors are appointed for each externally validated or franchised course, which leads to a University of Westminster award. For further information around definitions and collaborative models please refer to the [Collaborations Handbook](#).

1.2.2   Liaison Tutors are usually based within the University of Westminster College which is responsible for managing the collaboration. Collaborative relationships can be multi College collaborations which involve more than one internal College.

1.2.3   The role of the Liaison Tutor may vary according to the nature of the collaboration but is likely to include:
-        liaison with colleagues at the partner institution;
-        participation in approval/validation and review activity;
-        support and advice on admissions processes;
-        participation in assessment processes;
-        providing guidance on student representation and feedback;
-        coordination of the arrangements for annual monitoring;
-        participation in course and module modifications processes;
-        visiting the partner institution;
-        completing Liaison Tutor reports.

1.3 Person Specification

1.3.1   There are no absolute requirements in the form of a person specification but the role of Liaison Tutor is likely to be undertaken by an experienced member of the academic staff with:
-        experience of course management;
-        knowledge of quality assurance procedures;
-        high level inter-personal/communication skills;
-        a willingness to visit and work with colleagues at the partner institution;
-        knowledge of relevant curricula.

Section 2: Appointment of a Liaison Tutor

2.1 Appointment Procedure

2.1.1   The Liaison Tutor is appointed by the Head of College in which the collaborative course(s) reside.

2.1.2   The Head of College is responsible for informing the Quality and Standards Office at the University of Westminster of the name of the person appointed as Liaison Tutor and of any subsequent changes.

2.1.3   A Liaison Tutor must be appointed:

- before a course is validated / approved to assist in the development and approval of the new collaboration;

- for the entire time that there are students enrolled on the collaborative course.

2.2 Induction

2.2.1   It is the responsibility of the Head of the relevant academic department at the University to arrange the induction of new Liaison Tutors. This can be in collaborative with the Partnerships and Collaborations Teams.

2.2.2   The main purpose of induction is to ensure that the Liaison Tutor is informed about the collaborative link and can conduct their responsibilities effectively.

2.2.3   It is recommended that the Induction involves the following elements as a minimum:

(a) information to be provided to the Liaison Tutor (see 2.3);

(b) visit to the Partner Institution (see 2.4).

2.3 Information

2.3.1   The Liaison Tutor should be directed through the following documents:

(i)   The [Collaborations Handbook](#)

(ii)   The initial partner profile documentation

(iii)   Course Handbook and course specification

(iv)   Collaborative Agreement (if already in place)

2.3.2   Additionally, where the Liaison Tutor is appointed to an existing collaborative link:

(i)   Copies of the previous Liaison Tutor reports

(ii)   Copies of the previous years' annual monitoring documents (which includes External Examiner reports and responses and the minutes of Course Committee meetings)

(iii)   Initial validation or re-validation reports

2.4   Initial visit to the Partner Institution

2.4.1   An initial visit to the partner institution should be arranged for the new Liaison Tutor to meet with teaching staff and, where appropriate, students on the University award. It may also be useful for the Liaison Tutor to meet support staff involved in the collaborative link.

2.4.2   Where a Liaison Tutor is being appointed to an existing collaborative link, the previous Liaison Tutor should, where possible, accompany the new appointee on the first visit to introduce them to the staff and students at the partner institution.

2.4.3   For a Liaison Tutor appointed for a new course proposal, this visit may be used to have discussions about the course development and approval processes and the Liaison Tutor might be accompanied by a member of staff from Quality and Standards or the wider Academic Registrar's department.

Section 3: Responsibilities

3.1 General

3.1.1 The Liaison Tutor normally contributes to the initial development of a new collaboration, and, once the link has been approved, to provide continuity of contact and advice between the two institutions.

3.1.2 The specific responsibilities of the Liaison Tutor will vary in accordance with the nature of the collaboration. The administrative annex to the Agreement will identify the specific responsibilities.

3.1.3 The main responsibility of the Liaison Tutor is to initiate and maintain regular contact with the Course Leader at the partner institution, and to share information and records with relevant administrative colleagues who hold responsibility for the academic administration of the partnership.

3.2 Specific Responsibilities

3.2.1 The specific responsibilities of a Liaison Tutor are:

(i) To maintain an effective communication network between the partner institution and the University in respect of the specified award(s).

(ii) To communicate directly with the Course Leader employed by the partner institution and other colleagues (administrator, module leader, programme coordinator and senior management), liaising regularly by email, telephone and fax as appropriate, and to document electronically the main issues discussed and record the advice given.

(iii) To work collaboratively with colleagues in the Admissions, Registry and Partnerships teams providing access to data and documentation to assist planning and organisation for:
- Student Recruitment and Admissions;
- Assessment.

(iv) To provide advice and guidance to the partner institution on the University's academic regulations (see Handbook of Academic Regulations), principally in areas of recruitment and selection, admission and induction of students; sharing best practice and making decisions on exceptional and/or non-standard cases.

(v) To liaise with the Module Leaders within the University who hold responsibility for modules which provide the benchmark for the modules delivered within the partner institution, facilitating the exchange of assessment criteria and marking schemes, and criteria for sampling (a) for moderation by Westminster Module Leaders, and (b) independent scrutiny by the appointed External Examiner(s).

(vi) To provide guidance on marking standards and provision of detailed feedback to students on their performance in assessment.

(vii)   To maintain an overview of any issues which may pose risks to the University or its partner institution in terms of potential compromise of integrity and accountability.

(viii)   To provide guidance on the most effective means of supporting student representatives, and eliciting and recording student feedback, and reporting back to students on the points raised (including opportunities for feedback on access to resources).

(ix)   To provide advice on proposed module and course modifications and staff development and assessment, including external examining.

(x)   To liaise with the External Examiner(s) appointed by the University of Westminster, and support them in their role of providing independent scrutiny of the assessment arrangements, attesting to the academic quality and standards of the course as evidenced through coursework and examination.

(xi)   To participate in all Assessment Boards convened by the University and the partner institution in respect of awards conferred by the University of Westminster.

(xii)   To provide advice on the University's processes for the investigation of alleged assessment offences, and any Mitigating Circumstances submissions, and requests for review of Assessment Board results (appeals).

(xiii)   To support collaborative partners in preparing for approval/validation and re-approval/revalidation, advising on course modifications at other times and reviewing course documentation (including the Administrative Annex) in collaboration with other stakeholders.

(xiv)   To coordinate the submission of documentation in accordance with the University's requirements for annual monitoring by Colleges and the University's Teaching Committee on behalf of Academic Council.

(xv)   To inform the partner institution on University regulations, policies and procedures, and to keep the partner updated of new or revised policies and procedures.

(xvi)   To monitor the continued effectiveness of facilities and resources including student support and learning resources.

(xvii)   To consult with the partner institution to help ensure that the quality of staffing is maintained and identifying any staff development needs to support the partnership and respond to those accordingly.

(xviii)   Ensuring that the latest publicity materials used to promote any aspect of the University and the collaborative provision are accurate, comply with the terms of the collaborative agreement and are sent to the University for approval.

3.3 Visits to the Partner Institution

3.3.1   Liaison Tutors are required to visit the collaborative partner institution at least twice each academic session. The main aims of visits are:

- to maintain and develop links with colleagues at the partner institution;
- to meet with students studying collaborative courses;
- to monitor the quality assurance arrangements for the collaborative course;
- to address any other issues identified by the University or the collaborative partner;
- to discuss the management and operation of the collaborative course.

3.3.2   Specific tasks undertaken during a visit to a collaborative partner institution may vary according to the nature of the partner and the maturity of the relationship. Key areas to be covered are:

- quality assurance procedures, especially assessment;
- risk assessment;
- monitoring of admissions;
- resourcing;
- student feedback

3.3.3   Specific areas for focus may include:

- Observation of teaching
- Course/curriculum development
- Modifications to modules/course
- Audit of Assessment Process
- Admission decisions
- Conduct of Assessment Boards
- External Examiner feedback
- Resources
- Administrative issues
- Staff development requirements
- Discussions about external body visits
- Student recruitment
- Student achievement/progression/retention

3.3.4   The outcomes of each visit to a collaborative partner institution should be included in the next Liaison Tutor Report. **See Section 5** for more on the Report.

3.4   Student Voice

3.4.1   The University values highly the full spectrum of student engagement with their courses of study as a means of addressing operational issues and promoting quality enhancement. Liaison Tutors are encouraged to work with their colleagues at partner institutions to promote:
(i)   better support for student representatives
(ii)   improved methods of eliciting and recording student feedback;
(iii)   more effective ways of reporting back to students on actions taken to address issues raised.

Section 4: Programme Management

4.1   Monitoring of Admissions

4.1.1   Admissions requirements for collaborative provision must conform to the University's general admissions requirements (including all relevant English language requirements and any course specific requirements approved through validation).

4.1.2   Liaison Tutors are required to record the monitoring of admissions taken on the University's behalf by staff in partner institutions throughout the admissions cycle on a regular basis, and provide written reports (within the Liaison Tutor Reports) yearly to the University Academic Registrar and their Head of Department to record decisions taken and issues raised. This report should cover all admissions activities from promotion and recruitment to issue of offers, confirmation and induction. The aim of this document is to provide additional guidance to Liaison Tutors on the monitoring of admissions at partner institutions.

4.2   Course and Module Modifications

4.2.1   Details of the course and module modifications are contained within the [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.](#)

4.3   Annual Monitoring

4.3.1   With the exception of WIUT, the Liaison Tutor is responsible for advising partner institutions of the agreed review method and for ensuring that partner institutions are aware of the requirements of the University's annual monitoring process.

4.3.2   The Liaison Tutors for WIUT courses participate in the annual monitoring process as critical friends, travelling to WIUT for that purpose. However, each College that hosts courses delivered by WIUT has a named academic Head of School who is the lead contact for annual monitoring and who takes responsibility for advising WIUT of the agreed review method, for ensuring that WIUT are aware of the requirements of the University's annual monitoring process, and ensuring that the outcomes of annual monitoring processes at WIUT are integrated into the College's report and action plan. The nominated Head of School in each College will also take responsibility for monitoring responses to External Examiner reports.

4.3.3   Details of annual monitoring of programmes are contained within the [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook](#).

4.4   Validation / Approval Processes

4.4.1   The role of Liaison Tutor normally includes contributing to the initial development of new collaborative programmes and providing support and guidance for validation, revalidation, review and programme modification processes. It can include assistance with the production of associated documentation but primary responsibility for this work normally rests with the collaborative partner.

4.4.2   Details of the requirements for validation, review and modification of programmes are contained within the [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook](#).

Section 5: Liaison Tutor Reports

5.1   Report

5.1.1   Liaison Tutors are required to submit at least two formal written reports each session.

5.1.2   The main aim of each Report is to report on:

(i)   the effectiveness of links with the partner institution;
(ii)   the operation of quality assurance arrangements for the collaborative course;
(iii)   the management and operation of the collaborative course;
(iv)   the purpose and outcomes of any recent visits to the partner institution;
(v)   examples of good practice;
(vi)   recommendations for action.

5.1.3   All reports should be completed using the attached pro-forma report template (see Appendix A).

5.1.4   The Head of College will arrange for Liaison Tutor Reports to be submitted as part of the Evidence Base for the next round of annual monitoring.

5.2   Issues from Report

5.2.1   The Collaborations Manager will arrange for issues raised in Liaison Tutor Reports to be reported to the Collaborations Committee.

5.2.2   The Collaborations Committee will consider any issues raised and provide feedback to Liaison Tutors.

5.2.3   In the event that the Liaison Tutor identifies major issues in the delivery or the management of the collaborative provision, they must complete their report as soon as possible after the visit. It must be circulated internally in the first instance to the Head of College, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement), Collaborations and Partnerships Mangers who will agree how the issues raised in the report will be communicated to the partner institution and the timescales for issues to be addressed.

Section 6: Support for Liaison Tutor

6.1 Support

6.1.1 Support is available for Liaison Tutors from the following sources:

(i)   from the Academic Registrar's Department and the Collaborations Manager for matters relating to approval/validation, quality assurance and annual monitoring;

(ii)   from the College and/or the Partnerships Team for matters relating to the day to day operation of the collaborative course.

6.1.2 Further support is also likely to be available from the administrative offices at collaborative partner institutions. This is likely to vary from partner to partner and Liaison Tutors are therefore encouraged to identify the particular arrangements which apply to the arrangement for which they are responsible.

6.2 Other Sources of Information

6.2.1 Internal Documents

- The Collaborations Handbook
- The Handbook of Academic Regulations
- The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook
- Course Handbook and Course Specification
- Administrative Annex
- Collaborative Agreement
- Previous Liaison Tutor Reports
- External Examiner Reports
- Validation/Re-validation Reports
- Guidance for panels undertaking site visits

6.2.2 External Documents

- QAA Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards
- QAA The UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statements

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER⊞

Liaison Tutor Report Form

INSTRUCTIONS

Liaison Tutors are required to submit at least two formal written reports each session:

i.   A report covering Semester One by 31st March;

ii.   A report covering Semester Two and any summer assessments by 30th September.

Additional reports by Liaison Tutors visiting a partner institution may be submitted as appropriate.

It is recommended that other staff who visit a partner Institution also complete a formal report of their visit.

Please complete a copy of this form for each visit completed and append any supplementary reports as appropriate.

1   CORE INFORMATION:

Name of partner institution:			
Name of course:			
Name of liaison tutor:			
University of Westminster College:			
Partner Department/School:		**Date of report:**	
Academic year:		**Semester:**	
Visit purpose:		**Visit date:**	

2   ACTIONS FROM LAST REPORT/S:

Please report on the progress of any actions or issues identified from your last report/s. Also note if the action has been resolved and can be closed.

Action	By Whom?	By When?	Latest Action Taken

3   GOOD PRACTICE AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT:

Please report on examples of good practice and quality enhancement identified since your last report in respect of the management or delivery of the collaborative course.

4   STATUS REPORT:

Please describe the outcomes of the visit. The headings in this section should help form your report.

Admissions (including admission decisions, student recruitment, student achievement/progression/retention records, etc.):

Public information (any issues with the accuracy of the public information, e.g. course specification, partner website, prospectus etc.):

Assessment (including audit of assessment process, conduct of assessment board, etc.):

Course management (including course/curriculum development, modifications to modules/course, any other changes proposed to the course, etc.):

Observations (teaching - provide summary details such as what, whom and how long, discussions with staff, students, reports from external examiners, etc.):

Resources (including facilities, any administrative issues and staffing issues - have there been any changes to the teaching team of the course? Is there any staff development/training needs? Etc.):

Other quality assurance matters (have there been any other issues raised by the on-going communications with partner staff? Was there any external monitoring of the course e.g. by a professional body? Etc.):

5   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:

The University has identified the following key priorities for the effective management of collaborative links. Please indicate any issues to be addressed by whom and by when. Where issues do exist, please provide further details.

Issues which put at risk the continued delivery of the collaborative course:	By whom?	By when?
Admissions:		
Public Information:		

Assessment:			14
External examiner reports:			
Student feedback:			
Course management:			
Resources:			
Other quality assurance matters:			

6   ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

Please comment on any other areas of interest with regards to the course and/or partner, e.g. any development of new courses, campus changes, research opportunities, potential collaborative growth in other subjects, etc.

Name of liaison tutor:		
Signature of liaison tutor:	**Date:**	

Completed reports should be uploaded to the relevant folder on the Liaison Tutor Committee Sharepoint site and distributed to the following offices/groups as part of the annual monitoring process:

University	Partner
Head of College	Head of School or equivalent
Head of School	Course Leader
Relevant External Examiners	Quality Manager

This list is not exhaustive and the report should always be copied to staff where issues identified are relevant to their area of work or where actions are identified for them to undertake.

If you not to have access to the Liaison Tutor Committee Sharepoint site please contact the Collaborations Team.

Appendix B

Liaison Tutor Directory

College	Partner Name	Country	Name of Award / Subject Area	Liaison Tutor Name
DCDI	Community Music Ltd	UK	Foundation Degree in Arts in Music Production and Business Creation	Glenn Skinner
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	BEng (Hons) Software Engineering	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	BSc (Hons) Computer Science	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	MSc Advanced Software Engineering	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	MSc Cyber Security and Forensics	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
DCDI	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	MA Fashion Business Management	Caroline Curtis
DCDI	Istituto Europeo di Design (IED)	Spain	BA (Hons) Fashion Design (Barcelona)	Richard Gray
DCDI	Istituto Europeo di Design (IED)	Spain and Italy	BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing and Communication (Barcelona, Milan)	Virginia Grose
DCDI	Macromedia	Germany	BA Media & Communications Design	Hans Reichert
DCDI	Macromedia	Germany	BA Media & Communications Management	Geoffrey Davies
WBS	EF Language School Limited	UK	Certificate of Higher Education in Business and Management (EF)	Jon Pike
WBS	Informatics Institute of Technology	Sri Lanka	BA Business Management	Sumita Ketkar
WBS	Macromedia	Germany	BA (Hons) International Business	Martin Mathews
WBS	Nyenrode New Business School, Amsterdam	The Netherlands	BA Business Management - Amsterdam (Level 6)	Martin Mathews
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	Certificate of Foundation Studies (International Programme)	Kamalini Sivagurunathan
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems	Kamalini Sivagurunathan

WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	BA (Hons) in Commercial Law	TBC
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	LLM in International Commercial Law	TBC
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	Postgraduate Certificate of Special Study in Teaching and Learning	Richard West
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	BA (Hons) Business Administration	Richard West
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	BSc (Hons) Economics	Richard West
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	BSc (Hons) Economics with Finance	Richard West
WIUT	Westminster International University in Tashkent	Uzbekistan	MA International Business Management	Richard West

Internal Contact Information

In the first instance please send any queries or questions to:

- Pre-approval, contracting or quality assurance

    Andrew Stevenson, Collaborations Manager – A.Stevenson@westminster.ac.uk

- Operational

    Melanie Hutton, Partnerships Manager – M.Hutton@westminster.ac.uk