

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS AND PATHWAY ARRANGEMENTS

1 Scope and Definitions

- 1.1 This Policy covers the following low-risk arrangements co-ordinated by the International Office in co-operation with Faculties, Schools and Admissions staff, in the context of the University's Recruitment Strategy:
- a. Admissions Agreement For admission to Stage 1 of Newcastle programmes. Recognizes the syllabus of an existing qualification. Specifies entry requirements / grades to be achieved.
 - b. Pathway Agreement Specifies the route and the amount of advanced standing or credit that can be accredited to prior learning, not necessarily a full qualification.
- 1.2 An Admissions or Pathway Agreement is essentially an arms-length marketing arrangement in collaboration with an appropriate Partner organisation. It establishes a clear and transparent mechanism for considering alternative forms of preparation or qualifications and promoting access routes to NU academic programmes. It facilitates the consideration of partner student applications on a case-by-case basis against clear admissions criteria based on the student's prior learning performance. Such Agreements are established in accordance with the [Policy on Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)](#) and based on the development and approval of a syllabus-matching document.
- 1.3 Other types of arrangements in which there is close collaboration with a Partner, for example to jointly develop the syllabus for a new qualification, and to guarantee admission based on an agreed level of performance, fall under the [Educational Partnerships Policy](#), for which there is a different approval mechanism.

2 Development of a New International Admissions or Partnership Arrangement

2.1 Syllabus Matching

- 2.1.1 The most important element of this process is to establish that the Partner syllabus adequately prepares candidates for entry to Stage 1, or, if admission is proposed to a later Stage of a programme, has sufficient compatibility with the NU syllabus, such that the candidate will be adequately prepared to make a successful transfer to the NU programme.
- 2.1.2 An exercise to map the Partner syllabus to NU entrance requirements, or to the relevant Stage or component of the NU degree programme, is a required element of the approval process.

2.2 Approval Process

- 2.2.1 The development of a new arrangement will follow the approval pathway set out in the Flowchart at Appendix 1, consistent with the Policy on Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning, and according to the usual local arrangements for RPL with the approval of the Head of School or nominee, e.g. via the School Director of Excellence in Learning & Teaching and/or DPD / Board of Studies and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (the relevant Dean on behalf of the Faculty). On the basis of the Dean's recommendation, the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor or nominee will sign the Agreement on behalf of the University.

2.2.2 Approval will be based on information provided against a Checklist which will also form the basis of the Agreement.

2.2.3 The key criteria considered in the approval process will be:

Admissions Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Quality of the Partner - Partners will typically be organisations with a good reputation for learning and teaching in their own context b. Adequate Preparation / Syllabus Match and amount of advanced standing to be awarded, if applicable to the arrangement c. Entrance Requirements – Academic and English Language
Pathway Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consistency with Recruitment Strategy b. Consistency with School Plans c. Quality of the Partner - Partners will typically be organisations with a good reputation for learning and teaching in their own context d. Adequate Preparation / Syllabus Match and amount of advanced standing to be awarded, if applicable to the arrangement e. Entrance Requirements – Academic and English Language f. Capacity to support the arrangement appropriately – e.g. there should be clear points of contact, academic and administrative, to manage the partner relationship and ensure that students are appropriately supported through the transition and their progress monitored. g. Does the Partner intend to apply NU credit to its own award, resulting in a dual qualification?

2.3 Advanced Standing

2.3.1 The amount of advanced standing that can be awarded in such an arrangement will be consistent with the University Policy on Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning:

2.3.2 At **undergraduate** level, the maximum credit which can be awarded to students seeking advanced standing is one third (120 credits) of a three-year undergraduate degree and one half (240 credits) of a four-year integrated Master’s degree (e.g. MEng).

2.3.2 At **postgraduate** level, the maximum credit which can be awarded to students seeking advanced standing is one half of the taught component of postgraduate certificates, taught doctorates and the Integrated PhD. The maximum credit for which RPL can be offered on other postgraduate taught programmes (Diploma or Master’s) is 40 credits.

2.4 Development of an Agreement

2.4.1 The final Agreement will be developed from a Template to an agreed format, approved by Legal Services, or, if the Agreement is the Partner’s Template, checked against criteria developed in liaison with Legal Services. (Sample Agreement – Appendix 2)

2.4.2 In addition to any academic and other entrance requirements, the Template Agreement will cover the following terms and conditions, as relevant to the nature of the arrangement.

- i. Admission is based on the assessment of individual applications on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. The University retains the right to refuse admission to applicants.
- iii. Each Party, the Partner and the University, will keep the other updated on any syllabus changes.
- iv. Financial Arrangements, if any (e.g. there may be a scholarship arrangement which will follow University policy on discounting and scholarship arrangements).
- v. Where known, record the fact that the Partner will apply NU credit to make its own award upon the student’s return to the home country.

- vi. Numbers proposed / Any limitations on the numbers that can be accepted
- vii. Approval of publicity and marketing and use of corporate visual identity
- viii. Data Protection provisions where relevant
- ix. Points of Liaison
- x. Renewal, Termination and Amendment
- xi. Anti-Corruption Provision

2.4.3 The Agreement is typically for a five-year period, with provision for annual review.

2.5 Reporting, Monitoring, Review and Renewal

- 2.5.1 The International Office (International Partnerships) will maintain a record of all such arrangements, which will be available to relevant School, Faculty, Admissions, Marketing and Recruitment staff, and others as appropriate.
- 2.5.2 The record will include the points of contact for different elements of the relationship management.
- 2.5.3 A Report on new Agreements developed and any renewals will be made on a six-monthly basis to University Educational Partnerships Sub-Committee of ULTSEC, and University Internationalisation Committee. The Report will indicate any arrangements for which the Partner makes its own award in addition to the NU award, upon the candidate's return to the home country.
- 2.5.4 Marketing and promotion activities by partners will be monitored by Marketing / International Office, as appropriate.
- 2.5.5 Academic performance and the functioning of the partnership will be considered as part of the normal Annual Monitoring and Review process through School Boards of Studies and reported to Faculty Learning Teaching & Student Experience Committee.
- 2.5.6 Overall viability of partnerships will be reviewed as part of regional review exercises in co-operation between Faculties and the International Office.
- 2.5.7 The Agreement provides for the early termination of non-productive or poor quality arrangements.
- 2.5.8 Where arrangements are within 18 months of the expiry date, a recommendation will be made to renew or terminate. As part of the renewal process, the syllabus match will be re-checked for continued consistency. Other factors considered in the renewal process will be student performance, based on evidence reviewed by School Boards of Studies.
- 2.5.9 Where there is a decision to terminate, an appropriate communication to the Partner will be agreed, according to a relationship management protocol, consistent with the nature and status of the relationship, which may include other on-going projects.

3 Contacts and Further Information

International Office Partnerships Team	internationalpartnerships@ncl.ac.uk
International Website	https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/international/
Learning & Teaching Development Service	ltlds@ncl.ac.uk or educational.partnerships@ncl.ac.uk
Learning & Teaching Development Service Website	http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltlds/governance/partnerships/
Policy on Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning	http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltlds/assets/documents/qsh-ct-rpl-pol.pdf

4 Appendices

1. Flowchart
2. Sample Template Agreement (commercially confidential - not uploaded to website)

Document History	
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