

Appendix 2: Guide to the Approval and Re-approval of Collaborative Partnerships

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1 Introduction

This section outlines the processes for the approval and re-approval of Collaborative Partnerships in Categories B-F and should be read in conjunction with the Quality Management Handbook (QMH), Chapter 5, Collaborative Provision – www.edgehill.ac.uk/aqu/QACollaborativeProvision.htm

1.1 Table showing University Classification of Collaborative Provision

Category		Sub-category		Risk level	Period of Approval
B	Outreach Learning Venues An external venue where all teaching, assessment and student support are provided by University staff. The partner is only responsible for providing the teaching accommodation, and on occasion, some learning resources	B1	Outreach Learning Venues (UK)	L	1 year
		B2	SCITTs	L	1 year
		B3	Outreach Learning Venues (Overseas) in respect of the delivery of a single session.	L	1 year
C	Outreach Supported Learning Centres Off-site collaborative arrangements where University staff deliver all teaching and assessment but the venue, learning resources and some support services are provided by the partner	C1	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: Education providers (UK)	M	5 years
		C2	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: Non-education providers (UK)	M	5 years
		C3	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: overseas in respect of the delivery of a programme, including in-country support linked to distance learning programmes.	M	5 years
D	Credit-rating	D1	Credit-rating Credit recognition – rating a partner’s provision for the award of EHU general credit; or the rating of a limited volume (typically less than 30 credits) of specific credit. This normally will only be utilised for UK provision only.	M	5 years
E	Articulation agreements	E1	Articulation agreements The ‘mapping’ for content and level of a specified module/s or programme of another UK HEI, overseas provider of similar status. Articulation arrangements are used to enable entry with advanced standing by any student holding the approved external qualification through credit exemption rather than credit recognition or the award of credit.	M	5 years

F	Delivery with a third party This is a partnership where some or all of the academic delivery of the programme is undertaken by a third party.	F1	Franchised (single modules) provision leading to an academic award or credit. This normally will only be utilised for UK provision only.	M	5 years
		F2	Co-delivery Engagement of a specialist 3 rd party in academic delivery to either part-deliver or co-deliver programmes, including in-country support linked to distance learning programmes.	M	5 years
		F3	Franchised (whole programmes) provision leading to an academic award or credit, including dual awards.	H	5 years
		F4	Validated provision leading to an academic award or credit (these would not normally be considered individually and therefore only when linked to another category of partnerships, normally F3), including dual awards.	H	5 years
		F5	Joint awards provision whereby two or more awarding bodies together provide a programme leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants.	H	5 years
SCHOOL DIRECT		In relation to School Direct Hub approval for supporting the delivery of PGCE awards. EHU and the School Direct hub working together to jointly deliver PGCE awards.		H	5 years

Note: the approval of programmes running in Collaborative Partnership will be co-terminous with the Partner approval period. Therefore at the point of partner re-approval, all programmes running in the partnership will need to be re-considered for delivery approval.

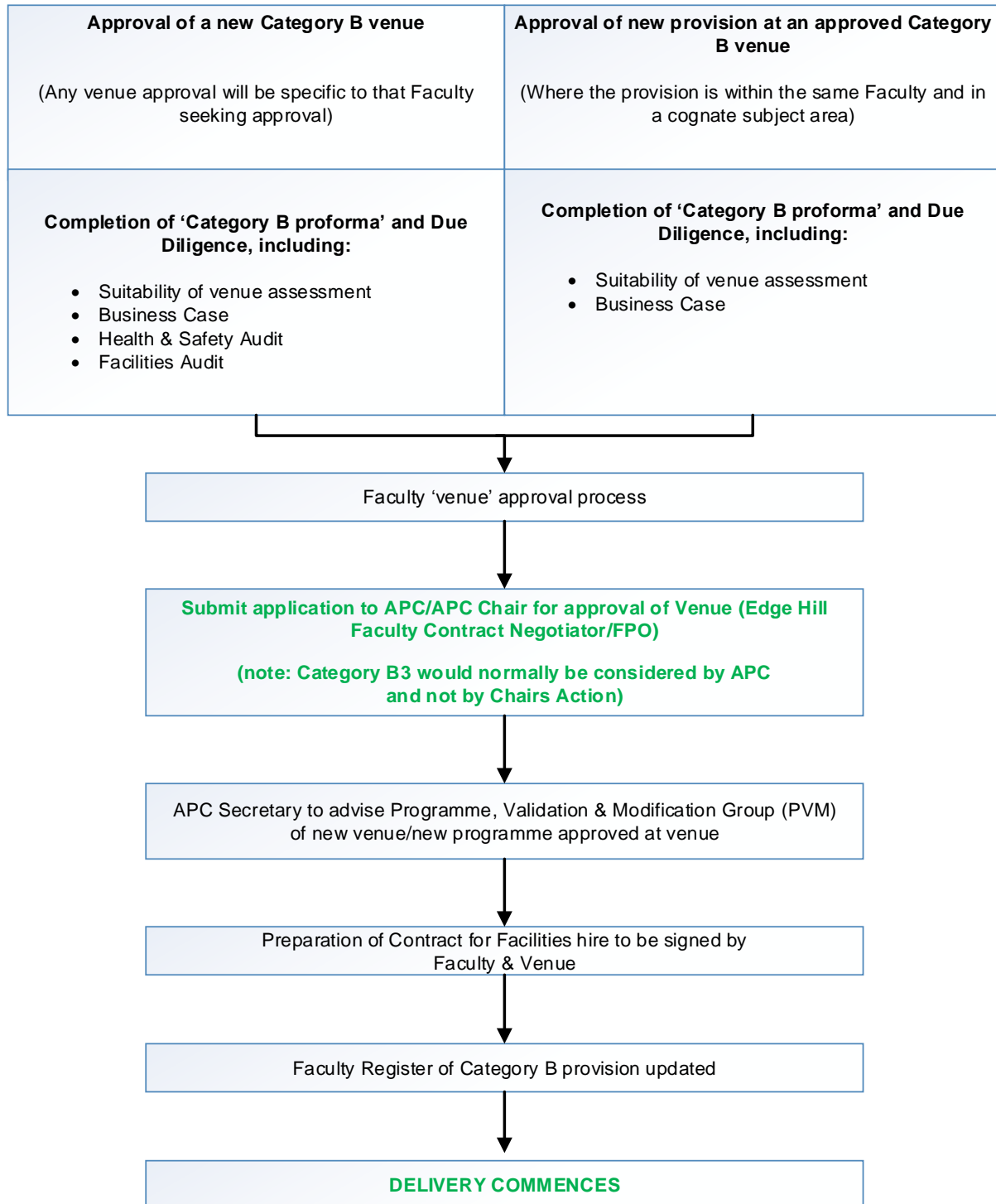
1.2 Category B: Learning Venues

Category		Sub-category	
B	Outreach Learning Venues An external venue where all teaching, assessment and student support are provided by University staff. The partner is only responsible for providing the teaching accommodation, and on occasion, <i>some learning resources*</i>	B1	Outreach Learning Venues (UK)
		B2	SCITTs
		B3	Outreach Learning Venues (Overseas) in respect of the delivery of single sessions

1.2.1 Flowchart showing the process for the approval of a venue and approval of new provision at an existing approved venue

The flowchart below outlines the typical route through for the development, consideration and approval of Category 'B' Collaborative Provision proposals.

This procedure is managed by the Faculty Partnership Officer.



1.2.2 Re-approval of Category B venues

- Category 'B' venues should be reviewed and re-approved annually.
- Arrangements for the re-approval of Category 'B' venues will be included in Faculty Academic Quality Statements.

1.3 Category C-F, School Direct provision

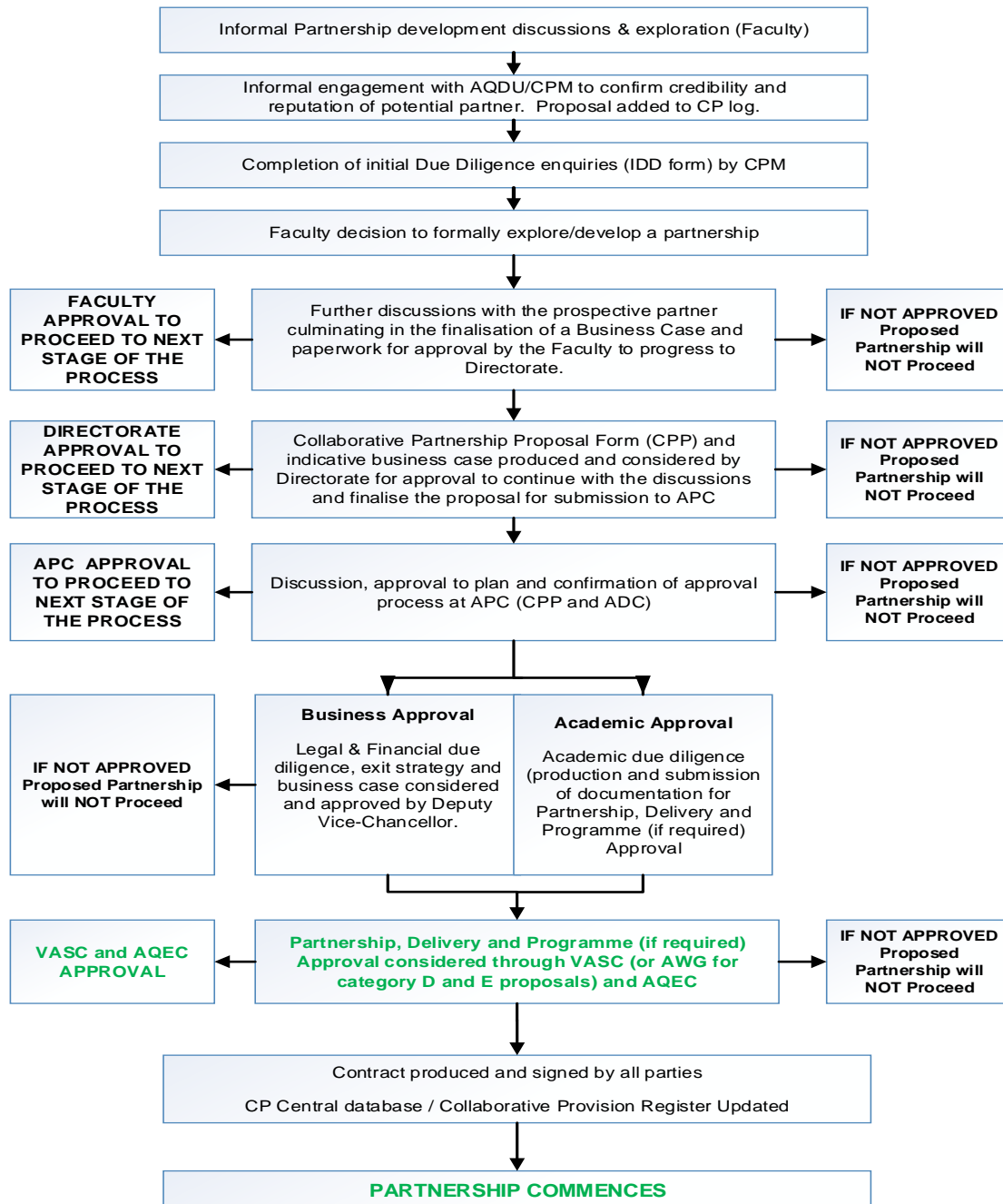
Category		Sub-category	
C	Outreach Supported Learning Centres Off-site collaborative arrangements where University staff deliver all teaching and assessment but the venue, learning resources and some support services are provided by the partner	C1	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: Education providers (UK)
		C2	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: Non-education providers (UK)
		C3	Outreach Supported Learning Centres: overseas in respect of the delivery of a programme, including in-country support linked to distance learning programmes.
D	Credit-rating	D1	Credit-rating Credit recognition – rating a partner’s provision for the award of EHU general credit; or the rating of a limited volume (typically less than 30 credits) of specific credit. This normally will only be utilised for UK provision only.
E	Articulation agreements	E1	Articulation agreements The ‘mapping’ for content and level of a specified module/s or programme of another UK HEI, overseas provider of similar status. Articulation arrangements are used to enable entry with advanced standing by any student holding the approved external qualification through credit exemption rather than credit recognition or the award of credit.
F	Delivery with a third party This is a partnership where some or all of the academic delivery of the programme is undertaken by a third party.	F1	Franchised (single modules) provision leading to an academic award or credit. This normally will only be utilised for UK provision only.
		F2	Co-delivery Engagement of a specialist 3 rd party in academic delivery to either part-deliver or co-deliver programmes, including in-country support linked to distance learning programmes.
		F3	Franchised (whole programmes) provision leading to an academic award or credit, including dual awards.
		F4	Validated provision leading to an academic award or credit (these would not normally be considered individually and therefore only when linked to another category of partnerships, normally F3), including dual awards.
		F5	Joint awards provision whereby two or more awarding bodies together provide a programme leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants.
SCHOOL DIRECT		In relation to School Direct Hub approval for supporting the delivery of PGCE awards. EHU and the School Direct hub working together to jointly deliver PGCE awards.	

1.3.1 Overview of Partner Approval processes (including programme and delivery approval)

- Due to the higher risk associated with partnerships in Categories C-F, the responsibility for approval and monitoring is retained by AQEC through the Validation and Audit Sub-Committee(VASC) and Academic Quality Enhancement Committee (AQEC)
This procedure is managed by the Collaborative Provision Manager (CPM) in conjunction with the Faculty Partnership Officer, with Academic Quality and Development Unit being responsible for the Academic Approval process
- Approval is separated into two parts;
 - **Business approval** and
 - **Academic Approval.**
- **Business approval** reviews the Legal & Financial due diligence, exit strategy and business case and is considered and approved by Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
- **Academic approval** considers the Partnership, Delivery and Programme approval and is undertaken by VASC and AQEC.

1.3.2 Flowchart showing the process for the Approval of Category C-F

The flowchart below outlines the typical route through for the development, consideration and approval of Collaborative Provision proposals. It is acknowledged however, that the initial stages up to 'Faculty approval to proceed to the next stage of the process' may happen in a different order, depending on the nature of the proposal.



1.3.3 Documentation required for Business Approval

CAT	Business Approval and re-approval: Partner	Business Approval: Addition of a new programme
C	Legal and Financial Due Diligence. Business case and overview. Exit Strategy. Draft financial annex Learning Resources and IT Audit	Business case and overview. Exit Strategy. Draft financial annex Learning Resources and IT Audit
D	Legal and Financial Due Diligence (if appropriate). Business case and overview.	Business case and overview.
E	Legal and Financial Due Diligence (if appropriate). Business case and overview.	Business case and overview.
F	Legal and Financial Due Diligence. Business case and overview. Exit Strategy. Draft financial annex Learning Resources and IT Audit	Business case and overview. Exit Strategy. Draft financial annex Learning Resources and IT Audit
School Direct	Legal and Financial Due Diligence. Business case and overview. Exit Strategy. Draft financial annex Learning Resources and IT Audit	N/A – approval is restricted to School Direct PGCE only.

1.3.4 Documentation required for Academic Approval: Partner

CAT	Academic Approval: Partner	Academic Re-approval: Partner
C	Partner Audit Document (PAD). Confirmation of Due Diligence sign off. Country Intelligence if overseas proposal. Partner Self-Evaluation Document (SED). Overview report.	Review of the operation of the partnership (re-approval PAD). Renewal of the Delivery Agreement. Overview report.
D	Course materials (partner) Credit Rating Coversheet (produced jointly by the University and the partner which describes the level, credit volume, learning outcomes and assessment strategy).	Course materials (partner) Credit Rating Coversheet (produced jointly by the University and the partner which describes the level, credit volume, learning outcomes and assessment strategy). Category D AMRs.

E	Desk based audit. Country Intelligence if overseas proposal.	Review of Desk based audit and Country Intelligence if overseas proposal. Category E AMRs.
F	Partner Audit Document (PAD); Confirmation of Due Diligence sign off; Country Intelligence if overseas proposal; Partner Self-Evaluation Document (SED) ¹ ; Overview report from CPM.	Review of the operation of the partnership (re-approval PAD). Renewal of the Delivery Agreement. Overview report from the CPM.

¹ The Partner Self-Evaluation document should cover the following:

- Overview of the Partners strategy in relation to delivery of Higher Education;
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement;
- Student experience;
- Staffing and staff development;
- Partner's infrastructure and management;
- Academic Leadership;
- Arrangements for liaison with the awarding body.

1.3.5 Documentation for Academic Approval: Programme/delivery

CAT	Academic Approval: Programme/delivery approval	Academic Approval: Additional provision	Academic Re-approval: Programme/delivery approval
C	<p>If new programme:</p> <p>Programme specifications Module specifications Part B, plus appendices. Delivery Agreement Learning Resources and IT Audit</p> <p>If existing programme:</p> <p>Delivery Agreement Learning Resources and IT Audit</p>	<p>If new programme:</p> <p>Programme specifications Module specifications Part B, plus appendices. Delivery Agreement Learning Resources and IT Audit</p> <p>If existing programme:</p> <p>Delivery Agreement Learning Resources and IT Audit</p>	<p>Programme will be considered as part of Department Periodic Review and continuing approval given.</p> <p>Delivery approval will be considered as part of the Partner approval event. For delivery approval the following will be required:</p> <p>Delivery Agreement Learning Resources and IT Audit</p> <p>If programmes undergo standalone validation, delivery approval will be considered as part of that event. Documentation will be as per programme/delivery approval.</p>
D	<p>Course materials (partner) Credit Rating Coversheet (produced jointly by the University and the partner which describes the level, credit volume, learning outcomes and assessment strategy).</p>		
E	<p>Document mapping the external programme/qualification to the entry stage of our programme and states the amount of credit to be exempted, together with any additional bridging requirements.</p>		
F	<p>Programme:</p> <p>Programme specifications Module specifications Part B, plus appendices.</p> <p>In addition for delivery approval, the following are required:</p> <p>Delivery Agreement Staff CVs, with grid mapping staff to individual modules Learning Resources and IT Audit Programme specifications. Module specifications. Part B document, plus appendices.</p>		

School Direct	<p>Partner Audit Document (PAD); Confirmation of Business Approval sign off; Delivery agreement; Learning Resources and IT Audit; Programme specification; Overview report from Faculty (this should focus on the non-modular activity and how this interfaces with the credit-bearing elements of the programme' within the programme and the role of the SD Hub and partner schools)². Staff CVs or equivalent³ for SD Hub Lead School staff supporting delivery.</p>
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² Indicative content for the Faculty overview report is as follows:

- Overview of the delivery of the programme
- Non-modular activity and how this interfaces within the programme
- Role of the SD Hub
- Role of partner schools
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement
- Student experience
- Staffing and staff development
- Partner's infrastructure and management
- Academic Leadership
- Resources for the programme
- Placements
- QTS

³ It is accepted that it is not usual for teachers within School settings to have CVs and therefore alternative provision of information in relation to proposed staff would be acceptable e.g. spreadsheet which provides details of the proposed staff, their role in school, length of time in post, qualifications and experience would be deemed equivalent as long as it provides sufficient information to confirm the suitability of the staff proposed to deliver on the programme.

1.3.6 VASC Panel Constitution

- VASC panel constitution for Partner and Delivery approval events will be in line with the requirements for programme validation.
- The panel will include VASC members with experience of the management and/or approval of Collaborative Provision.
- External panel members will also form part of the panel, in line with the table below:

Approval event	External panel member requirements
Partner approval	One external panel member is required with suitable expertise in managing collaborative provision at an institutional level.
Delivery approval	One external panel member is required with relevant subject expertise (experience of collaborative partner working is also desirable).
Combined Programme and delivery approval	One external panel member is required with relevant subject expertise (experience of collaborative partner working is also desirable). Where a programme is being validated in a subject not currently offered by the University, two external subject experts should be retained.
Combined Partner, Programme and delivery approval	Two external panel members, one with experience of managing partnerships at an institutional level and one subject-based external (ideally, with experience of collaborative working).

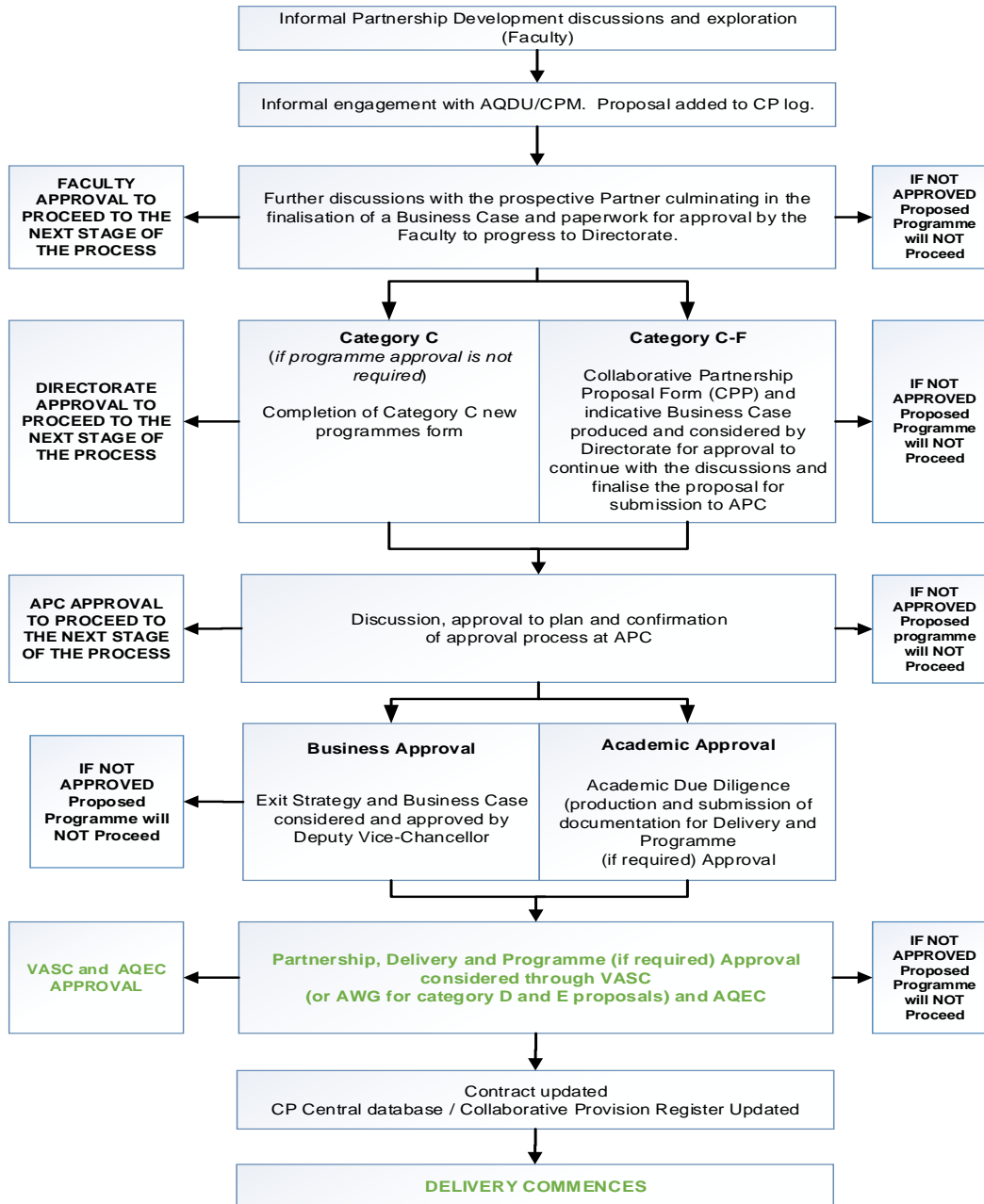
1.3.7 New venue (for existing approved Partners in Category C, F and School Direct)

- Should a Partner wish to utilise a new venue for the delivery of University awards, the new venue must be approved prior to commencement of delivery of the programme. The following audit should normally be undertaken by the Internal Verifier/Subject-expert verifier and Faculty Partnership Officer (and/or the Collaborative Provision Manager) and should consider the following in order to confirm the suitability of the new venue:
 - Review of Health & Safety (depending on the nature of the programme being delivered);
 - Review of the facilities to ensure that they are appropriate for the delivery of the provision;
- The Faculty will complete the following documentation:
 - Category B venue form (noting that this is category C,F or School Direct provision);
 - Health & Safety;
 - CP Learning Resources proforma;
 - Overview report.
- Once complete, they should be submitted to the CP Manager for sign off, prior to submission to APC for approval.

1.3.8 Interim Review (Category C and F provision only)

- If a partnership does not recruit its first cohort within 2 years of the original approval for commencement of delivery of the programme, should it wish to commence delivery, will be subject to a formal review which will include consideration of the following:
 - The Delivery Agreement and the staffing/support/resources/facilities at the partner to see if any changes since approval that may affect the delivery of the programme;
 - Any changes/amendments/curriculum issues in relation to the programme in case this has any effect on the approval granted;
 - Review of the due diligence.
- The review would not have the effect of extending the life of the partnership but would enable the Faculty, in conjunction with the Collaborative Provision Manager to review the provision and provide reassurance to AQEC that everything remains in order or make any recommendations for follow-up before delivery commences.
- Following consideration by the Faculty, a report outlining the findings of the review, with any recommendations for follow-up action should be submitted to AQEC for approval.

1.3.9 Flowchart showing the process for adding a new provision to an existing category C-F partner.



1.3.10 Re-approval of Category C-F

- Partnership approval is normally granted for a time period of 5 years and this will be reflected in the Contracts/MoA/Articulation Agreements, which will be for a specific period of time, reflecting the decision of AQEC to grant approval.
- In the last year of the arrangement, there is the capacity for a full review before a decision is made on whether to continue with the partnership.
- Renewal of the partnership arrangement will be subject to the appropriate updating of the due diligence procedure and quality assurance mechanisms associated with the level of partnership and as detailed in Part 3 and will normally be granted for a further period of 5 years.
- As part of partner/delivery re-approval, the panel will hold a student focus group to meet with students on the programme.

1.4 Appendix 1: Additional Information on the Approval of Articulation Arrangements (Category E)

Articulation as defined by Edge Hill is the process by which students use an external qualification or programme for entry to one of the University's programmes either at the normal start-point (admission) or at a later stage in the programme (entry with advanced standing). Articulation is used when a number of students will be applying with the same entry requirements from a specific awarding body/institution. Individual students applying for entry with advanced standing, where articulation is not intended to lead to a progression agreement, should use the established APEL process.

Approval of an articulation route may then result in a progression agreement between the University and the awarding body/institution or a simple statement to acknowledge recognition of a particular qualification. The chart that follows outlines a number of possible scenarios, together with the level of due diligence and investigations required. (The final column on the chart which refers to credit recognition requires further consideration). The approval process for an articulation route, whether UK-based or overseas, has two purposes:

- 1) to establish broad equivalence between the external programme and the Edge Hill programme to which entry is being sought in respect of curriculum content, volume and level;
- 2) and the requirement of the University to satisfy itself that the awarding body/institution has broad mechanisms for assuring the academic standards of its programmes (whilst at the same time acknowledging the lower level of risk associated with this type of collaborative provision which does not directly result in the award of Edge Hill credit).

Process in detail:

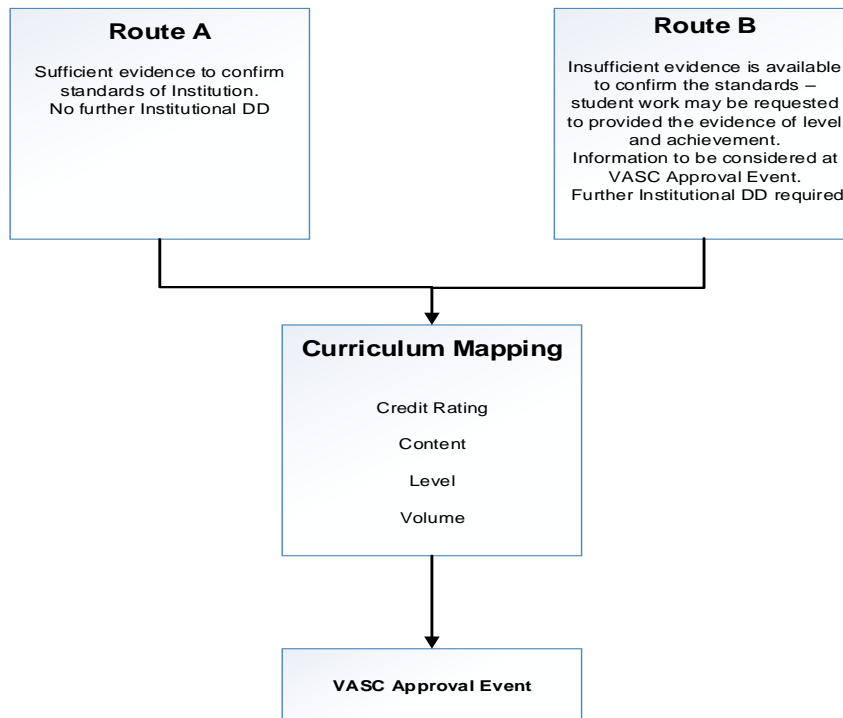
- As for all CP Proposals, a CPP is produced and approved to proceed through Faculty (or Faculties) and by Directorate and APC.
- In addition, for International Proposals, The International Office produces a broad overview of the education system of the home territory of the awarding body/institution, for example, detailed intelligence on the school systems, selection and support for tertiary education in the state and private sectors, explanation of the regulatory system for the sector and any other specific information pertinent to the area.
- Desk based Institutional due diligence undertaken to ascertain the status of the awarding body/institution within their country's system i.e. appropriate licence to operate and authority to award qualifications (Status information can be provided in the above International Office report).
- UK Awarding Bodies to have an audit visit.

Allocation of a route for approval/validation process is as follows:-

Route A – Where there is sufficient evidence to confirm the standards of the institution or the awarding body without recourse to additional information (for example, Universities or Colleges with individual entries on NARIC or other appropriate 'official' evidence, and awarding bodies that are 'known' to us e.g. Edexcel)

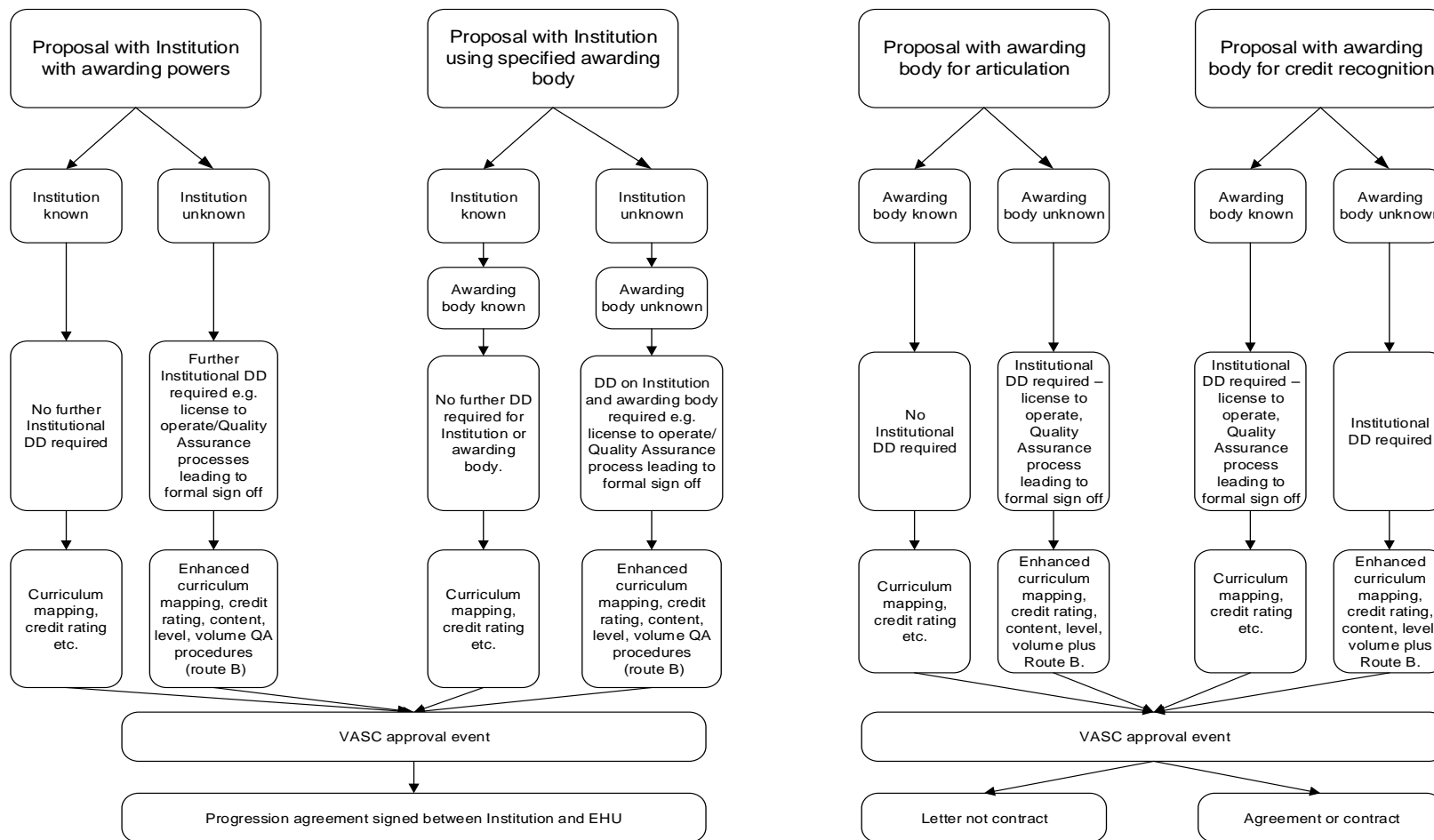
Route B – Where insufficient evidence is available to confirm the academic standards without further investigation, student work may be requested to provide evidence of level and achievement. Further Institutional due diligence would be required to ascertain the quality assurance mechanisms of the institution or awarding body.

If concerns remain in relation to the output of the awarding body/institution then Approval of the articulation route would only be granted for two years in the first instance and student performance on the target award will be monitored. If, at the end of the two year period of approval, the University is confident in the standards of the awards of the partner institution, approval would be conferred for the remaining 3 years prior to the general review to which all institutions are subject.



The approval process would culminate in a VASC approval event (which could be by correspondence) entailing receipt and consideration of a curriculum mapping statement produced by the proposing team; and evidence of the awarding body's systems for academic quality assurance provided by the Academic Quality Unit. Institutional due diligence and evidence of the awarding body/institution's quality assurance processes would not need to be completed each time a new articulation route was proposed. Additional articulation routes would require initial approval at Faculty APC (or equivalent), and proceed to APC for confirmation of the approval requirements which will involve a VASC event (possibly by correspondence) and all arrangements with awarding bodies/institutions will be subject to review after a period of 5 years to confirm their status.

Process to approve Progression Arrangements with Overseas Institutions and Awarding Bodies



Key: DD – due diligence