ACADEMIC LIAISON TUTOR HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a useful introductory resource to new Academic Liaison Tutors (ALTs) and to act as a reference resource to existing ALTs. This resource will act as a guide to ALTs from across all schools and partnerships.

The ALT has the responsibilities akin to those of a London Met Course/Module leader but for a course (or courses) which run with a Partner Institution. Partners vary considerably in terms of location, culture, size and length of relationship with London Met. Not only are the relationships significant contributors to the University budget, they extend the reputation of the University and offer the opportunity for staff and students to collaborate across international borders. ALTs have an important role in maintaining academic and commercial relations with these centres. Partner management requires practical and diplomatic skills. A primary task is to make course and module leaders aware that their work is appreciated and followed in other parts of the UK and overseas. You will be the critical point of contact for all enquires and this requires you to make decisions (e.g. approval or rejection of marginal applications to courses). That said, you will have support and this handbook contains a number of your key contacts. Additionally, you will often work alongside other ALTs from other Schools in the University when working in committees either at London Met or at your partner institution.

The Partners may have one of two sorts of academic relationship with London Met. One is a *Franchise course delivery*, by which ALT supply all the material and examinations. Naturally all our usual quality concerns are applied to the partners. The second form of arrangement is a *Validated course delivery*, where the partner may develop the course (with our guidance) to better suit its teaching needs (i.e. to fit the local circumstances more closely). In this case the partner may write its own examinations consistent with the validated syllabi, develop materials and request your approval. Some validated courses may use existing franchised modules, which should be consistent with London Met modules. The two types of franchised/validated procedures determine your supervisory and liaison role, as set out in this handbook. A number of hours is allowed for this task to be offset your total workload for your ordinary course duties and other standard work. Nevertheless, a certain amount of annual travel and overnight stays are part of the role.

The full job specification for ALTs is listed later in this handbook.

POINTS OF CONTACT

HEADS OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BY SCHOOL*

Dr Ron Cambridge (GSBL)

Dr Dom Conroy (SSSP)

Dr Stephen Breen (SCDM)

Dr Abdollah Ghavami (SHSC)

*Note: There are currently no ALTs or Heads of Collaborative Partnership for the School of the Built Environment or the School of Art, Architecture and Design

KEY PARTNERSHIP CONTACTS

Dr Wendy Bloisi (Head of Academic Partnerships and Short Courses)

Kelly Griffin (Head of Partnerships Office, Student Recruitment and Business Development)

Marie Jiskoot (Partnerships Officer)

Dr Ryan Hale (Academic Liaison Tutor Coordinator)

Moyra Throssell (Quality Manager for Partnerships)

FURTHER POINTS OF CONTACT

AREA OF EXPERTISE	POINT OF CONTACT
STUDENT REGISTRATION SUBJECT STANDARDS BOARDS	GEMMA HOLLERAN
AWARDS AND PROGRESSION BOARDS	SIMON WILLIAMS
MARK ENTRY EVISION	BEN TURNER
EXTERNAL EXAMINING	ACADEMIC QUALITY OFFICE (AQD) externalexaminer@londonmet.ac.uk
MODULE AND COURSE CODES	SYSTEMS OFFICE systemsoffice@londonmet.ac.uk
ARMS ACCOUNTS	IT SERVICE DESK itservicedesk@londonmet.ac.uk
SCHOOL MODERATION STANDARD/NON-STANDARD APPLICATIONS	HEAD OF PARTNERSHIPS (FOR YOUR SCHOOL)
MODULE OPERATING CATALOGUE COURSE OFFER DATABASE	TIMETABLING AND ACADEMIC INFORMATION TEAM

ACADEMIC LIAISION TUTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

MAIN DUTIES

COURSE VALIDATION AND PERIODIC REVIEW

- Work with Academic Quality (AQD) in coordinating preparations for validation and periodic review events and attend meetings with University panels, as required
- Support the Collaborative Partner with the development of course documentation and review events
- Support the Collaborative Partner and the School with meeting conditions and/or recommendations set by the validation or periodic review panel
- Work with AQD and Student Administration in requesting and recording modules and course codes on course documentation

ADMISSIONS

- Responsibility for reviewing non-standard applications submitted by the Collaborative Partner. All offers made to non-standard applicants must be authorised by the ALT
- Support the Admissions department with conducting an annual review of a sample of standard applications. The Admissions department will report the outcomes of the review to SLTQC and CTPSC
- Support where appropriate with the Student Records and Assessments Team to ensure that students are enrolled and are given their ID cards which will provide them with access to some learning resources
- ALT will be updated by the partner on student enrolments as agreed in the business schedule

COURSE MATERIALS

- Liaise with the Collaborative Partner to produce a course handbook which is localised and suitable for the partner institution
- Liaise with the module leaders at the University to ensure that module booklets and teaching materials are available where appropriate (franchise provision only)

EXTERNAL EXAMINING

- Liaise with Course and Module leaders in the School in nominating External Examiners for courses delivered by the Collaborative Partner
- Liaise with AQD to ensure that External Examiners are appointed for courses delivered by the Collaborative Partner. Please note that there are a number of different processes involved here:
  - Recruitment of External Examiners typically derives from a known colleague at another university, or an advertisement can be made for JISC. In both cases, AQD will advise on how to prevent a conflict of interest
  - Should you need to recruit a new External Examiner to moderate samples of work, you need to complete a **nomination form** (EEA1) and send this to

externalexaminer@londonmet.ac.uk which will need to be authorised by your Head of School. Likewise, should you need to reallocate modules to an External Examiner, or request an extension of their standard tenure (4 years), a **reallocation form** will need completion (EER1). Both forms can be found here.

- Ensure that External Examiners are briefed on their role, the course/modules and the Collaborative Partner prior to and after the appointment has been confirmed by AQD
- Work with the Collaborative Partner and AQD to ensure that External Examiners are provided with sufficient information to carry out their role. This will include taking part in the External Examiners Induction programme where required.
  - o Note: Maintaining a healthy relationship with External Examiners is important. For example, this can be achieved by ensuring consistency in how we present samples to our partners. They may require prompting to ensure their availability.

- Receive all assessments from the partner and liaise with the module leader at the university and the External Examiner where appropriate to agree the assessments
- Ensure draft assignment briefs and examination papers are approved by the appropriate London Met staff and External Examiner prior to being issued to students
- Forward confirmation of the External Examiner's approval of grades to Student Records and Assessment and AQD
- Ensure that External Examiner Annual Reports and Module Sampling Feedback Forms are forwarded to the Collaborative Partner and coordinate response to the External Examiners

MARK ENTRY
- Work with the Collaborative Partner, Student Records and Assessment Team to ensure that marks are entered onto Evision in a timely manner
- Work with the aforementioned to ensure Collaborative Partner is trained on mark entry and that they have an ARMs account

ASSESSMENT BOARDS
- Attend Subject Standards Boards where module marks will be considered. The results are usually communicated to the Collaborative Partner by the Student Records and Assessments Team at London Met

CERTFICATES AND TRANSCRIPTS
- Support Academic Quality and Student Administrative where required with the transfer of data from the partner to the University for the production of awards, certificates and transcripts and for the preparation of funding and other statutory returns

CONTINUOUS MONITORING
- Support the Collaborative Partner in complying with the University's policies and procedures for continuous monitoring
- Contribute to continuous monitoring documentation such as the Course and Module Action Plan and other supporting documents
- Support Head/Dean of School by contributing to School level reports as part of continuous monitoring activities

- Take part in continuous monitoring events and support the partner in the completion/submission of documentation for continuous monitoring activities
- Monitor changes in statutory regulations that may affect course delivery (with the support of the School, PSD teams and AQD)
- Carry out an annual review of course documentation and resources supporting the delivery of collaborative provision
- Ensure any updated course documentation is logged with AQD annually
- Monitor the ongoing suitability of, and student access to learning resources

COURSE MODIFICATIONS

- Provide advice on changes required to any aspect of course delivery and coordinate the modification approval process, as necessary
- Support the communication and implementation of any changes taking place with on-campus modules that have an impact on franchise courses at the collaborative partner

REGULATIONS

- Provide advice to partner staff on the implementation of new University policies and regulations applying to the courses
- Work with partner staff to ensure that information relating to courses which lead to London Met awards is processed in accordance with Data Protection legislation and relevant University polices

STUDENT INDUCTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

- Participate in student induction events and/or induction material that informs the students about the University and the School
- Attend bi-annual Student Course Committee meetings and submit meeting minutes to AQD and school colleagues
- Monitor quality of teaching through peer teaching observation, if appropriately qualified. Please note: no formal requirement to produce a written evaluation of this activity
- Monitor collection and analysis of student feedback by the Collaborative Partner

APPROVAL OF TEACHING STAFF

- Ensure all new members of teaching staff at the partner institution (involved in the delivery of London Met awards) are formally approved via appropriate channels at the University

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Support the sharing of best practice between the School and the Collaborative Partner. This includes staff development resources, invitation to University events and hosting staff development sessions

TEACHING SITES

- Support the Head of Partnerships with review and approval of new collaborative partner teaching sites including physical learning resources
- Take part in formal site visit if partner teaching premises change, and support Head of Partnerships in the completion of an appropriate report

COMMUNICATION, VISITS AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

- Regular communications with, and visits when necessary, to the partner to ensure that the provisions of the Partnerships Operations Manual (POM) and Quality Manual are being implemented, and that courses are being delivered as approved

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND RESOLUTION

- Work with the partner to resolve problems with delivery and management of courses, as they arise
- Escalate any issues that cannot be resolved promptly, via the School, AQSA or Head of Partnerships
- Ensure AQD and Head of Partnerships are notified of any potential breaches in meeting expectations relating to academic quality and standards
- Should a Collaborative Partner breach legal agreements (which leads to an improvement action plan), contribute to the development of the plan and support the monitoring of actions where appropriate

PARTNERSHIP TERMINATION AND COURSE TEACH OUT

- Support the Collaborative Partner and departments in the University with the partnership termination and course teach out processes as articulated in the Partnerships Operational Manual and the Quality Manual

Note: For further information regarding specific policies, regulations or processes that will support tasks undertaken in this role, please refer to one or more of the following documents (click on each to find the appropriate link):

- o [Partnerships Operational Manual](#)
- o [Quality Manual](#)
- o [Staff Zone](#)
- o [Academic Regulations](#)
- o [General Student Regulations](#)

USEFUL INFORMATION

1. ALT FORUMS

There is an ALT Forum across all schools led by Dr Ryan Hale, whereby colleagues from across schools, the partnerships office and AQD staff can liaise with eachother. Schools also commonly operate an informal forum once per semester where ALTs can share experiences and raise issues with colleagues

2. ALT TRAINING

Training events will be provided during the academic year to provide an induction for new ALTs and to provide updated information for existing ALTs. This will take place virtually (or on campus should the situation permit), often with invited guests who will share expertise, and as often as possible, they will be made available to ALTs regardless of school and recorded for those who cannot attend.

3. TRAVEL AND PARTNERSHIP VISITS

Typically ALTs were expected to visit partner colleges twice per year, coinciding with the requirements to have course committee meetings twice per year (i.e. once per semester). However, COVID and other factors have made this more challenging and therefore it is with the discretion of the school to decide whether to reduce this requirement (For example: One course committee meeting might be held virtually should that suit all parties).

Prior to travel you need to ensure your line manager has agreed to your travel, as this may impact upon your teaching. The **Collaborative Visit Form** (AQDC038) should be emailed to your school office.

Booking flights is usually arranged with your school office and you need to give them the dates and preferred route/airline for travel. While on University business, you are entitled to travel expenses that cover food, laundry and transport (e.g. taxi to the station or airport). It is advisable to keep all receipts, as they will be required as evidence when you submit your expenses claim on your return from a partner visit. You will need to ensure that you have travel insurance (provided by the University). You will find all documentation related to travel on ALT Weblearn.

Partnership visits are typically over several days, but in some cases it could be over a week. Depending on the country you are visiting you may need to obtain a visa. It is advisable to check before travel what the visa requirements are. For example, some countries require the visa to be arranged in advance, whilst others might be obtainable on arrival. Once again, visa expenses are reimbursed via the expenses form.

During the visit you would be expected to meet with the senior staff to discuss problems, new initiatives with the partner, changes in university regulations or how we can better work together. Course committee meetings usually take place during these visits and generally the ALT chairs the meeting. It is a good opportunity to meet with students, share new ideas, correct bad practice and solve problems. Commonly, ALTs provide staff development opportunities in the form of lectures or

group discussions. It may be possible to invite a guest speaker via MS Teams to speak to the staff and provide further input.

After the visit has been completed, an ALT will need to complete the Collaborative Partner Monitoring Visit Report Form (AQDC038) and send this to their Head of Partnerships within their school and the ALT coordinator.

4. STANDARD AND NON-STANDARD APPLICATIONS

Standard applications will be dealt with by the partner institution based on an agreement about what constitutes an acceptable entry level by the applicant. Non-Standard applications will be sent to the ALT for the approval. Generally if the applicant is wishing to join level 3, 4 or 7 we would look at the qualifications and make an assessment based on how likely they are to be able to follow the course and succeed. If you are satisfied, you need to inform the partner that you approve the application and that they may proceed with the application. Level 5 and 6 direct entry, will need the ALT to assess any prior learning to determine if the applicant has the appropriate background to be granted direct entry to levels 5 and 6. A credit transfer form needs to be completed and sent to Student Records and to the APL coordinator in the School. A copy of a credit transfer form is available in Weblearn.

5. WEBLEARN

Generally, Weblearn is not made to partner colleges. This is mainly due to licence restriction on how many students can access Weblearn. Requests are sometimes made partners to access course content on modules, access to Weblearn can be requested on a temporary basis, usually for a calendar month to allow all materials to be downloaded. Requests for this kind of access need to be sent to Weblearn support.

6. ARMS ACCOUNTS

ARMs accounts are provided to a small number of partnership staff. This may be the registrar or administrator at the partner college, or in some cases it could be teaching staff who have access to either Weblearn, Evision or library resources. ARMs accounts need to be requested in the first instance and then renewed annually.

7. BUSINESS CALENDAR

Usually this is sent to the partner institution on a yearly basis, normally at the beginning of the academic year. This is used by departments in the university to be aware of when to expect mark entry, resits etc.

8. LIBRARY RESOURCES

Limited library resources are available to students at our partner colleges, but due to copyright and licensing issues, access to e-books is restricted.

9. UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

Key documentation relating to partnerships will be made available on Weblearn, including the Partnership Operating Manual (POM) and the ALT job description.

10. DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Direct contact made by students can be referred back to staff at the partner college. Issues relating to graduation, marked, complaints, awards and so on, all need to be addressed by the partner.

11. PARTNERSHIP TEACHING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

There are several staff development opportunities open to the staff at our partnerships. As mentioned previously, we normally offer some form of staff development during our partnership visits. The university also offers staff, if they have an ARMs account, access to the LMU online library resource as well as LinkedIn Learning. With the agreement of the partner college, it is also possible for staff to be accepted on PhD programmes, this works based on there being a local first supervisor and an LMU second supervisor. If you are aware of interested staff, please encourage them to apply.

12. PARTNERSHIP STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

The university has offered the possibility of scholarships to the best graduates from our partner institutions. These scholarships are normally full scholarships and are offered in partnership with International House, which normally offers the accommodation.