

Preamble

EQUAL is a European forum which works towards a common understanding, formulating opinions and guidelines about quality assurance and development in higher business and management education. It is an umbrella network acting primarily as a think-tank to promote quality enhancement and synchronisation.

To fulfil its mission, EQUAL provides the international business education community with white papers and guidelines. It supports research and projects on a variety of topics concerning advancements in business and management education, and disseminates best practices.

These present Guidelines set out good practice requirements upon a business school or other awarding institution concerning its collaborative provision. These organisations are subsequently referred to as the awarding institutions or “franchisor”. The Guidelines also set out the expectations on other business schools or organisations which have a formal but subsidiary part in the collaborative provision. These organisations are subsequently referred to as the collaborative organisation or “franchisee”

1. Definition of Terms

Collaborative provision is a general term and should be understood to include partnerships, joint programmes, franchising and off-shore arrangements.

Award: is a general term covering all certificates, diplomas and degrees. It includes a whole award, dual awards, joint awards, specified credit toward an award, which is delivered and/or supported and/or assessed as part of collaborative provision.

Franchising: is a specific example of collaborative provision where a programme developed by and leading to an award of the awarding institution (the franchisor) is predominantly delivered and/or supported by one or more collaborative organisations (the franchisee/s). Typically, a franchisee may provide some or all of the tuition and may use local teaching and administrative support staff.

Off-shore: denotes educational provision leading to an award, in a country other than that of the awarding institution. Typically, the awarding institution provides the majority of teaching and may use their own or local administrative staff. Off-shore does not include multi-campus provision of the awarding institution whether located in the same or different countries.

(Sections 2 – 8 relate to awarding organisations (franchisors))

2. Responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards

2.1 The awarding institution is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and for ensuring that any collaborative organisation maintains these standards.

2.2 The academic standards of these awards should meet the same expectations of quality from the awarding institution with regard to providing a comparable learning experience.

3. Policies, procedures and information

- 3.1 An up-to-date and authoritative record of the awarding institution's collaborative awards, should form part of the institution's publicly available information.
- 3.2 The awarding institution should inform any professional, statutory and regulatory body, which has approved or recognised a programme that is the subject of a possible or actual collaborative arrangement of its proposals and of any final agreements which involve the programme.
- 3.3 The awarding institution's policies and procedures should ensure that there are adequate safeguards with regard to quality to cover all contingencies that might compromise academic and administrative standards and ensure that any collaborative organisation meets their responsibilities with respect to the academic standards of the awarding institution and where appropriate any applicable national minimum standards.
- 3.4 Collaborative arrangements should be accurately costed and budgeted for and should also be accounted for separately and accurately.

4. Selecting a collaborative organisation

- 4.1 In order to create a successful collaboration, both (all) institutions involved should seek to have strong alignment in mission and strategy. The partnership should provide clear benefit for all institutions involved.
- 4.2 The awarding institution should undertake, with due diligence, an investigation to satisfy itself about the good standing of a prospective collaborative organisation, and of their capacity to fulfil their designated role in the arrangement. This investigation should include its legal status and its capacity in law to contract with the awarding institution. It should also include consideration of specific local tax and regulatory requirements.

5. Written agreements with a collaborative organisation

- 5.1 There should be a written and legally binding agreement/contract setting out the rights and obligations of the parties and signed by the authorised representatives of the awarding institution and the collaborative organisation.
- 5.2 The agreement or contract should make clear that the collaborative organisation is not permitted to engage in any 'serial' arrangement whereby it offers the approved collaborative provision elsewhere through an arrangement of its own.

6. Assuring academic standards and the quality of programmes and awards

- 6.1 The awarding institution is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning opportunities offered through these programmes is comparable to its own programmes and thus suitable for enabling a student to achieve the same academic standard required for its academic award.
- 6.2 An awarding institution that engages with other awarding bodies to provide a programme should be able to satisfy itself that they have the legal capacity to do so, and that the award (including any joint award) meets its own expectations for the

academic standard of the award, irrespective of the expectations of the other bodies.

- 6.3 The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff from a collaborative organisation who are engaged in delivering and/or supporting a programme are appropriately qualified for their role, and that the collaborative organisation has effective measures to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff.

7. Assessment requirements

- 7.1 The awarding institution is responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of assessment for a programme (in whichever language is used for assessment) meet the specified academic level of the award, with standards that are consistent with its own expectations.
- 7.2 The awarding institution should ensure that a collaborative organisation involved in the assessment of students fully understands and follows the requirements approved by the awarding institution for the conduct and standard of assessments.

8. Information for students

- 8.1 The awarding institution should set out clearly the minimum level of information that prospective and registered students should have about a programme. This includes the need for accurate information about national and international accreditation pertaining to the institution and/or programme.
- 8.2 The information made available to prospective students and those registered on a programme should include information about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints and appeals, making clear the responsibilities of all parties and the channels through which students can contact the awarding institution directly.

9. Requirements on collaborative organisations (franchisees)

The collaborative organisation should:

- 9.1 Fully understand, implement and maintain a comparable academic standard of awards as the awarding organisation.
- 9.2 Make the status of the programme in respect of PSRB recognition clear to prospective students.
- 9.3 Supply full and accurate information to the awarding organisation with regard to meeting its due diligence requirements.
- 9.4 Not engage in any form of serial arrangement whereby it offers the approved collaborative provision elsewhere through an arrangement of its own.
- 9.5 Ensure that those engaged in delivering and/or supporting programmes are appropriately qualified for their role, and that there are effective measures in place to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff.
- 9.6 Ensure that it fully understands and follows the requirements approved by the awarding institution for the conduct and standard of assessments.

9.7 The collaborative organisation, may with the prior approval of the awarding institution, adapt the content of a programme to its location in order to reflect legal, commercial and environmental differences in particular countries and regions. These differences need to be clearly identified, and communicated to programme participants.

Current EQUAL members:

AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

ABS Finland - Association of Business Schools Finland

AEEDE - Asociación Española de Escuelas de Dirección de Empresa

AMBA - Association of MBAs

ASFOR - Associazione Italiana per la Formazione Manageriale

BMDA - Baltic Management Development Association

CAMBAS - Czech Association of MBA Schools

CEEMAN - International Association for Management Development in Dynamic Societies

CFBSD - Canadian Federation of Business School Deans

Chapitre des Ecoles de Management- Conférence des Grandes Ecoles

CABS - Chartered Association of Business Schools

CLADEA - The Latin American Council of Management Schools

ECONA

EDAMBA - European Doctoral Programmes Association in Management and Business Administration

EFMD – The Management Development Network

FIBAA - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation

FNEGE – Fondation Nationale pour l’Enseignement de la Gestion des Entreprises

FORUM - Association of Management Education

GMAC® - Graduate Management Admission Council®

IAE France - University Schools of Management

The Finnish Business School Graduates

Swedish Association of Graduates in Business Administration and Economics

VSNU - Vereniging van Samenwerkende Nederlandse Universiteiten



EQUAL GUIDELINES ON COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

February 2016

For more information, please contact the EQUAL Secretariat (Griet Houbrechts)
at

secretariat@equal.network

c/o EFMD, rue Gachard 88 box 3, B-1050 Brussels

<http://equal.network>