

Revised March 2021

## Collaborative PhDs leading to Lancaster University Awards: Guidance Notes

1. Collaborative PhDs are subject to Lancaster University's procedures for the approval, monitoring and management of collaborative provision.

Lancaster University defines collaborative provision as any formal arrangement whereby the University engages in partnership with another institution or institutions (public or private) in order to

- deliver or validate programmes or parts of programmes of teaching, learning and assessment leading to Lancaster University credit or awards
- give access to programmes of teaching, learning and assessment leading to Lancaster University credit or awards with or without advanced standing.

Partner institutions may be based in the UK or worldwide.

Legally binding agreements are required for all collaborative PhD partnerships.

2. Collaborative PhD arrangements may lead to a *single award* by Lancaster University, to a *dual award* where each partner makes its own award on the basis of the same body of work, or to a *double award* where each partner makes its own award on the basis of different requirements. Whatever the type of collaborative PhD proposed, the key point for emphasis is that where a Lancaster PhD is to be awarded, there are certain essential criteria and requirements that must be met.
3. The following key principles have been agreed in relation to collaborative PhD arrangements, and should be observed, if a Lancaster degree is to be awarded:
  - a) A PhD encompasses scholarly research in a chosen field of study that makes an original contribution to knowledge of a standard appropriate for scholarly publication.
  - b) PhDs will involve, although not necessarily be limited to, the production of a thesis – a coherent body of work, albeit potentially in a number of formats.
  - c) Research skills training and additional learning, either formative or summative, is seen as critical to success, particularly for individual's career progression, but there is flexibility in both mode of delivery and required outcomes.
  - d) The primary means of assessment is an oral examination based upon a written thesis; the assessment should be objective, independent and demonstrate an appropriate level of externality.
  - e) Within collaborative arrangements students will be registered with both institutions for the entire period of study. The Parties may by mutual agreement, designate one institution as the primary location for study for periods of the overall time studied (e.g. if necessary for funding, immigration or other agreed purposes).
  - f) Doctoral students must be made fully aware of all expectations upon them. Should additional work be required by one collaborative party that is in excess of the standard requirements of the other, this must be made explicit to the student from the outset and full consent demonstrated through the registration process.

- f) In collaborative arrangements leading to dual PhDs, the collaborative process does not affect the ultimate authority of either institution. Processes and formats are collectively negotiated and agreed between them. All decisions are made formally explicit to all participants and each agrees to act in the spirit of partnership to the fulfilment of the agreed arrangements. Notwithstanding this, both parties maintain their ultimate authority to grant their own award to any candidate that they deem to have successfully completed the required criteria.
- g) The thesis shall be written in English. A candidate, with the support of her/his supervisor and Head of Department, may apply for exceptional permission to present the thesis in whole or in part in another language, for which approval may be given by the body or officer with delegated authority from the Senate.
4. In accordance with the above principles, for the award of a Lancaster PhD within any collaborative PhD arrangement, Lancaster expects as a minimum: that Lancaster examination requirements, including an oral examination will be met; to appoint the examiners, including at least one external examiner; and to make the decision whether to award the Lancaster degree. All students must be registered with Lancaster and will have a Lancaster supervisor who will be the primary supervisor for the Lancaster PhD.
  5. The amount of time students are required to study at each partner institution must be agreed. Students will normally be expected to spend at least some of their study period at Lancaster. It shall be the responsibility of the admitting department to determine the amount and timing of the period or periods of study to be spent at Lancaster.
  6. With respect to supervision arrangements, consideration must be given to the amount of contact time with the supervisor each partner guarantees, how supervisors liaise, and how any disagreements that may arise between supervisors will be managed.
  7. Proposals should align with the University's *Postgraduate Research Regulations* which outline the institutional framework for postgraduate research students.
  8. Proposals for collaborative PhDs must follow the University's procedures for approval of collaborative provision as set out in MARP (Collaborative Teaching Partnership Provision). Faculty PRCs and teaching committees must be satisfied with the strategic benefit of the proposed programme and the financial and academic arrangements. Approval for the partner and the partnership must be sought from the Collaborative Partnership Sub-Committee. Proposals must cover:
    - strategic benefit of the proposed collaboration
    - suitability of the partner institution as an academic partner for LU and its capacity to fulfil its responsibilities within the collaborative PhD arrangement
    - financial viability
    - arrangements proposed for:
      - admission
      - supervision
      - research skills training
      - progress monitoring
      - examination and award
      - review and appeal
      - access to facilities and student support.