

**Principles and process for the approval and monitoring of recognition arrangements**

1. **Recognition Principles**

1.1 The University defines recognition as an arrangement whereby a named award delivered by another institution is formally recognised as appropriate for entry with or without advanced standing to one or more specified University of Worcester (UW) programmes, thereby providing a basis for *individual* applications to the course. There is no guaranteed entry through any recognition arrangement.

1.2 Recognition will normally apply to arrangements providing access to HE for international students, and therefore will relate primarily to international institutions and internationally recognised awarding bodies, international colleges in the UK, and UK FE Colleges and other organisations providing courses for international students.

1.3 Recognition arrangements will only be developed with:

* NARIC or otherwise externally recognised/endorsed institutions

and in relation to

* NARIC listed or internationally recognised qualifications e.g. Edexcel, Association of Business Executives (ABE), Institute of Administrative Management (IAM)

or

* UK based institutions and organisations that have Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status

and in relation to

* validated qualifications that have appropriate externality.

All proposed recognition arrangements should be discussed with the Deputy Head of Academic Quality (Collaborative) at the earliest opportunity.

1.4 All recognition arrangements will be based on appropriate assurances that the qualification of the recognition institution is of an appropriate standard and quality, and that the alignment of programmes of study and qualifications/awards is appropriate.

1.5 Applicants will apply on an individual basis in accordance with the University’s Admissions Policy and admission processes and procedures, and the processes for recognition of prior learning, where applicable. Admissions profiles will be considered on a case by case basis through the University’s standard processes. The University’s standard entry requirements will apply and progression with advanced standing will be managed through the application of credit transfer in line with the University’s RPL procedures.

1.6 Recognition arrangements will be formalised through a memorandum of recognition written to a standard template. In most cases they will not fall under the University’s full partnership processes, although a recognition arrangement may form the basis for a longer term academic collaborative partnership.

1.7 Recognition arrangements will be developed, managed and monitored by the International Recruitment Team and/or the relevant Institute(s) as appropriate. Recognition arrangements that involve advanced standing for entry to a course must be led and managed by the relevant Institute. Proposed recognition agreements led by the International Recruitment Team must ensure consultation with relevant Institutes. Formal approval on the basis of a recommendation from the Institute or from the International Recruitment Team will be given by ASQEC on consideration of a satisfactory report covering due diligence and the details of the proposed arrangement.

1.8 Memoranda of recognition will be issued for a three year period. Renewal will be subject to satisfaction of the criteria listed in 2.10.

1.9 The collaborative register will form a central database of recognition arrangements.

1.10 All public and marketing information whether issued by UW or the recognition institution must be clear about the nature of the arrangement. It is advised that the following wording is used in all promotional material associated with the recognition arrangement:

*The University of Worcester recognises [XX add named qualifications of institution] as meeting entry standards for specific programmes at the University [XX list named qualifications and awards]. Applications from eligible candidates will be considered on an individual basis. Please note that the University of Worcester retains sole rights of admission to its programmes. [Include link to appropriate course page and UW Admissions]*

1.11 A recognition agreement will permit the recognition institution to use the University of Worcester logo on its webpages only in association with the above statement. It does not permit the recognition institution to use the logo on any course related materials or other marketing/publicity materials. Any marketing/publicity materials which refer to the relationship with the University must be approved by the Head of Institute and Director of Communications and Participation in advance of distribution.

1.12 Institutes may agree with the recognition institution that the statement at 1.10 above can be included in course handbooks together with hyperlinks to University of Worcester webpages explaining how students may apply for entry to the named University of Worcester course.

1.13 The rights, responsibilities and expectations in relation to public and marketing information detailed in principles 1.10-1.12 above are not conferred to the individual centres of internationally recognised awarding bodies, unless these centres have themselves secured a memorandum of recognition directly with the University. Where the memorandum is solely with the awarding body, the individual centres must confine any reference to the arrangement to a link back to the details on the awarding body’s website only. In such cases, it will be the responsibility of the awarding body to ensure that its centres comply with this expectation.

**2 Process for the approval and monitoring of recognition arrangements**

2.1 Recognition arrangements are developed by Institutes and/or the International Recruitment Team in liaison with external institutions and with guidance from relevant departments within the University as appropriate. It is anticipated that a single Institute will be involved in discussions with a given external institution or organisation at any one point in time, but if this is not the case, it may be appropriate to agree the International Recruitment Team or a lead Institute to conduct any wider institutional due diligence.

2.2 Proposals for new recognition arrangements that involve advanced standing must be discussed with the Deputy Head of Academic Quality (Collaborative) and considered by Institute Senior Management Teams in the first instance in order to determine whether the proposal fits with University policy, and the Institute’s strategic direction, priorities and resources, and appears to be viable in principle.

2.3 A short [proposal paper](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Proposal_for_a_new_recognition_agreement.docx) should be drawn up, written to a standard template and demonstrating:

* rationale for the development and how it relates to institutional strategy
* details of the institution (i.e. university or other educational institution, public or private, whether NARIC listed or otherwise externally endorsed/recognised, HTS status) and courses (i.e. academic level, whether top-up or full programme, whether NARIC listed or internationally recognised qualifications e.g. Edexcel, ABE, IAM, validation status etc)
* an assessment of risk incorporating an agreed checklist and a statement identifying the nature of any specific foreseeable risk, particularly where this might impact on the needs and experience of students, and how this might be mitigated
* evidence of scrutiny of qualification/award to ascertain appropriateness of academic standard and quality; in the case of proposals involving advanced standing, there must be evidence of mapping of the awards concerned\*
* anticipated number of applicants through the arrangement
* identification of a named individual to oversee the arrangement if agreed
* a draft memorandum of recognition.

\* The mapping should demonstrate to IQC that someone with relevant expertise (eg the course leader of the receiving UW award) has looked at the content/curriculum/outcomes of the external courses and mapped these to demonstrate there is a good fit with the UW course (ie that students will have met the ‘pre-requisite’ knowledge, skills, understanding etc).  This might take the form of a list of the modules on the UW award and an indication of how the external course prepares students through its curriculum (referring to any mandatory modules and a sufficient number of optional modules). Documentation underpinning the mapping should be retained by the Institute and made available on request.

2.4 In completing the proposal paper, advice may be sought from relevant staff working in the International Recruitment Team, Admissions, and the AQU. In any cases where the due diligence reveals that the institution in question is not NARIC listed or otherwise externally endorsed or the qualification is not NARIC listed or internationally recognised or appropriately validated, the proposal should be referred centrally for advice on process via AQU in the first instance.

2.5 The proposal paper will be signed by the Head of Institute or Director of Communications and Participation as appropriate and the Deputy Head of Academic Quality (Collaborative), and forwarded to ASQEC for formal approval.

2.6 On approval by ASQEC of a new recognition arrangement, the memorandum will be drawn up by AQU, signed by the Pro Vice Chancellor (International), and forwarded to the recognition institution for signature. Electronic copies will be provided to Communications and Participation, the International Recruitment Team, the Academic Registrar’s Office and Admissions.

2.7 Details of the agreement will be recorded in the collaborative register maintained by AQU. The register will include as a minimum, details of the recognition institution, relevant qualifications and programmes of each institution, dates of approval and renewal and the key contacts responsible for managing the arrangement in the relevant academic departments.

2.8 The relevant Institute or International Recruitment Team will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the details of the memorandum once agreed. It is expected that an appropriate level of communication will be maintained with the recognition institution in order to implement the terms of the memorandum with at least an annual discussion to review its progress in full.

2.9 Recognition arrangements should be monitored annually by Institutes and/or the International Recruitment Team. This monitoring should draw on the annual discussion between the two institutional leads and consider specifically:

* whether the mapping in the memorandum annex remains current
* whether the arrangement has been satisfactory in other respects e.g. accuracy of public information
* the numbers of students progressing through the arrangement and their performance in relation to those accessing through different routes, based on information provided by the Data Management Unit and coding applied at admission.

2.10 Memoranda of recognition are issued for a three year period. AQU will notify the relevant Institute and/or the International Recruitment Team, at least six months before the end of the agreement. Renewal is subject to approval by ASQEC by means of a brief update report paper drawing on evidence from the annual reviews. Renewal will be subject to satisfactory continued course mapping, and a proven track record of student progression in terms of both numbers and comparative achievement on the UW course. The options at this stage are:

1. cessation of the arrangement where progression has not been successful and/or where communication with the other institution has been poor in relation to updating mapping
2. the issuing of a further memorandum for a period of up to three years where all aspects of the memorandum have been observed satisfactorily.
3. transfer to an articulation or other appropriate agreement where progression and achievement has been particularly strong and where the Institute may want to develop the arrangement into a formal partnership. Advice from AQU should be sought at this point.

**Revision History**

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| **Committee** | **Date** | **Change** |
| ASQEC | 24th September 2014 | Para 1.7, 1.9, 2.5 and 2.10 updated and Para 2.6 and 2.7 inserted all relating to the status of  Recognition Agreements |
| ASQEC | 8th January 2014 | Document revised to permit International Recruitment Team to bring forward proposals, and to streamline processes. Revision of definition of ‘recognition’. |
| *(University Executive)* | 14th November 2012 | Agreement that the folder to record recognition arrangements and Memorandum of Understanding to be established |
| *Academic Board*  | 25th April 2012  | Original recognition principles and process agreed.  |

**Memorandum of Recognition flowchart**

Submission to ASQEC for approval

Annual conversation and monitoring

Details of memorandum of recognition entered to collaborative register

Memorandum of recognition signed by Pro Vice Chancellor (International) and external organisation

Institute or IRT carries out due diligence on proposed recognition institution and qualification(s)/award

Recognition opportunity identified and discussed with Deputy Head of Academic Quality (Collaborative) and International Recruitment Team (IRT) / Institute Senior Management Team

Entry to start of course

Entry with advanced standing

Institute carries out due diligence checks on proposed recognition institution and qualification(s)/award

Mapping of qualification to be recognised to UW course

Consultation with Institute and/or IRT about proposal

Informal discussions with external organisation to ascertain nature of proposed arrangement as either:

Completion of proposed paper and drafting of memorandum of recognition