

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

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STUDY ABROAD POLICY

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Introduction

Our Strategy: The Way Forward [2018-2023: Recast COVID-19](#).

Our vision is to be a world-leading, research-excellent, educationally outstanding university, driven by creativity and curiosity, which fulfils its social, cultural and economic obligations to Cardiff, Wales, the UK and the world. By fulfilling our vision, we expect to improve our standing as one of the top 100 universities in the world and the top 20 in the UK.

The Way Forward [2018-2023: Recast COVID-19](#), outlines the guiding principles for the way we put this vision into practice, and includes performance indicators that will help us gauge our progress. Our revised [Education and Students Sub-strategy](#) will re-prioritise activity to provide our students with the highest quality experience possible given the constraints of the Covid-19 crisis, whilst preserving our academic standards and integrity.

These include our commitment to:

- Learning environment
- Student experience
- Welsh-Language Strategy, Yr Alwad/Embrace It.
- Placement and Employability:
- Widening Participation
- Teaching excellence:
- Academic standards

Institutional oversight

This Policy has been endorsed by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) in April 2018 (updated in August 2020)¹ and will be kept under regular review to ensure it continues both to support internal processes that function efficiently and effectively and to fully meet the expectations and practices set out in the revised UK [the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

The principles have been mapped against the UK Quality Code expectations and core and common practices alongside the supporting advice and guidance on [Course Design and Development](#), [Partnerships](#), [Research Degrees](#), [Monitoring and Evaluation](#) and [Assessment](#), [Enabling Student Achievement](#), and [Student Engagement](#) as appropriate.

Expectations for standards	Expectations for quality
The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework'	Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector recognised standards'	From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.
Core practices for standards	Core practices for quality
The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.	The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.
The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.	Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.
Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.	The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

¹ Amendments to this policy may be made by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC). All amendments will be communicated to the College Pro Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Schools by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Academic Standards).

The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.	The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
	The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
	Where the provider offers research degrees, it delivers these in appropriate and supportive research environments.
	The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.
	The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.
Common practices for standards	Common practices for quality
The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement	The provider reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.
	The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.
	The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

SECTION 1: Scope and Exclusions

Scope of the policy

From 1 August 2018 (updated August 2020), the Study Abroad Policy (the Policy) provides guidance for the development and management of Study Abroad activity. It identifies a broad range of activities that come under the broad umbrella term of 'study abroad' (Annex A); however, for the purposes of this Policy, the University defines 'study abroad as:

'periods of study at other higher education institutions outside the UK where these form part of Cardiff University programmes. This activity refers to 'replacement' credit (whereby part of a Cardiff University programme is replaced with study at an overseas institution) e.g. a semester of study abroad worth 60 credits; or

'additional' credit (lengthening the normal period of study for that programme and leading to a specific award recognising the time spent on study abroad) e.g. 120 credits

The Study Abroad Policy builds on the processes and procedures outlined in the [Collaborative Provision Policy](#) and [Programme Development Policy](#) taking a risk-based approach to developing and managing all study abroad activity identifying any specific additional requirements.

Alternative forms of collaboration with other higher education institutions are addressed in the University's [Collaborative Provision Policy](#), whilst placements (including those overseas) are addressed in the University's [Placement Learning Policy](#).

Whilst the focus of this policy is taught provision, it is expected that Schools will apply the principles to ensure that postgraduate research study abroad activities are risk assessed and that there are clearly defined support mechanisms in place for students.

It is expected that the development of all new programme proposals and changes to existing programmes should be developed with reference to other Cardiff University policies and codes of practice alongside any professional and statutory body requirements:

- [Academic Regulations](#);
- [Assessment principles and commitments](#) and associated [assessment and feedback](#) resources;
- Principles of Programme Structure, Design & Delivery (approved October 2019);
- [Digital Education Strategy and Digital Learning Framework](#)
- Welsh Language Strategy
- [Collaborative Provision Policy](#) (revised August 2020)
- [Study Abroad Policy](#) (revised August 2020), where appropriate
- [Placement Learning Policy](#) (Revised August 2020), where appropriate
- [Admissions Policies](#) (including terms and conditions of offer)
- [Tuition Fee Policy](#)

- Guidance relating to [Teaching and supporting students](#) Guidance relating to [Teaching and supporting students](#).

Schools are required to contact the Global Opportunities team before any formal negotiations take place with Study Abroad partner organisations to ensure that appropriate guidance can be given on setting up the partnership.

Study Abroad opportunities must not be advertised for offered to students until both the Study Abroad partner and the programme have been approved by the Programme and Partner Standing Panel.

Proposals strategically endorsed by University Executive Board

On occasion UEB may endorse proposals as a strategic initiative, and any such approved proposals must complete all stages of University processes.

Any new programmes including credit bearing study abroad activity must be approved in accordance with the stages outlined in the aa.

All new study abroad partnerships must be approved in line with the provisions set out in this policy and it is advisable to contact the Global Opportunities Team before negotiations with study abroad partners commence to ensure that appropriate guidance can be given on setting up the partnership.

It is important to note that students must not be offered study abroad opportunities until all elements have been approved.

Exclusions

The University acknowledges that all study abroad activity can provide students with opportunities to gain invaluable skills and knowledge to support their academic and employability objectives. However the following are not within the scope of this policy:

- **A year of Study Abroad substituting academic credit for a full year of study (120 credits) with all marks contributing to the degree classification:** As this study activity contributes to more than the 10% for an additional 120 credits of study, this is considered full collaborative provision activity and Schools should refer to the procedures outlined in the Framework for guidance.
- **Non-credit bearing study abroad activity:** Where non-credit bearing study abroad activity is being arranged and/or supported by Schools or professional service departments within the University, the provision should be reviewed to ensure that it complies with the relevant provisions of this policy.

SECTION 2: Key principles

The decision-making processes within this Policy are designed in relation to a guiding principle of subsidiarity, which aids the efficient process of University business whilst ensuring commensurate rigour and scrutiny. It allows the University to fully meet the expectations and practices set out in the [revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and under [consumer protection law](#).

For proposals including study abroad activity, a key consideration is whether collaboration with a partner poses a risk to the University's academic standards and student experience, and by implication the reputation of the University. The need to protect these is of paramount importance and must be the primary consideration in the evaluation of the benefits of any form of collaboration.

Overarching principles of programme approval

Stage 1 Strategic Approval

Strategic Approval is taken at University level and addresses the key question, '**In principle, do we want to do this, and does it align with institutional priorities outlined in [the Way Forward 2018-2023: Recast COVID-19](#)?**' Answering this question also involves moving forward on plans to enhance our online and blended offering. New online provision will be considered for potential new revenue streams, underpinned by a University-level learning technology service. Careful consideration will be given to market intelligence, business viability including costs and tuition fee income and risks (including reputational risks).

Colleges will only put forward key proposals to the Stage 1 University panel that meet the institutional priorities outlined in [the Way Forward 2018-2023: Recast COVID-19](#) highlighting how the proposal meets the criteria set out by the Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group.

Each proposal will be considered at set meetings per year (normally quarterly), which will align with the timescales in Section 3. Each proposal will take into account institutional priorities, the resource needed from the School to commit to the development phase and the support required from CESI. Detailed timescales for development phase will need to be outlined by the School including the academic sponsor who will be responsible for ensuring timescales are met. All proposals will need to take into consideration the timescales identified in section 3 to maximise recruitment opportunities.

Stage 2 Programme and Partnership Development phase

During this phase you will develop you will develop your programme, collect information on your proposed partner and how the programme and period of study abroad will be delivered.

There is an expectation that all proposals progressing from Stage 1 Strategic approval will engage with any workshops offered on the

development of programmes. Workshops will cover curriculum design and delivery, assessment and re-assessment opportunities, the student experience and learning resources.

There is an expectation that all programmes will incorporate the principles outlined in the [Welsh Language Strategy](#), [Digital Learning Framework](#) and the [assessment and feedback commitments](#). All proposals will be expected to include the [module threshold checklist](#) to ensure a core level of consistency in students' educational experience, when there will be a much greater emphasis on digital elements of their programme.

It is envisaged that more time invested during the programme development phase will increase high quality, innovative, programmes being put forward for academic approval to the Programme and Partner Standing Panel thus minimising conditions. During this phase detailed academic due diligence shall be conducted and partnership management plans shall be developed which outline the roles of each partner in the delivery of the programme.

Stage 3

Academic Approval

This stage asks the question **‘Do we already have a relationship with the partner?’**, **‘s this academically robust and does it fulfil the basic structure, curriculum and assessment principles expected for all Cardiff programmes?’**

All proposals put forward for consideration to the Programme and Partner Standing Panel must show how they have engaged with the workshops provided through the CESI including [the Digital Learning Framework](#) to ensure they meet the principles of programme structure, design and delivery.

The Panel will look to ensure that all new programmes:

- incorporate the principles outlined in the Digital Learning Framework including the [module threshold checklist](#).
- incorporate the principles outlined in the [assessment and feedback principles](#).
- ensure there is appropriate core/required curriculum to uphold the standards of each academic award.
- ensure that any Profession, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements have been included.
- Have appropriate mechanisms and support structures in place to protect the student experience; and
- comply with external benchmarks and quality and standards frameworks.

Student Membership on the panel is critical to gaining insight into student views on the proposal and identifying if any additional modifications are needed.

It is anticipated that engagement with the support available through the programme development phase will minimise the need for additional conditions/recommendations to be made before recommending for formal **University approval** by ASQC.

Our obligations under Consumer Law prevent us from advertising any programme(s) until formal ASQC approval is granted to ensure the accuracy of information available to students and applicants.

It is only after all stages have been completed that a formal agreement can be signed outlining the nature and extent of the collaboration.

Academic approval of study abroad programmes (additional 120 credits creating a 4 year programme).

The overarching principles for the introduction of an additional 120 credits (i.e. a full academic year) of study abroad activity into existing 360 credit programmes (480 credits in total), contributing 10% of the overall degree classification, are considered changes requiring University level Approval under the University's [Programme Approval Policy](#) and it is important that the Board(s) of Studies and School Board(s) are included in the discussions regarding the programme information before they are submitted to the College as part of the Stage 1 Approval process for consideration.

Before Schools prepare to submit Stage 1 Strategic Approval documentation to the College and before students can commence any study abroad activity, they must check with the Global Opportunities team that all study abroad partner organisations have been approved by the Programme and Partner Standing Panel and there are active partnership agreements in place.

If new partnerships are being established, Schools will need to discuss the time needed to set up the proposed study abroad partnership agreement to align it with the development of the study abroad programme.

Stage 1: Strategic Approval

The University will need to establish whether the proposal fits with the School, College and University strategic priorities and justifies the time and resource that the School would need to invest in subsequent stages. Each proposal for developing a programme(s) with study abroad activity will need to demonstrate the following:

- the strategic and academic justification for developing the programme;
- evidence of demand and proposed marketing strategy (UK and/or overseas);
- a detailed outline of academic and other resources needed;
- the proposed student numbers over a five year period;
- financial analysis (including fee income and success criteria);
- identification of any School, College or University risks associated with the proposal;
- confirmation of the study abroad partnership agreement and associated Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment from the Global Opportunities team.

The University panel (in consultation with other academic and professional service staff from within the College and wider University), will consider the merits of the proposal as part of the Stage 1 strategic approval meeting and will indicate if the proposal can move forward to Stage 2.

Full details of all the required documentation for Stage 1 strategic approval for developing programmes with 120 credits of study abroad activity is available on the [intranet](#) with support and guidance available from your College Communication and Recruitment team on assessing the market viability of your proposed programme developments and your College Quality Officer.

It should be noted that the University panel may request further information or decide that the proposal should not be taken forward to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Partnership and Programme Development

This stage involves development of your Year of Study Abroad programme and prospective partnerships. During this stage you will engage with any workshops offered by the University and look to incorporate the principles outlined in the [Digital Education Strategy](#) in addition to the Principles of Programme Structure, Design & Delivery and the [assessment and feedback commitments](#).

You will need to consider:

- the design of your programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved through the Year of Study Abroad;
- how study at prospective partner Universities will fit into the structure of your programme;
- how you will assess your Year of Study Abroad: whether Cardiff Assessment or grade conversion shall be used and the opportunities for re-assessment;
- how you will prepare students for their Year of Study Abroad;
- how students will be supported through their Year of Study abroad;
- the proposed student learning agreement and how it will be delivered;
- how you will quality assure the student experience at partner Universities and how you will review proposed modules studied;
- how you will manage your partnerships with partner Universities
- how will your proposal impact on any PSRB requirements? How will these be managed? Do you need to notify/seek approval from your PSRB?

It is envisaged that more time invested during the programme development phase will increase high quality, innovative, programmes being put forward for academic approval to the Programme and Partner Standing Panel thus minimising conditions.

Stage 3: Academic Approval

This stage involves scrutiny of full programme information where the members of the Programme and Partner Standing Panel will consider issues of curriculum design and delivery, the student experience, student lifecycle including progression (and points of recovery from failure), learning resources and support and administration arrangements within the School.

Once Stage 1 strategic approval has been agreed by the College, Schools can start developing the full programme information in preparation for presentation to the Programme and Partner Standing Panel.

Proposals will not be considered if study abroad partners have not been approved.

As outlined in section 3, Schools will need to set realistic timescales for the development, approval and marketing of their proposals to maximise recruitment opportunities. Full details of the approval process can be found in the [Programme Development Policy](#).

Effective programme design

The Programme and Partner Standing Panel will focus on how the study abroad proposal meets the minimum standards set out in this Policy, paying particular attention to the issues of student support both from the University and the partner organisation and the impact on the overall student experience. Consideration will be given to:

- Confirmation that the formal study abroad agreement exists (provided by the Global Opportunities team);
- Length of programme at host institution and how this maps to Cardiff structure;
- The FHEQ level and value of the modules studied at host institution through the Study Abroad Programme Risk Assessment and the study abroad module mapping documentation;
- The mechanisms and timings for agreeing the selection of modules and the module level with the partner organisation before the student commences the activity;
- Clearly defined learning outcomes for the Cardiff Study Abroad module and how this is reflected in the overarching programme level learning outcomes;
- Implications of PSRB requirements and how they are met through the study abroad partner modules;
- A draft Student Learning Agreement outlining if any grade conversion mechanisms that will be used – this must be agreed before the student commences their study abroad year with appropriate modelling;
- The information provided to students in the Study Abroad Handbook and details of the induction process;
- The mechanisms for communicating and staying in touch with the Study Abroad partner;
- Opportunities for language preparation at Cardiff and at the host institution and the impact on assessment;
- Procedures for returning to the University and support when re-integrating back into academic study at Cardiff;
- Assessment and feedback including opportunities for re-assessment/repeat of year and opportunities to transfer onto alternative programmes;
- The mechanisms for managing and monitoring study abroad activity.

Joint honours programmes

Where study abroad opportunities are available for joint honours students, the home School must ensure that the management and evaluation of all study abroad arrangements (including grade conversion) and adhere to the principles set out in this policy. All students should be assigned to an appropriate member of staff with study abroad experience (academic or professional services), usually within the home School, who will be their primary point of contact throughout the arrangement.

All documentation required for [developing study abroad programmes](#) is available on the intranet with support, advice and guidance given by your College Quality Officer and College Education Officer. Your College Communications Team will also provide support and guidance on the quality of the programme information presented and will sign off the programme information template before submission to the Standing Panel.

Stage 3: ASQC approval

In this final stage, the proposal achieves final sign-off from the Academic Standards and Quality Committee. It is important to note that any conditions arising out of the consideration of the proposal must be completed before students can commence their study abroad activity.

Approving 60 credit semester study abroad modules

Before Schools prepare to submit the appropriate documentation to the Board of Studies/School Board and before students can commence any study abroad activity, they must check with the Global Opportunities team that all study abroad partner organisations have been approved by the Programme and Partner Standing Panel and there are active partnership agreements in place. The Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment and the partnership agreement will need to be presented to the Board of Studies/School Board along with the 60 credit study abroad module.

Academic Approval

The introduction of a study abroad module (60 credits) is subject to the approval of the Board of Studies/School Board. The key objective is to ensure that there are no potential issues that may negatively affect the student experience or the School's ability to support the provision of study abroad opportunities for students.

Each Board of Studies should consider the following matters:

- Does the University already have a partnership agreement with the proposed partner organisation? (*the Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment and the partnership agreement must be provided by the Global Opportunities team in order to approve the module*);
- Does the School have confidence that the modules being studied at the partner organisation will be comparable in level and intensity to those being studied at Cardiff? (the module mapping documentation will need to be presented in order to ensure the appropriate FHEQ level is being studied);
- What is the overall impact on the programme when a module is being substituted into an existing programme? (*How does this affect the overall programme level learning outcomes?*);
- Are there any PSRB requirements that need to be considered? (*the module mapping document must be completed to illustrate all PSRB learning outcomes/content has been covered*);
- Does the structure of the current programme allow for a semester to be substituted? (difficulties may be experienced if all modules are long, thin spanning the entire academic year);

- What is the impact on the student experience?
- Have students been consulted about the changes? (*Formal feedback will be required.*);
- Does it impact on other programmes? (*Consideration of the availability of provision to students on joint programmes will be particularly relevant.*);
- Are any further resources needed? (*Including both academic and professional services staff required for sourcing and co-ordinating provision and undertaking pastoral visits?*);
- Have the potential implications of Competitions and Markets Authority guidance been considered? (*All published material will need to ensure that the nature and availability of the provision is clear.*)

SECTION 3: Timescales for programme development

As each study abroad programme proposal varies in scale and complexity, it is important that appropriate time and resources are available to School staff throughout each stage of the process outlined in Section 2. Proposals including study abroad will require additional information to ensure the academic standards and the student experience is protected.

Programme proposals can be considered by the Programme and Partner Standing Panel on a regular basis as the Standing Panel meets regularly. Schools will need to set realistic timescales to develop proposals that are attractive, innovative, and stimulating to both current and prospective students in addition to the appropriate marketing.

Consideration of proposals to introduce new programmes late in the academic cycle will impact on the Schools ability to maximise recruitment and marketing activities and the Schools ability to recruit to the predicted numbers stated as part of their business plan².

Late changes to existing programmes need to be carefully considered for both current students and applicants as outlined in the University's [terms and conditions of offer](#). Section 4 of the [Programme Approval Policy](#) outlines the process of student consultation when making changes to existing programmes and the process of contacting applicants after changes have been made.

² Late consideration of new programmes will need to be agreed by the College PVC to determine the year of entry the new programme will start.

SECTION 4: Approving the Study Abroad Partner

The Global Opportunities team will be responsible for brokering the arrangements with the study abroad partner however it is each individual School that is responsible for ensuring the expectations and practices set out in the [revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) are implemented and operationalised

Before any study abroad activity can proceed, each study abroad partner must be risk assessed for its capacity to deliver the educational objectives and any broader risk(s) to either the student, School or the University. This assessment should be proportionate to the scale of risk, and undertaken with due diligence. A number of critical aspects must be considered to ensure it meets the following core practice outlined in the [revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)

‘Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them’.

Assessing the risk of the partner organisation

The Global Opportunities team will assess each partnership arrangement for its suitability and to allow for a wider institutional approach to partnership development. They will liaise with the proposing School(s) to complete the Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment Form for each agreement entered into by the University. On completion, a sub-group of the Programme and Partner Standing Panel will consider the details of the proposed partnership through the Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment information that will include the following:

- If they are an existing partner of Cardiff University and if so in what capacity (current strategic partner, Erasmus, articulation/progression agreements etc);
- The proposed partners experience with study abroad activity;
- Academic and pastoral support;
- Any educational or cultural information that students will need to be aware of before they commence and would form part of the study abroad induction;
- The systems to ensure the quality assurance and enhancement of the programme and the student experience;
- Details of recent visits to the partner institution, including who has visited the partner organisation from Cardiff University prior to the agreement being proposed, the findings of their visit and arrangements for ongoing visits;
- The number of Schools identified to send students to the proposed partner;
- The maximum number of outgoing/incoming students that can be sent/received each year (with confirmation from each School that they can receive students).
- The resources and facilities available at the partner organisation

Proposals for new partnerships and reviews of existing partnership agreements can be submitted to the Programme and Partner Standing Panel sub-group throughout the year in line with the published schedule of meetings. The panel shall only consider for approval proposals which appropriately address all elements of the risk assessment.

Visiting Partner Organisations

The visiting of partner organisations is a key part of the process for the approval and ongoing management of Institutional Study Abroad partnerships, both as part of building the relationship with partner organisations and in supporting the University to assess and monitor any risks associated with the partnership. As such, it is an expectation that a recent and appropriate site visit has been completed before a proposal may be considered for approval. Thereafter, partner organisations should be re-visited at least once every 5 years. Global Opportunities can support proposers in co-ordinating collaborative visits and providing guidance on what evidences should be captured during visits.

Insurance and University liability

Specific queries regarding insurance cover should be raised with the University's [Corporate Financial Services Team](#). However, due to Financial Conduct Authority regulations, the University cannot recommend particular products and cannot charge or recharge students for the costs of insurance.

Before authorising any study abroad activity, the School must be satisfied that appropriate cover is in place. If appropriate cover is not in place advice should be sought from the University's [Corporate Financial Services Team](#).

Travel insurance

Schools must provide the Corporate Financial Services Team with the details of any student undertaking an overseas placement, as the University will arrange travel insurance for the student via UMAL. Cover will usually be included for emergency medical treatment and repatriation, even if an incident occurs whilst on placement. However, the insurance will only cover the period of the placement (including travel to and from placement), and students wishing to take a holiday, either before or after the placement, will need to arrange their own travel insurance for that additional period. Information about the extent of the cover available via UMAL is available on the [University intranet](#).

Overseas insurance requirements

Insurance requirements outside of the UK vary on a country by country basis therefore, checks need to be undertaken with each placement provider to ascertain the cover available for injury or loss suffered by students and third parties. If there is any doubt regarding whether the level of cover is sufficient, or the placement provider indicates that no cover is available, advice should be sought from the [Corporate Financial Services Team](#), as consideration will need to be given to whether the student should be advised to purchase separate cover on the open market.

Professional bodies: A student who is a member of a professional body may be able to access insurance cover as part of their membership.

Assessing the risk of the programme

All programme proposals, including those with study abroad, are subject to the processes and procedures outlined in the [Programme Development Policy](#) and the [Collaborative Provision Policy](#) to take account of the increased risk associated with any learning opportunity which is taking place away from the institution.

In addition to the Study Abroad Partner Risk Assessment Form, provided by the Global Opportunities team, the Standing Panel will consider the details of the study abroad operating model through the submission of the Study Abroad Programme Risk Assessment Form which includes information on the following:

- Selection of students;
- Programme design;
- FHEQ levels of modules being studied at the partner organisation;
- Mapping of partner organisation modules to ensure all Cardiff University learning outcomes are met;
- Requirements of any professional bodies;
- Assessment/reassessment opportunities;
- Student progress and monitoring procedures;
- Pastoral support at the partner organisation.
- Quality and standards arrangements at the partner organisation.

Grade Conversion

Given the variation in structures and standards in the marking process within institutions and across countries outside of the UK, translation or mapping will be required. The University has developed country specific grade conversion tables to support the process of converting marks gained from studying abroad to Cardiff credit and provide a starting point for detailed discussions with study abroad partner organisations. The tables do not cover all countries and are not discipline specific therefore a risk-based approach must be taken when translating or mapping the marks to the equivalent standards at Cardiff University. When sending students on study abroad activity, consideration must be given to the following:

- **Is it appropriate to use grade conversion?** Yes, but only when a full mapping of the modules has been undertaken and there is agreement between both institutions on the most appropriate grade conversion methodology. It is not compulsory nor always appropriate to use the University developed tables as they are a guideline only.
- **What happens if grade conversion is used?** If the School decides to use grade conversion, the School must enter into dialogue with the study abroad partner organisation to confirm how the marks awarded at the study abroad partner organisation will be translated into Cardiff marks. Precise details of the grade conversion methodology must be stated on the Student Learning Agreement to ensure the student is aware of how the grades awarded at the study abroad partner organisation will be converted back to Cardiff marks along

with an explanation of how their marks will contribute to the degree classification.

If Grade Conversion is to be used, details of the proposed grade conversion methodology must be submitted to the panel along with the application for approval of the proposed Study Abroad Partnership.

- **What happens if grade conversion is not used?** If grade conversion is not used, students will still receive a transcript from the study abroad partner organisation highlighting the marks awarded for the modules studied. Schools must consider which of the following options will be used:
 - setting an additional Cardiff University assessment that covers the study abroad learning outcomes that is marked by Cardiff University staff. In this scenario, the marks will contribute to the degree classification;
 - discounting the study abroad marks (predominantly for the 60 credit semester abroad) so that the overall degree classification of the student would be calculated on Cardiff University awarded credit only.

In all circumstances, the School is responsible for documenting the exact grade conversion methodology in the Student Learning Agreement before they leave for their study abroad activity. The Student Learning Agreement must be signed and logged for future reference by the Examining Board.

Review and re-approval of agreements

Each partnership agreement must be reviewed every 5 years in line with the provisions set out in the [Collaborative Provision Policy](#). The Global Opportunities team will be responsible for keeping a register of study abroad partnerships that will be reviewed and updated each academic year and approved by the Programme and Partner Standing Panel.

SECTION 5: Equality and Diversity

The University's commitment and legislative background

Cardiff University is committed to creating a stimulating and supportive learning environment based on mutual respect and trust. We will continue to celebrate and value diversity within the community of staff and students, to promote equality of opportunity and to challenge and strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

These principles are outlined in more detail within the University's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#), which is itself underpinned by UK legislation. Under the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The protected characteristics under the Act are:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race,
- religion or belief (including lack of belief),
- sex and sexual orientation.

Student declaration processes

The University is required to ensure that students with protected characteristics are not discriminated against in relation to study abroad activity, and has to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in order for disabled students to be able to complete any study abroad requirements within their programme of study. In order for reasonable adjustments to be made, **students must be given the opportunity to formally disclose their disability** (if they have not already done so) prior to the allocation of a study abroad place at the partner organisation.

Where a student identifies a condition or circumstance that may impact upon their ability to complete the study abroad module/year safely, or that may require a reasonable adjustment, the School should discuss the position with the student. If the information provided by the student appears likely to impact upon the study abroad activity, the student must be informed that it cannot proceed until the study abroad partner organisation has been notified of the relevant information and consideration given to how any additional risk can be managed. If the student refuses to consent to the information being disclosed, then study abroad activity cannot proceed and the Global Opportunities team will need to be informed immediately. Advice and guidance regarding appropriate support and adjustments can be obtained from the [Disability & Dyslexia Service](#).

Any reasonable adjustments need to be agreed in advance of the student commencing their study abroad activity and logged on the Student Learning Agreement.

Checking the study abroad partner organisation is aware of and adheres to the principles of equality and diversity

The Global Opportunities team will check if the study abroad partner organisation have processes in place which promote and respect the principles of equality and diversity via the **placement provider questionnaire**. Where the School and the study abroad partner organisation work together to recruit/allocate students to study abroad opportunities, the School must ensure that the selection processes employed are open and fair.

Where a study abroad partner organisation appears to be unfamiliar with the legislative requirements, it is suggested that they are directed to the University's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

SECTION 6: International Exchange and Study Abroad Students coming to study at Cardiff

Overarching principles for supporting the enhancement of the international exchange and study abroad student experience for incoming students

The University recognises incoming International exchange Students as valuable members of the student community with an equivalent status to home students. In order to deliver a high quality student experience for incoming exchange students, the University has agreed upon the following overarching principles to apply to the provision it shall make available to all incoming exchange students:

- **Offering:** An appropriate, and adequate, range of single-semester only modules must be made available by all non-clinical academic Schools. Module lists should be confirmed in line with the dates set for all module diets in the Programme Information Task and advertised in the Study Abroad Online Module Catalogue;
- **Time-appropriate modules:** For year-long modules, academic Schools are required to create single semester variants with a distinct study abroad module code, with a parent/child link established in order that learning materials can be shared across the modules. For existing Autumn Semester-only modules, academic Schools should review assessment methods to establish if the learning outcomes of modules could be assessed by coursework.;
- **Assessment:** Assessment of Autumn Semester modules and resit assessments for international exchange and study abroad students shall be through coursework only.
- **Enrolment:** Schools are required to reserve an appropriate amount of spaces for international exchange/study abroad students on selected modules to ensure student module selections can be confirmed to the student's pre-arrival.
- **Home School:** Global Opportunities shall continue to act as the 'principal administrative unit' for international exchange/study abroad students, however, all study abroad and international exchange students will be allocated a Home academic School. This Home School shall either be based on where the student intends to take the majority of modules or reflect the student's degree major at their home University. The nominated Home School must ensure that each international exchange/Study Abroad student is allocated a personal tutor in advance of their arrival at Cardiff and that they are added to essential School communication lists including induction activities.

SECTION 7: Managing and evaluating Study Abroad activity

Cardiff University staff responsibilities

The Head of School or their nominee (e.g. study abroad coordinator) must ensure that the management and evaluation of all study abroad arrangements adhere to the principles set out in this policy. All students should be assigned to a member of staff, who will be their primary point of contact at the University throughout their time at the partner organisation. This may be a member of academic or professional services staff, but the assigned person should have experience of study abroad provision and student support.

In addition to receiving support from their partner organisation and from a study abroad tutor, students remain registered as students of the University and are able to access all of the University's support services. Therefore, students should also be allocated a personal tutor with whom the student can liaise in the event that they require pastoral support, particularly in respect of non-study abroad related issues.

If the nominated member of staff changes during the period of the study abroad activity, the student and the partner organisation must be contacted immediately and advised who will be undertaking the responsibilities for the remainder of the time.

Joint honours programmes

Where study abroad opportunities are available for joint honours students, the home School must ensure that the management and evaluation of all study abroad arrangements (including grade conversion) and adhere to the principles set out in this policy. All students should be assigned to an appropriate member of staff with study abroad experience (academic or professional services), usually within the home School, who will be their primary point of contact throughout the arrangement.

Student Learning Agreement

Before a student can commence their study abroad activity, it is important that they understand the precise details of what they will be studying at the study abroad partner organisation. Before the student leaves, the School must confirm the modules that the student will be studying and record the following information on the Student Learning Agreement:

- The FHEQ level and value of the modules studied at host institution;
- How the modules at the study abroad partner organisation meet the learning outcomes for the Cardiff Study Abroad module (through the module mapping documentation);
- How any PSRB requirements are met through the study abroad partner modules (through the module mapping documentation);

- Any grade conversion mechanisms that will be used with a detailed explanation of how marks achieved at the study abroad partner will be converted to Cardiff marks (if appropriate);
- Confirmation that students have received a Study Abroad Handbook and details of the induction process;
- The mechanisms the School will be using for communicating and staying in touch with the student including a dedicated contact and links to emergency protocol information

Pre-study abroad student information and briefing

All students must be provided with briefing information by the School prior to commencing any study abroad activity. Briefing information should include:

- a Study Abroad handbook;
- discussion of planned learning activities, intended learning outcomes and how they will be assessed and the opportunities for re-assessment;
- the risk assessment and recommendations regarding health, safety, welfare and personal insurance cover for the student;
- the student's responsibilities, rights and entitlements in the study abroad setting;
- language and cultural considerations;
- accommodation arrangements (where relevant);
- contact information - both for the University and the study abroad provider, and also for any other relevant local organisations in the study abroad setting. All students must be aware of the process for raising concerns whilst on study abroad with both the School and the partner organisation and the additional support provided by the [Student Union](#);
- student support arrangements including agreed method and schedule of contact throughout study abroad, dedicated study abroad contact and emergency protocol information;
- any specific needs of the individual student (e.g. disability, health, dietary or religious) and how these will be accommodated within the study abroad setting.

School register of study abroad activities

Schools must maintain a register of all study abroad activities. This should include the following information for each study abroad:

- the specific area within the School associated with the study abroad activity (discipline / programme / research team);
- the designated study abroad co-ordinator/tutor;
- any other organisations involved;
- names and contact details;
- statement of responsibilities of the study abroad partner organisation;
- copy of any formal agreements with the study abroad partner organisation;

- list of names and ID numbers of students involved in the study abroad;
- statement of any reasonable adjustments agreed with the study abroad partner organisation; and
- student's written consent to disability disclosure, where applicable.

Student contact during study abroad

Semester and year-long study abroad

For semester and year-long study abroad activity, Schools should consider the feasibility of pastoral visits from a study abroad tutor, particularly if there are high numbers of students at one partner organisation. Consideration should be given to:

- collaborative visits (i.e. sharing visiting responsibilities with other Cardiff University Schools who have students in the same location/region);
- making a pastoral visit to a central 'base' to which a number of students can travel within a day;
- visiting established study abroad partners on a regular cycle.

The method and schedule of communication should be explained to the students before the study abroad activity commences with the first contact taking place within the first two weeks to ensure that an appropriate induction has taken place and the student has transitioned into the study abroad environment. The minimum expectations for student contact is twice per semester via Skype and/or telephone with email follow up where appropriate.

Where study abroad partners have been identified as belonging to higher risk categories through study abroad partner risk assessment process, it is expected that the School will monitor the specific risks identified as part of the risk assessment process with both the student and the partner organisation. Students must be aware of the process for raising concerns whilst on study abroad with both the School and the partner organisation and the additional support provided by the [Student Union](#).

There should also be clearly scheduled points of contact and lines of communication between the School and the partner organisation. This should include opportunities for the partner to:

- raise concerns or complaints about any aspect of the activity, including an individual student's performance or conduct;
- make suggestions to the University about how the activity could be improved.

All communication must be logged on the student file and reviewed at the end of the placement. The information may inform any future decisions on the appropriateness of placing students with the study abroad partner organisation.

Returning from study abroad

It is important that students are supported in their transition back to the University to resume their academic programme. This may be done on a one-to-one basis or via a group de-briefing session if there are a number of students returning at the same time. Whilst scheduled contact throughout the study abroad semester/year would alert Schools to any immediate issues or concerns, a de-briefing session can highlight areas of good practice that can be shared and reported through the Annual Review and Enhancement process.

Complaints and Appeals

Any registered or former student of Cardiff University has the right of complaint and appeal through the usual University procedures. Therefore, unless explicitly stated otherwise, the University's regulatory framework for complaints and appeals will apply.

Monitoring and evaluating study abroad activities

Schools must ensure that there is a clear, effective and confidential way for students to provide feedback whilst they are at a study abroad partner organisation to protect the student experience. Feedback should be monitored, evaluated and summarised in an annual report to the Board of Studies and to the University via the Annual Review and Enhancement Process. This should include information summarising:

- student numbers and achievements whilst on study abroad;
- any impact of increased student numbers on the resources available to support students;
- feedback from all stakeholders;
- reflection on any new programmes/partners added, plus comments on any proposed changes to improve study abroad activity in future years;
- reflection of any equality and diversity issues that have been raised;
- any other comments, including key points summarising any aspects of good practice that were considered to be particularly effective.

The Academic Standards and Quality Committee will maintain an institutional oversight of monitoring and reporting of placement activity through the ARE process.

ANNEX A: Taxonomy of Study Abroad / Placement Activity

	Work-based Placements / Internships	Study Abroad (including international exchange and Erasmus)	Non-credit bearing work experience and volunteering
Primary Policy to consider:	Placement Learning Policy	Study Abroad Policy	Placement Learning Policy
Risk Category:³	3	3	1
Definition	<p>The emphasis of the placement/internship is on gaining professional or technical employment experience. This could be based in the UK or overseas through a full academic year, a semester or a module.</p> <p>The student may or may not be a contracted employee. If employed, the student has the status, remuneration, and access to support structures commensurate with an employee of the organisation.</p>	<p>The student is registered as a student at both the host partner institution and Cardiff. The placement provides a period of academic study with an overseas University, which is credit-bearing within a Cardiff programme. Placements are either:</p> <p>a) Compulsory: to the award of the Cardiff degree (semester or full academic year).</p> <p>b) Optional: students can apply for worldwide placements through the Erasmus+ programme (or other schemes) to study or work in a European country for 2-12 months as part of their degree programme.</p>	<p>This can be negotiated directly between the student and the placement provider or with support from the University (academic School / Global Opportunities team) and is not a requirement of the student's programme of study.</p>

³ The University has assessed and categorised each type of collaborative provision according to risk on a 6 point scale, 6 representing the highest risk. See further Collaborative Provision Policy. General Categorical risk scores do not replace the need for individual risk assessments to be conducted per proposal. Rather, the categorical scores operate as starting points and offer a general score for the type of collaborative provision.

Curriculum Features	<p>a) Placement Year: a single 120 credit-bearing placement, as part of a programme of study, generally lasting for one academic year. Inclusion of a placement year creates a separate programme of study as the placement variant will be reflected in the programme title (e.g. LLB with a Professional Placement Year).</p> <p>b) Module: a single or series of credit-bearing modules, as part of a programme of study.</p>		Not integrated in the delivery of the curriculum and may be undertaken during vacation periods or outside of scheduled University contact time.
Assessment Features	<p>a) Placement Year: The learning outcomes for the placement are assessed by Cardiff University and the credits and marks contribute directly towards the calculation of the degree classification (10%).</p> <p>b) Placements embedded in modules: The learning outcomes for the module are assessed through agreed assessment methods.</p> <p>Clear assessment schemes and marking criteria should be development for all credit bearing placement activity</p>	Credit bearing assessment: the placement is assessed, credits and marks achieved at the partner institution are converted through the agreed Grade Conversion process by Cardiff and contribute directly towards the calculation of the degree classification.	No assessment.
Level of Support	<p>Scheduled contact maintained with students which is negotiated before a student starts the placement. There will be a named member of staff at Cardiff and at the placement provider who is the key contact/supervisor/mentor. For semester and year-long placements, the first contact must take place within the first 2 weeks of starting the placement. Higher risk placements must be monitored every month with the student and the placement provider.</p> <p>For shorter placement periods (e.g. within modules), early contact must be established to ensure students are supported should there be any issues or difficulties that may impact on them achieving the learning outcomes of the module.</p>	<p>Scheduled contact and monitoring of students based overseas must be negotiated before a student starts the placement. For semester and year-long placements, the first contact must take place within the first 2 weeks.</p> <p>For shorter placement periods (e.g. within modules), early contact must be established to ensure students are supported should there be any issues or difficulties that may impact on them achieving the learning outcomes of the module.</p>	Regular contact may be scheduled if it is arranged through Global Opportunities team.
Cardiff University Responsibilities:	Responsible for ensuring the quality of the educational provision, resources and supervisory arrangements. This is managed at an institutional level through the Cardiff University Quality Assurance Framework.		Careers and Employability and the Global Opportunities team can help students identify paid

Responsibilities: School/Institute	<p>Operational management, assurance, and support for placement opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of appropriateness of individual placement providers (e.g. through risk assessment mechanisms including insurance). • Taking steps to ensure opportunities are consistent with Cardiff University's Equal Opportunities Policy. • Defining the detailed and specific responsibilities and entitlements relating to students and providers. • Briefing placement providers and making available written guidance such as handbooks, including information on intended learning outcomes. It may be useful to develop a 'learning agreement' with providers. • Providing students with guidance and documentation to support them before, during, and after the placement (e.g. placement handbook). • Control the setting and marking of assessment schemes especially where placement providers may have an input in the delivery of some assessment exercises. • Evaluating effectiveness of placements. 	<p>Operational management, assurance, and support for placement opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of appropriateness of individual placement providers (e.g. through risk assessment mechanisms)*. • Taking steps to ensure opportunities are consistent with Cardiff University's Equal Opportunities Policy*. • Defining the detailed and specific responsibilities and entitlements of students*. • Providing students with guidance and documentation to support them before, during, and after the placement (e.g. year abroad handbook)*. • Advise, scrutinise and approve module selection/student's study plan to ensure the plan meets the programme regulations*. (An Erasmus Learning Agreement is completed for Erasmus study placements.) • Host institution conducts assessment and School is responsible for conversion of marks • Evaluating effectiveness of placements*. <p>* Central support is provided as well for placements coordinated by the International</p>	<p>and unpaid work experience opportunities.</p> <p>If the activity is arranged by the University/School the following responsibilities are likely to be assumed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of appropriateness of individual placement providers (e.g. through risk assessment mechanisms including insurance); • Take steps to ensure opportunities are consistent with Cardiff University's Equal Opportunities Policy; • Highlight scheduled points of contact. <p>If the activity is not formally arranged by the University, there is no responsibility for the University to ascertain health and safety, insurance or scheduled points of contact.</p>
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Responsibilities of Students (Generic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a suitable placement opportunity (where relevant). If abroad, obtain a visa and any necessary insurance. If abroad, register with the local British Consulate. Comply with any relevant code of professional conduct and behave as a representative of the programme and Cardiff University. Maintain appropriate attendance and contact levels as agreed with Cardiff University before starting the placement. Seek out learning opportunities and optimise the learning experience available. Notify the School if the placement is prematurely terminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain a visa and any necessary insurance for period abroad. Register with the local British Consulate. Develop a study plan /learning agreement following guidance provided on module selection and programme regulations. Notify Cardiff University and have approved any changes to the agreed study plan. To be aware of and follow the academic regulations at the host institution. Maintain appropriate attendance and contact levels as agreed with Cardiff University before starting the placement. Seek out learning opportunities and optimise the learning experience available. Notify the School if the placement is prematurely terminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a suitable work experience opportunity (where relevant). If abroad, obtain a visa and insurance. Check Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for up to date information. Behave professionally and as a representative of Cardiff University where the opportunity has been arranged with institutional support.
Responsibilities of Placement Provider (Generic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of appropriate learning opportunities, with a particular emphasis on professional, practical, or technical experience. Where relevant contribute to the assessment of students. Comply with all responsibilities under employment legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of appropriate learning opportunities, conduct assessments, produce transcript of results. Comply with Health and Safety legislation and maintain appropriate insurance cover. 	Where the opportunity is supported by the University, the provider would be expected to comply with Health and Safety, employment and insurance legislation as applicable.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comply with Health and Safety legislation and maintain appropriate insurance cover.• Comply with Equality Act (2010) to ensure reasonable adjustments are in place.		
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