

# ACADEMIC LIAISON TUTOR HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

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

Partners vary considerably in terms of location, culture, size and length of relationship with London Met, they extend the reputation of the University and offer the opportunity for staff and students to collaborate across international borders. ALTs have an important role in maintaining academic and commercial relations with these centres. Partner management requires practical and diplomatic skills. A primary task is to make course and module leaders aware that their work is appreciated and followed in other parts of the UK and overseas. You will be the critical point of contact for all enquires and this requires you to make decisions (e.g. approval or rejection of non standard applications to courses). That said, you will have support and this handbook contains a number of your key contacts. Additionally, you will often work alongside other ALTs from other Schools in the University when working in committees either at London Met or at your partner institution.

The Partners may have one of two sorts of academic relationship with London Met. One is a *Franchise course delivery*, by which London Met supplies all the teaching and learning material and assessments. Naturally all our usual quality concerns are applied to the partners. The second form of arrangement is a *Validated course delivery*, where the partner develop the course itself (with our guidance) to better suit its teaching needs (i.e. to fit the local circumstances more closely). In this case the partner may write its own materials and assessments consistent with the validated syllabi. Some validated courses may use some existing franchised modules, which should be consistent with London Met modules.

A number of hours is allocated for the role of the ALT and this is including in your annual work loading. Additionally, a certain amount of annual travel and overnight stays may be requires as part of the role.

The ALT role descriptor is listed later in this handbook.

## POINTS OF CONTACT

### HEADS OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BY SCHOOL

Dr Ron Cambridge (GSBL)

tbc (SSSP)

Dr Stephen Breen (SCDM)

Dr Abdollah Ghavami (SHSC)

James Hunting (AADS)

### KEY PARTNERSHIP CONTACTS

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

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

Marie Jiskoot and Rebecca Tyrrell (Partnerships Officers)

Moyra Throssell (Quality Manager (Partnerships))

## FURTHER POINTS OF CONTACT

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

## ACADEMIC LIAISON TUTOR RESPONSIBILITIES - MAIN DUTIES:

### *COURSE APPROVALS AND PARTNER REVIEWS*

- Work with Academic Quality (AQD) in coordinating preparations for approvals, revalidations and partner review events and attend meetings with University panels, as required
- Support the Collaborative Partner with the development of course documentation and review events
- Support the Collaborative Partner and the School with meeting conditions and/or recommendations set by the event panel
- Engage with AQD and the Collaborative Partner to support continuous monitoring processes

### *ADMISSIONS*

- Responsibility for reviewing non-standard applications submitted by the Collaborative Partner. All offers made to non-standard applicants must be authorised by the ALT
- Support where appropriate with the Student Records and Assessments teams to ensure that students are enrolled
- ALT will be updated by the partner on student enrolments as agreed in the business schedule

### *COURSE MATERIALS*

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

### *EXTERNAL EXAMINING*

- Liaise with Course and Module leaders in the School in nominating External Examiners for courses delivered by the Collaborative Partner
- Liaise with AQD to ensure that External Examiners are appointed for courses delivered by the Collaborative Partner. Please note that there are a number of different processes involved – more guidance is available from AQD.
- Working with AQD, ensure that External Examiners are briefed on their role in relation to the Collaborative Partner and the course/modules
- Work with the Collaborative Partner and AQD to ensure that External Examiners are provided with sufficient information to carry out their role. This will include taking part in the External Examiners Induction programme where required.

- Note: Maintaining a healthy relationship with External Examiners is important. For example, this can be achieved by ensuring consistency in how we present samples to our partners. They may require prompting to ensure their availability.

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

#### **MARK ENTRY**

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

#### **ASSESSMENT BOARDS**

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

#### **CERTIFICATES AND TRANSCRIPTS**

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

#### **CONTINUOUS MONITORING**

- Support the Collaborative Partner in complying with the University's policies and procedures for continuous monitoring
- Contribute to continuous monitoring documentation such as the Touchpoint templates
- Support Head/Dean of School by contributing to School level reports as part of continuous monitoring activities
- Take part in continuous monitoring events and support the partner in the completion/submission of documentation for continuous monitoring activities
- Ensure any updated course documentation is logged with AQD annually
- Monitor the ongoing suitability of, and student access to, learning resources

#### **COURSE MODIFICATIONS**

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

#### **REGULATIONS**

- Provide advice to partner staff on the implementation of new University policies and regulations applying to the courses

- Work with partner staff to ensure that information relating to courses which lead to London Met awards is processed in accordance with Data Protection legislation and relevant University policies

#### *STUDENT INDUCTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT*

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

#### *APPROVAL OF TEACHING STAFF*

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

#### *STAFF DEVELOPMENT*

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

#### *TEACHING SITES*

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

#### *COMMUNICATION, VISITS AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT*

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

#### *PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND RESOLUTION*

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

#### *PARTNERSHIP TERMINATION AND COURSE TEACH OUT*

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

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

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

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### 1. ALT FORUMS

ALT Forums may be offered and will be led by AQD; they provide an opportunity for colleagues from across schools, the partnerships office and AQD staff to liaise and share best practice. Schools may also offer an informal forum once per semester where ALTs can share experiences and raise issues with colleagues. Forums will be on campus where possible, or virtually should the situation best suit this approach.

### 2. ALT TRAINING

Training events will be provided during the academic year to provide an induction for new ALTs and to provide updated information for existing ALTs. Development sessions will often include guests who will share expertise, and as often as possible, they will be made available to ALTs regardless of school and recorded for those who cannot attend.

### 3. TRAVEL AND PARTNERSHIP VISITS

ALTs are expected to engage with regular communication with collaborative partners, including visits to partners. As the [AQDC015 Collaborative Partner Visit Report](#) reflects, the expectation is for at least one formal visit to the partner in person. Previously the expectation had been for two visits in person, but COVID, improved online communication and our commitment to sustainability has allowed for an approach where one has become the favoured approach. Typically ALTs have completed in person visits to coincide with course committee meetings (once per semester) and therefore a common approach has been to hold one of these in person and one virtually, should that suit all parties.

Prior to travel you need to ensure your line manager has agreed to your travel, as this may impact upon your teaching. Where possible, we prefer to limit the stresses upon our partners by coordinating visits at the same time, should there be ALTs from across several schools visiting the partner.

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

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

During the visit you would be expected to meet with the senior staff to discuss issues that may have arisen, new initiatives with the partner, changes in university regulations or how we can better work together. Course committee meetings usually take place during these visits and it is a good opportunity to meet with students, share new ideas and solve problems. Commonly, ALTs provide staff development opportunities in the form of lectures or group discussions.

After the visit has been completed, each ALT will need to complete the [AQDC015 Collaborative Partner Visit Report](#) and send this to their Head of Partnerships within their school and share it with AQD

#### 4. STANDARD AND NON-STANDARD APPLICATIONS

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

#### 5. WEBLEARN

Generally, Weblearn access is not provided to partners. This is mainly due to licence restriction on how many students can access Weblearn. Requests are sometimes made by partners to access course content on modules, access to Weblearn can be requested on a temporary basis, usually for a

calendar month to allow all materials to be downloaded. Requests for this kind of access need to be sent to Weblearn support.

#### 6. ARMS ACCOUNTS

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

#### 7. BUSINESS CALENDAR

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

#### 8. LIBRARY RESOURCES

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

#### 9. UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

Key documentation relating to partnerships will be made available on the Quality pages of the university website, including the Partnership Operating Manual (POM).

#### 10. DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Direct contact made by students can be referred back to staff at the partner institution. Issues relating to graduation, marked, complaints, awards, for example may need to be addressed by the partner. Please check with the Partnerships Office or AQD if you require assistance with these types of request.

#### 11. PARTNERSHIP TEACHING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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