

Articulation and Progression Agreements:

Approval & Monitoring Process



Definitions & Context

Articulation and Progression Agreements are used when a number of students may be applying to study at the University with the same entry requirements from a specific awarding body/institution. Individual students applying for entry with advanced standing, where articulation is not intended to lead to a formal agreement, should use the established Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedure. At Staffordshire University there are two ways that prior study can be recognised at an institutional level:

(a) Progression Agreement

Cohorts of students who have studied a Staffordshire University award at a partner institution, who satisfy academic criteria, are automatically entitled to be admitted to a specified course (or level of a course) leading to a Staffordshire University award. These progression routes are normally identified as part of the course approval process and confirmed in a formal Progression Agreement.

(b) Articulation Arrangement

Cohorts of students who have studied an award at a particular institution, or through a specific awarding body, who satisfy academic criteria, are deemed to have met the minimum entry requirement to be admitted to a specified course, (either at the usual starting point or at a point other than the usual starting point), leading to a Staffordshire University award. A formal mapping and approval of equivalency of these courses is undertaken by the University and confirmed in a formal Articulation Agreement.

In all cases individual students will have to satisfy all Staffordshire University minimum entry requirements, including meeting the criteria for English Language proficiency and satisfying UKVI Tier 4 immigration requirements (where appropriate).

Approval Process

Approval of an articulation or progression route results in an Articulation or Progression Agreement between the University and the partner institution.

Progression Agreements

In normal circumstances progression from University validated Foundation Degrees and HNCs/ HNDs (or equivalent overseas programmes) will be agreed at the validation and/or delivery approval of the University course. Any progression arrangements not approved at a University validation event would need to be mapped and then considered by the appropriate School Academic Committee(s).

Articulation Agreements

The approval process for an Articulation Agreement, whether UK-based or overseas, has two purposes:

1. To establish broad equivalence between the external programme and the University programme to which entry is being sought, in respect of curriculum content, volume and level;
2. To enable Staffordshire University to satisfy itself that the awarding body / institution has broad mechanisms for assuring the academic standards of its programmes (whilst, at the same time – acknowledging the lower level of risk associated with the type of collaborative provision, which may not directly result in the award of SU credit).

For stand alone, articulation proposals (i.e. not part of a validation or existing collaborative partnership), an Articulation Agreement Proposal (AAP) form is produced by the proposer and submitted as follows:

a) **If the institution is based in the UK** – to the Director of Collaborative Academic Partnerships (DCAP)

b) **If the institution is based overseas** (whether in the EEA, EU or elsewhere) - to the Director of International Recruitment and Development (DIRD)

The relevant Director will then confirm the correct proposal process i.e. Route A or B (as detailed below).

To support the submission of the AAP, desk-based institutional due diligence will be undertaken through

- a) **For UK Institutions** - the Collaborative Academic Partnerships Services (CAPS) and
- b) **For Non-UK Institutions** – the International Recruitment and Development Office (IRD)

The due diligence will be undertaken in order to confirm that the institution has the appropriate licence or accreditation to operate and the relevant authority to award qualifications.

The due diligence for all proposals will consider the following (non-exclusive) parameters:

- the education system of the home territory of the awarding body/institution
- information on the school system
- selection and support for tertiary education in the state and private sectors
- explanation of the regulatory system for the sector
- the credentials of the awarding body/institution
- any pertinent accolades or other accreditations achieved by the institution

- any existing articulation or progression arrangements the awarding body or institution may have in place already
- any ethical factors or circumstances that need to be taken into consideration
- any other specific information pertinent to the country or region

There are two routes of approval for Articulation Agreements:

Route A

Used where there is sufficient evidence to confirm the standards of the institution or the awarding body without recourse to additional information (for example, Universities or Colleges with individual entries on NARIC or other appropriate 'official' evidence, and awarding bodies that are internationally acknowledged e.g. Edexcel, Pearson).

Route B

Where insufficient evidence is available to confirm the academic standards without further investigation, student work may be requested to provide evidence of level and achievement. Further institutional due diligence, to include as a minimum a visit to the organisation in association with Quality Enhancement Service, would be required to ascertain the quality assurance mechanisms of the institution or awarding body. It is envisaged that Route B will only be used in highly exceptional circumstances.

Recommendations for all new Articulation Arrangements will be submitted to the Due Diligence Group (DDG) for approval to continue with the proposal.

Once the arrangement is approved by the Due Diligence Group, mapping of the curricula should be undertaken in accordance with the Principles outlined in the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. Curricula mapping must be approved by the relevant School Academic Committee.

Following approval of the mapping(s) by the relevant SAC(s) the proposal is submitted to Quality Committee for final approval.

Articulation Agreements will normally be for a three-year period OR until ***substantial*** course content, curricula or syllabus changes are made by either institution, whichever comes first.

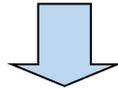
Articulation Agreements will be produced by the Director of International Development & Recruitment (for all International arrangements) and by the Director of Collaborative Academic Partnerships (for UK partners) using a standard template, and will be signed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor Student Experience.

Following signature of the Agreement, the new arrangement will be added to the Register of Collaborative Provision by the Quality Enhancement Service and noted at University Quality Committee.

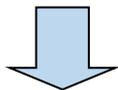
Where existing CAP partners request an Articulation Arrangement, further partnership due diligence is not required. However, the curricula mapping and final approval of the arrangement will follow the process above.

Approval of Articulation Agreements

Articulation Agreement Proposal submitted to DCAP (UK) or DIRD (Overseas)



CAPS/IRDO undertake initial due diligence and confirm route A or B process



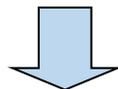
Route A

Sufficient evidence to confirm quality and standards of institution. No further institutional Due Diligence.

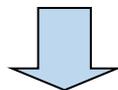
Route B

Insufficient evidence is available to confirm quality and Further institutional Due Diligence required.

CAPS/IRDO undertake further partnership investigations.



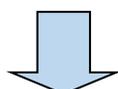
Recommendations for articulation arrangements submitted to the Due Diligence group for approval.



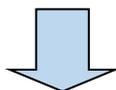
RPL Process/mapping of qualification by School and approved by School Academic Committee



Proposal / Mapping submitted to Quality Committee for approval.



Articulation/ Progression Agreement produced and signed by PVC Student Experience



Articulation/Progression Agreement confirmed with respective SU Admissions team (Home or International) and added to the Register of Collaborative Provision by Quality Enhancement Service

Monitoring & Review of Articulation and Progression Agreements

It is important that Articulation and Progression arrangements are monitored for the following reasons:-

- To measure the impact of the arrangement in terms of student progression to the University.
- To ensure the continuing academic coherence between the articulated and progression courses and to monitor student achievement.
- To assess the wider benefits of articulation and progression within the context of a Collaborative Academic Partnership.
- To increase and enhance the internationalisation of the University within the context of recruitment and diversification.

Course leaders will be required annually to undertake a monitoring of the articulation and/or progression arrangements associated with their courses. Course-level actions will be addressed through Continuous Monitoring Plans and Quality Committee will receive an annual overview report, including recommendations for the continuation or termination of standalone articulation arrangements.

For Progression Agreements where there is also a Collaborative Academic Partnership, the outcomes of the course monitoring will contribute to the overall course monitoring of Collaborative Academic Partnerships.