



UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Joint Degree and Dual Degree Awards Policy



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The University of Limerick (UL) supports links and collaborations with higher education institutions and industry partners. Where appropriate and in line with UL's strategic goals, the University will enter into agreement, on a case-by-case basis, with partner higher education institutions for accrediting and awarding taught joint or dual degree awards to students who undertake their degree studies at UL and at such partner institutions.

1. Definitions

Joint degree award: An award at NFQ level 8 or 9 or equivalent conferred by UL and one or more partner institutions to a student who has studied for his/her higher degree award at UL and at these partner institutions. The student will receive a single award that is recognised and conferred by the participating partner institutions under the terms of a formal agreement.

Dual degree award: Two separate awards at NFQ level 8 or 9 or equivalent conferred by UL and one partner institution to a student who has studied for his/her higher degree award at UL and at the partner institution. The student will receive two awards, one from UL and one from the partner institution, through agreed pathways outlined by a formal agreement. (Three or more (i.e. multiple) awards are not covered by this policy.)

Partner institution: In the context of this policy, 'partner institution' refers to a higher education institution that participates with UL in the awarding of a joint or dual degree award.

Formal agreement: A legal agreement or memorandum of understanding (MoU) that outlines the duties and responsibilities of each partner institution.

2. General Principles

- The strategic value to UL of any proposed joint or dual degree award must be identified and endorsed by UL's deans of faculty. The proposal should articulate the strategic benefits that the proposal brings over and above other inter-institutional arrangements that the University engages in, such as Erasmus or study abroad agreements. Where appropriate, a due diligence report on the proposed partner institution may be required.
- Joint and dual degree awards must be approved by the UL Provost & Deputy President and his/her equivalent officer at the partner institutions through a formal agreement between UL and the partner institutions.
- The programme of study leading to the joint or dual degree award must be an existing programme of study approved by UL's Academic Council.
- The partner institutions will have demonstrated capacity to deliver the programme of study to the same academic standards as applied by UL.
- The benefit(s) to the student of the shared joint/dual award curriculum should be identified. It is expected that at least 30% and no more than 70% of the taught credits in the programme of study will be offered at UL.
- Joint and dual degree students studying at UL from partner institutions will be accorded the same rights, privileges and access to facilities as full-time UL students.
- Arrangements for monitoring the quality of the joint/dual award programme and student experience will be identified in the formal agreement between the partner institutions.

3. Formal Agreement between UL and Partner Institutions

- 3.1 For joint and dual degree awards, permission to proceed with the development of a formal agreement must be obtained from the Provost & Deputy President using form DDA1. Once approval has been received, a formal agreement must be developed.
- 3.2 For each joint/dual degree award, the formal agreement between UL and the relevant partner institution(s) will specify:
- The duties and responsibilities of the partner institutions
 - The degree title awarded upon completion of the programme of study
 - The combined programme of study and any applicable exemptions that the student will undertake (included as an appendix). Any substantive change (i.e., elective streams or major options being withdrawn¹) in the combined programme of study should be brought to the attention of the Provost & Deputy President.
 - That substantive changes to the collaborative programme structure shall only be made with the consent of UL. Such consent will be obtained by the course director from the Provost & Deputy President following consultation with the dean and course director.
 - The financial responsibilities of the partner institutions
 - The selection criteria and number of places offered by each partner institution
 - The process and office responsible within each partner institution for selecting the students
 - The operational coordination and academic support obligations of the partner institutions
 - How the intellectual property of the partner institutions is protected
 - The conditions applying to the use of UL branding/logos
 - A time limit for the life of the formal agreement
 - A termination and dispute resolution process
- 3.3 In addition to the items specified in 3.2 above, the formal agreement between UL and the partner institutions for each joint degree award will identify the partner institution whose academic regulations apply to the joint award. Where the proposal refers to a dual degree award, the formal agreement between UL and the partner institution will normally require that the academic regulations of each partner institution apply to the respective awards.

4 General UL Procedures

- 4.1 The formal agreement signed by the partner institutions will be considered by the Provost & Deputy President for approval and signature. A copy of the formal agreement will be noted at the next meeting of the Academic Programme Review Committee (APRC) and reported to Academic Council.
- 4.2 The relevant UL faculty will be responsible for managing the selection process within the faculty or department.
- 4.3 The relevant UL faculty will be responsible for ensuring that partner institutions transfer details of students' academic performance in accordance with UL's academic calendar.
- 4.4 Credit for programmes taken will be transferred at the discretion of the home institution in accordance with its policies and procedures.

¹ For the purpose of this agreement, replacing modules with equivalent modules in the discipline is not considered to be a substantive change.

4.5 For joint awards, the recommendations on progression and award level of the partner institution whose academic regulations apply to the award will be noted at the next meeting of Academic Council.

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