

Program and course policy guidance materials: Partnered delivery of coursework awards

Overview

1. Graduate capabilities or competencies and learning outcomes of partner award programs will be the same as those of the program delivered at an RMIT University campus, as students are given an identical award on completion irrespective of the delivery location.
2. RMIT programs will be delivered and assessed in English unless explicitly approved otherwise.
3. A more limited range of elective courses may be available in partner programs than in the same program delivered at an RMIT campus.
4. Decisions on credit transfer and recognition of prior learning for students in partner programs will comply with the requirements of the [admissions and credit processes](#) (credit, recognition of prior learning and advanced standing). In particular, the same amount of credit will be granted for the same previous learning, towards the same RMIT award, regardless of location.
5. The University's academic policies apply to the same type of program irrespective of location; where necessary, operational guidelines will be developed to ensure effective policy implementation at different locations and with different partners.
6. Minimum standards for support services for RMIT students studying through a partner are specified by RMIT University.
7. The standards of the programs and of their governance and management will be assured by compliance with the relevant University academic policies.
8. All RMIT programs will fit one of three approved models for partnered delivery (see below).
 - 8.1. The approval of the DVC is required for the adoption of a particular model and the usual academic approval processes will also be required.
9. The Dean/Head of School/Associate Director (or nominee) that manages the program is responsible for ensuring:
 - 9.1. RMIT staff members work closely with the respective partner staff (teaching staff and professional staff) so that the transition for students between RMIT staff and partner staff is seamless and that the goals of the program are communicated unambiguously to students. This will enable the students to develop a strong sense of being in an RMIT program.
 - 9.2. RMIT staff provide all core teaching, learning and assessment materials and marking guides for all courses. Partner teaching staff may contextualise and customise learning materials with the approval of RMIT.
 - 9.3. moderation of all assessments and exam papers is undertaken by RMIT staff based on a minimum of sample size of at least three across each band of marks (fail, pass, credit, distinction, high distinction, competent, not yet competent) with the sample to be selected by RMIT University
 - 9.4. an orientation program is provided for students at the commencement of each program. This may be provided by RMIT or by the partner. If provided by the partner, RMIT will advise on the key topics that need to be included.
10. Where necessary, transition to the approved models will be implemented when existing contracts are renewed or new contracts are negotiated for partnered delivery.
11. For definitions of an RMIT global campus and global partner refer to [Appendix 1](#).

Partnered delivery teaching models (higher education)

12. Model 1 – RMIT delivered is the preferred model where the partner does not have an excellent track record of relevant program delivery capability or local academic staff of the required calibre are not readily available.
13. Under Model 1 RMIT academic/teaching staff will:

- 13.1. develop all teaching, learning and assessment materials
 - 13.2. undertake all teaching, tutoring and assessment and
 - 13.3. undertake all supervision of projects.
14. Model 2 – Jointly delivered: is preferred where the partner has demonstrated academic/industry training capacity. The partner will be responsible for some teaching, tutoring and/or assessment.
15. Under Model 2:
- 15.1. the requirement is for a specified minimum of 25% of every program to be taught by RMIT staff.
 - 15.2. RMIT may deliver its component of the program either through visits to the partner or through online delivery with relevant synchronous or asynchronous contact, video conferencing or a mixture of these modes.
 - 15.3. RMIT staff members will work closely with the respective partner teaching and professional staff to ensure that the impact on student learning of any transition between RMIT staff and the partner staff is minimised.
16. Under Model 2 RMIT academic/teaching staff will:
- 16.1. develop core teaching, learning and assessment materials
 - 16.2. determine entry criteria including advanced standing
 - 16.3. teach at least 25% of the program as delivered at the partnership depending on the agreed delivery model
 - 16.4. exercise final approval of staff selected to teach in the program
 - 16.5. moderate all assessment and approve all final results.
17. The timing of the RMIT contribution in a Model 2 delivery will be designed to achieve the best quality outcomes.
18. Model 3 - Licensed and quality assured is available:
- 18.1. where RMIT University decides to partner with a degree granting institution whose international standing for teaching and research in the discipline concerned can be demonstrated to be the same or better than that of RMIT
 - 18.2. for the delivery of all nationally accredited awards
 - 18.3. for RMIT accredited awards (including Foundation Studies) up to and including AQF level 5 (i.e. diploma level qualifications).
19. Under Model 3 RMIT academic/teaching staff will:
- 19.1. develop core teaching, learning and assessment materials
 - 19.2. determine entry criteria including advanced standing
 - 19.3. teach from 0% to an agreed proportion of the program as delivered at the partnership depending on the approved delivery model
 - 19.4. exercise final approval of staff selected to teach or tutor in the program
 - 19.5. moderate all assessment and approve all final results.
20. Model 2 and 3 partner staff may:
- 20.1. undertake teaching, tutoring and assessment
 - 20.2. undertake supervision of projects.

RMIT staff teaching and coordinating programs and courses in partner programs (Models 2 and 3)

21. The Dean/Head of School/Associate Director that manages the program (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring that RMIT staff teaching in the program:
- 21.1. are appointed, inducted, and managed to ensure that programs and courses delivered via partners are under the direct academic governance of RMIT
 - 21.2. undertake professional development designed to prepare for partner delivery
 - 21.3. are aware of their obligations to their respective partner staff in terms of induction, support and ongoing collaboration.

Teaching staff employed by partners to teach into RMIT programs (Models 2 and 3)

22. The Dean/Head of School/Associate Director responsible for the courses (or nominee) will have final approval of the selection of partner teaching staff.
23. Selection will be based on evidence of qualifications and experience and assessment against key selection criteria (including requisite English competency of a minimum of IELTS 7.0 or equivalent) which are to be included in the agreement.
24. Partner teaching staff will have appropriate qualifications in the relevant discipline such as academic qualifications and/or a range of industry/professionally qualified teaching and disciplinary expertise.
25. RMIT academic/teaching staff will provide formative feedback, mentoring and coaching support to partner teaching staff on achieving comparable learning outcomes for the program and/ or courses for which they are responsible.
26. Student feedback may be used, among other indicators, to assist the Dean/Head of School/Associate Director in determining eligibility of partner teaching staff for ongoing engagement as teaching staff on RMIT programs.
27. The dean L&T (or nominee), in collaboration with the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching (ADVC L&T), is responsible for ensuring partner staff are provided with a comprehensive suite of professional development resources including training in the implementation of appropriate quality standards, and working under a range of partnered delivery arrangements.
28. Partner teaching staff will normally be required to successfully complete certain online professional development materials before they are allowed to commence teaching.
29. Successful completion of further modules or alternative forms of face-to-face professional development or recognition of prior learning as defined in the agreement will be a requirement for ongoing engagement of teaching staff by the partner in RMIT programs.

Professional staff employed by partners to administer RMIT programs (Models 1, 2 and 3)

30. The Academic Registrar (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring:
 - 30.1. professional staff employed by partners to administer RMIT programs are provided with professional development materials before the program commences
 - 30.2. regular briefings are provided on changes to administrative procedures and relevant academic policies and procedures.
31. Professional staff employed by partners may administer assessments and examinations subject to RMIT having provided professional development on the relevant policies and procedures. RMIT retains final approval of all assessments and examinations.

Student support services (Models 1, 2 and 3)

32. Students will be given access to English language development and learning support through embedded academic literacies and language activities, adjunct workshops and/or online resources.
33. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities or long term medical conditions to support their equal opportunity.
34. English training preparatory to partner program entry will normally be taught by RMIT Training in all locations except Vietnam, where this is delivered by RMIT Vietnam.
35. Students will be supported to clarify career options and build links to professions, industries and organisations through embedded career development learning activities, adjunct workshops, visits and/or online resources.
36. Students will be supported to prepare for work integrated learning (WIL).
37. Students will have access to pastoral care to support their personal wellbeing and academic success provided online or face-to-face.
38. The Director, Student Wellbeing and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring:

- 38.1. students will be supported to build a student community and sense of belonging through activities and events run online or face-to-face
- 38.2. students will be consulted about their experience and have the opportunity to provide feedback
- 38.3. students are given the opportunity to join the global network of RMIT alumni.

Student administration services (Models 1, 2 and 3)

- 39. The Academic Registrar (or nominee) with the Dean/Head of School/Associate Director that manages the program (or nominee) are responsible for ensuring:
 - 39.1. partner-delivered programs are administered in compliance with relevant RMIT academic policies and procedures
 - 39.2. information including links to RMIT policies and procedures relevant to students are made available to all students at commencement in each program
 - 39.3. students have access to a process for resolving any complaints in relation to their RMIT program
 - 39.4. students are informed of the process for applying for special consideration (assessment adjustments because of adverse circumstances outside the student's control).
- 40. The Dean/Head of School/Associate Director that manages the program (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring:
 - 40.1. assessments are carried out in compliance with the relevant academic policies and procedures
 - 40.2. academic advice is provided to students who are at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress.
- 41. Academic misconduct by students will be managed in accordance with the relevant policy and procedure of RMIT University.
- 42. Final decisions on admission and credit transfer will be made by RMIT.

Student administration (all partnerships)

- 43. The Academic Registrar (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring an academic calendar is established by RMIT University for all programs offered via each partner. Student admissions, enrolments and results will be recorded by RMIT in a timely fashion as per the academic calendar.
- 44. Successful applicants for admission to a program will receive from RMIT a written offer of a place in the program, stating the terms and conditions of the offer.
- 45. Students' enrolments will be recorded on the RMIT University student administration management system.
- 46. Students' academic and personal information will be collected and kept in confidence by the partner in accordance with Australian privacy legislation, the RMIT University *Privacy and use of information policy*, and regulatory requirements in the country where the partner institution is situated.
- 47. Students will be issued with an RMIT student card.
- 48. Students will be given access to the RMIT online student portal.
- 49. For each intake to the program, an orientation will be provided to students by RMIT or by the partner. RMIT will define the topics that need to be covered by the orientation.
- 50. All communications regarding students will include their RMIT student number.
- 51. RMIT and the partner will communicate officially with students via their RMIT student email account.
- 52. RMIT will work with the partner to:
 - 52.1. establish a secure process for the management of test/examination questions, students' assessment work and results
 - 52.2. ensure that:
 - students' identity is verified before they are allowed to sit an examination
 - students are unable to collaborate on examination answers

- students have no access to any form of written, printed or digital information during the examination other than information specifically permitted by the examination arrangements.
53. It is the partner's responsibility to manage the cases of students who are absent from class, and to take care of these students to minimise risk to their safety. RMIT needs to be assured that this is being done. The agreement with the partner needs to make explicit the standard of care to missing students. The RMIT program manager needs to be notified of any follow-up of missing students.

Appendix 1: RMIT global campuses and partners

RMIT global campuses

As an international university, RMIT is a community of scholars and professional staff working under a common governance structure and with a single mission and vision. A global campus is an integral part of the University but located in another country. Academic and professional staff of the global campus contribute in a full and meaningful way to the work of the University, including the pursuit of its mission and vision. They are members of the University and their professional allegiance is to RMIT.

On an RMIT global campus the responsibility for governance and standards becomes a collaborative effort with staff of the RMIT global campus participating on University committees in the development and continuous improvement of programs and in delivering and assuring the academic quality and standards that the student will experience.

This is an important difference between an RMIT global campus and global partnership arrangements.

Another major difference is the expectation that all campuses will contribute to research.

Definition of an RMIT global campus

An RMIT global campus will be characterised in three ways: by the student experience, by the academic governance arrangements for the academic community and their inclusion into the academic life of the University, and by research.

The academic organisational structure of a global campus will be designed to parallel the college structure at RMIT in order to assist academic communication and collaboration in the development and management of RMIT programs and in research. There will also be care taken to ensure that the non-academic portfolios at RMIT can easily relate to equivalent or similar organisational structures in the global campus.

Student experience at a RMIT global campus

Students at an RMIT global campus will:

- a. receive an education of an equivalent and comparable standard to that provided at other RMIT campuses
- b. benefit from interaction with a research active RMIT academic community
- c. have the opportunity to study at other RMIT University campuses
- d. enjoy a campus experience enhanced by a physical RMIT presence.

Governance and the academic community at a RMIT global campus

Academic staff at a RMIT global campus will:

- a. operate within a single academic governance system under the Council and Academic Board of RMIT University
- b. develop an academic structure and mechanisms to report to the relevant RMIT University committees evidence of equivalence and comparability of standards in RMIT awards
- c. have appropriate academic capacity to be part of the RMIT academic community and to interact with other RMIT University staff in:
 - the development of learning and teaching materials and programs and
 - the delivery of research programs.

College ADVC L&T/VPA and Deans/Heads of School/Associate Directors will:

- a. be responsible for assuring the academic quality of RMIT University awards delivered at the global campus
- b. exercise academic leadership and ensure the meaningful involvement of academic staff at the global campus in their respective disciplines.

Academic presence at an RMIT global campus

An RMIT global campus will:

- a. represent a long term commitment of the University
- b. operate in the name of RMIT and carry appropriate RMIT branding
- c. offer only RMIT awards that bear RMIT's name alone or jointly with a partner institution
- d. employ RMIT academic staff resident at that location
- e. contribute to RMIT's research objectives
- f. employ professional staff resident at that location, dedicated solely to the administration and management of RMIT awards
- g. offer awards in more than one field of study
- h. be where students take most of their courses and may complete their award
- i. -offer substantially face-to-face instruction
- j. use English as the language of instruction.

RMIT global partnerships (coursework)

RMIT has a large number of students enrolled offshore. The majority of these are enrolled in programs offered through global partnership arrangements. The partner normally provides facilities, acts as a local marketing and recruitment centre, and can also assist in delivering the programs and in assessment, the standards of which are always moderated and finally signed off by RMIT University academic staff.

Partners may also be non-academic institutions such as global enterprises and NGOs whose partnership with RMIT involves provision of education and training for their staff, recruits and/or community members.

Staff at partner institutions are not involved in the academic governance of the programs, nor are they substantially responsible for the quality or standards of the awards. While a partnership of RMIT will often involve staff of other entities delivering some aspects of RMIT's programs, most often their engagement in RMIT endeavours will be limited to teaching programs designed by RMIT academics. Their employment and primary allegiance will be to the partner with whom RMIT has a contractual relationship.

Governance and standards of awards delivered through partnerships remain entirely the responsibility of RMIT University.

Definition of a RMIT global partnership

A RMIT global partnership will be characterised by governance arrangements designed to assure the quality and standards of the RMIT awards.

Student experience at a RMIT global partnership

Students at an RMIT global partnership will:

- a. receive an education of an equivalent and comparable standard to that provided at RMIT campuses and partnerships
- b. have the opportunity to study at other RMIT University campuses and partner locations.

Governance of a RMIT global partnership

RMIT academic staff responsible for the quality and standards of awards offered at an RMIT global partnership will:

- a. operate within a single academic governance system under the Council and Academic Board of RMIT University
- b. report to the relevant RMIT University committees evidence of equivalence and comparability of standards in RMIT awards.

College ADVC L&T/VPA and Deans/Heads of School/Associate Directors will be responsible for assuring the academic quality of RMIT University awards delivered at the global partnership.

Presence at an RMIT global partnership

An RMIT global partnership will:

- a. offer RMIT awards
- b. employ professional staff resident at that location to support the administration and management of RMIT awards
- c. be where students take most of their courses and may complete their award
- d. use English as the language of instruction.

Ownership of global campuses

The details of ownership and arrangements for management of the facilities at a global partnership or a global campus are largely irrelevant to determining whether the location is designated as a partnership or a campus. A global campus may be wholly or jointly owned. If it is a joint venture, academic responsibility must rest with RMIT in order to protect the academic reputation and brand of RMIT programs.

RMIT offshore partnerships – (research training)

Collaborative research training agreements and joint PhD award agreements between RMIT and global institutions are not within the purview of the *Program and course policy*. The activity covered by any such agreement is managed with the framework of existing program and course provisions.

Supporting resources

Related policy: [Program and course policy](#)

Related policy processes: *Program and course approval processes*

Document history

Version	Approved	Effective date	Approval authority	Register reference
1.0	14 April 2018	23 April 2018	Academic Registrar	POL/2018/00011
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