



**Higher Education Services
Articulation Approval Process**

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Higher Education Services Articulation Agreement Approval Process

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The aim of this document is to outline the processes for the approval, oversight, and administration of articulation agreements at FutureLearn. These processes are intended to ensure that roles and obligations are clearly defined, and that academic standards are upheld and continually improved in line with the FutureLearn's Regulatory Framework. The approach also takes into account the Quality and Standards Conditions set by the [Office for Students](#) (OfS) and the guidance provided by the [UK Quality Code for Partnerships](#).

2.0 Definition of Articulation

2.1 An arrangement where learners enrolled on a designated course at a partner provider are automatically entitled (subject to academic criteria) to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent part or year of a degree-awarding body's course. 'Advanced standing' is the recognition of previous successful study, reducing the number of modules needed to complete the course, [QAA Higher Education Credit Framework](#).

2.2 Under an articulation arrangement, FutureLearn commits to partner with universities to accept students who meet the predetermined entry criteria (including English language proficiency). Admission may only be suspended in cases where the applicant has a criminal conviction, in which case their application would be assessed in line with the FutureLearn's policy on admitting students with criminal records.

3.0 The Articulation Approval and Monitoring Process

There are seven key stages in the approval and monitoring of articulation agreements:

3.1 Initial Consideration of Proposal by FutureLearn Executive

3.1.1 Articulation proposals may be initiated by senior FutureLearn stakeholders for both domestic and international collaborations. At an early stage, the Vice President Higher Education Services will be engaged to conduct a thorough curriculum alignment to support the proposed pathway. A summary of the proposal will then be submitted to the FutureLearn Executive for evaluation in relation to the strategic goals and values.

3.1.2 Such arrangements may also involve the partner providing services related to student recruitment, sharing programme details, and assisting with the application process. The Vice President Higher Education Services will coordinate discussions to ensure that all aspects of the proposed agreement are reviewed with relevant internal and external parties. Once the Executive approves the business case to move forward, a formal due diligence process will be conducted for review by the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee.

3.2 Due Diligence Assessment

3.2.1 The Due Diligence Assessment will be completed by the Vice President Higher Education Services or nominee, as part of the [Academic Partnerships and Due Diligence Policy](#). Once complete the Vice President Higher Education Services will report into the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee recommending to either proceed, proceed with conditions, or cease discussions.

3.2.2 Where agents participate in the recruitment of students the Vice President Higher Education Services or nominee will follow the due diligence process as per the [Agent Approval and Progression Agreement Process](#).

3.3 Curriculum Mapping

3.3.1 The Head of Programmes will assess the curriculum of the partner institution's prior or post qualification, including a detailed mapping that demonstrates how students will have achieved the intended learning outcomes of any modules they are exempted from within the partnership agreement.

3.3.2 The Head of Programmes is responsible for confirming the compatibility between the proposed partner's programme and the corresponding FutureLearn course(s). This evaluation includes a comprehensive review of academic content, credit equivalence, and the scope and depth of learning to ensure that incoming/outgoing students possess the necessary knowledge, competencies, and academic background to succeed at the appropriate entry point.

3.3.3 For international partnerships, further verification will be conducted through ECCTIS to evaluate the recognition status and academic credibility of both the partner institution and its qualification.

3.3.4 Final approvals by the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee will be formally communicated to the partner organisation and will be included in reporting to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

3.4 Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee Consideration and Approval

3.4.1 The Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee is responsible for evaluating both the potential partner institution and the proposed articulation arrangement, with a focus on academic quality and reputational impact. Where agents are involved, the Committee will also evaluate any risks associated. This evaluation will consider:

- The potential benefits or risks to FutureLearn's reputation.
- Verification of the partner's legal, financial, and professional integrity.
- Projected student enrolment figures.
- The academic credibility of the partner's existing qualifications.
- Evidence of successful collaborations with other institutions.

3.4.2 Any organisation entering into a formal agreement with FutureLearn must be a legally recognised entity operating within the legal framework of its home country. Additionally, the partner must have appropriate authorisation from its awarding body to offer any programmes included in the proposed articulation pathway with FutureLearn.

3.4.3 The awarding body itself must meet acceptable academic standards. The Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee will review the due diligence assessment(s) from the Vice President Higher Education Services and Head of Programmes' curriculum mapping. Following the review of the documents the Committee may approve the articulation proposal, potentially subject to specific conditions or recommendations for further action by the partner or agent.

3.5 Written Agreement

3.5.1 A formal contract will be executed with each articulation partner, clearly outlining the type of partnership, the designated progression pathways available to students, the criteria for guaranteed admission, and the obligations of all parties involved.

3.6 Operations and Marketing Material

3.6.1 The Vice President Higher Education Services will coordinate with the partner institution and/or agent to ensure a comprehensive understanding of operational procedures, including recruitment and admissions workflows.

3.6.2 The Marketing team will work closely with both the partner and the relevant Head of Programmes to develop accurate and approved materials related to the new articulation pathway. All promotional content linked to the arrangement will be reviewed by the Director of Academic Affairs.

3.6.3 The Admissions team will be informed of the agreement to ensure that applicants are processed in accordance with the articulation agreement whether applying directly or through submissions made by a partner institution or agent.

3.7 Ongoing Monitoring and Review

3.7.1 The effectiveness of the articulation partnership including how well students admitted through the arrangement perform will be evaluated regularly through the annual monitoring review process and at the Student Engagement, Quality and Programme Committee. The findings will then be reported to the Academic Partnerships and Admissions Committee to confirm the ongoing relevance and quality of the arrangement.

3.7.2 The policy will be kept under review and formally reviewed every three years by the Academic Registrar.