

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW >

Glasgow School of Art and the University of Glasgow

Overview of Relationship and Responsibilities

1. Purpose

This document is intended to support the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) and the University of Glasgow

(UofG) to explain or expand on the responsibilities of each of the institutions in relation to programmes offered by GSA and validated by UofG. It sets out (in simplified form) the terms of the legal agreements in place between the institutions. It can be used to:

- Develop further guidance for staff or students on the responsibilities of each institution, the nature of the relationship between them, or to expand on the implications of that relationship for individual staff members of students.
- Provide an agreed point of reference when determining the appropriate process or procedure to be followed in a range of contexts. For example, academic programme approval or change, appeals processes or conduct procedures.

2. The Status of the Institutions

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) and the University of Glasgow (UofG) are separate Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and independent legal entities. This means that:

- Each has separate responsibility for their activities, funding, assets, staff and students.
- Each has their own governance structures, leadership teams, administrative procedures and systems.
- Each is separately accountable for operating within any statutory, legal, or regulatory provisions that apply to it.

Each institution, whilst operating independently, recognises the expertise and experience of the other. The UofG recognises GSA's long and distinguished history in art, design and architecture education and research. Similarly, the GSA recognises UofG's reputation as a leading broad-based civic university. Both recognise that the others respective strengths and experience bring value to students, staff and the City of Glasgow.

3. Academic Awards, Standards and Quality

Whilst each institution operates independently as an HEI and legal entity, in respect of academic standards and academic quality there are overlapping responsibilities. UofG is a degree awarding body and as such retains ultimate responsibility for academic standards and quality where awards are made in its name. The UK Quality Code requires that, in respect of academic standards, an awarding body:

“[...] has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them. In practice, this means that the awarding organisation must put in place all necessary measures to ensure that it can maintain the academic standards of its awards. This will include an analysis of the risks associated with a potential partner, the type of partnership that

will be entered into, the management of the partnership (and its associated risks), that an appropriate formal agreement is put in place, and that these arrangements are effectively monitored and evaluated.”

In respect of academic quality an awarding body must:

“[have] in place effective processes for the management and oversight of all aspects of the students’ academic experience to ensure that this is high-quality. These will include regular monitoring and review of the course(s), the teaching staff, the facilities, other resources and seeking, and acting on, where relevant, feedback from all involved in the provision with a particular focus on student feedback and outcomes.”

This means that that for programmes developed and delivered by GSA but validated and leading to an academic award of UofG, there must be suitable arrangements in place to provide oversight (by UofG) of academic standards and quality. These arrangements are set out, in summary, in the following section of this document.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Institutions

The partnership between UofG and GSA is subject to a number of binding legal agreements which set out the responsibilities of both institutions. These relate to the partnership generally and to the validation arrangements. The following key points have been agreed:

4.1. Independence

The University acknowledges and respects GSA’s autonomy as an independent HEI and legal entity and accordingly recognises it as a Validated Institution with ‘Accredited’ status. This status enables GSA to take maximum responsibility for ensuring the standards and enhancing the quality of validated programmes with reference to academic policy and planning, programme development and financial matters.

4.2. Overall agreement in relation to Academic Standards and Quality

GSA has contractually agreed to operate quality assurance and enhancement structures and processes which satisfy the requirements of UofG (as degree awarding body), QAA and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in addition to the requirements of any applicable professional or regulatory bodies. This is a broad responsibility to independently maintain and enhance standards and quality and is reflective of GSA’s independence and their status as an Accredited Validated Institution and includes the setting and maintenance of academic standards, programme approval, monitoring and review and appropriate arrangements for the engagement of students in quality management processes including student feedback and representation

Whilst GSA implements its own assurance and enhancement approaches, this does not mean UofG wholly passes on the responsibilities which attach to its DAB status. Accredited Institution status is therefore subject to certain agreed requirements and relevant delegated authorities as set out in the University’s Code of Practice for Validated Provision (COP VP) and the legal agreements in place between the institutions (MoAs). There are a number of structures, processes and reporting lines between the institutions which allow UofG to oversee and monitor the academic standards and quality of validated programmes leading to a UofG academic award.

4.3. Programme validation and revalidation

GSA is required to provide prior notice to UofG of any new validated programmes – this takes the form of a programme proposal. The University’s Academic Standards Committee (ASC) approves the proposal in-principle but can seek further clarification or information on the proposal if required before it proceeds through GSA’s processes. There are exceptions to this process, for example in the case of joint programmes and collaborative programmes, which require full scrutiny involving ASC final approval.

As an Accredited Institution, GSA is responsible for forming and managing a Validation Panel to review and approve any new validated programmes, or the revalidation of existing programmes. A cycle for revalidation of all programmes has been agreed (6 years). The Validation Panel has defined responsibilities and the membership must include an appropriate member, or members, of University staff in the case of joint programmes (as set out in the relevant MoA).

When validating programmes, the Validation Panel must have access to appropriate evidence and documentation, as prescribed in the COP VP. Subsequently, any decisions of the Validation Panel are recorded in a standardised validation/revalidation report(s) and approved by GSA’s Academic Council, via its Education Committee. A report of all new validated programmes and revalidated programmes is made by GSA to the University on an annual basis, through its Annual Report.

Changes to validated programmes are managed by GSA – major changes are subject to revalidation as described above and therefore also to the respective reporting requirements. UofG can determine, where necessary, whether a change means a programme should be subject to full revalidation involving full University scrutiny. Where there is any doubt as to whether a change is major the UofG Clerk of Senate has the final say.

4.4. Assessment

GSA operates its own Code of Assessment that is approved by the University. GSA has agreed to ensure that this Code of Assessment is explicit, transparent and accessible to students. GSA is responsible for ensuring GSA staff have a clear understanding of the Code of Assessment and how it should be applied.

Any proposed changes to the Code of Assessment should be submitted to UofG for internal review and approval (by ASC). The GSA Code of Assessment must conform to the University’s policies and procedures (although it need not be identical). Any non-conforming elements are subject to agreement by the UofG.

GSA appoints Boards of Examiners, including External Examiners. The appointment of External Examiners is subject to UofG approval through representation on the GSA Academic Council. All External Examiner reports are sent to the UofG and GSA provides responses to any concerns raised by the reports. Any concerns, and GSA’s response to such concerns, are reported to UofG through GSA’s annual report.

4.5. Students

Students have a contractual agreement with GSA. In addition to the delivery of learning and teaching, GSA takes responsibility for student services and support. In accordance with the UK Quality Code GSA provides facilities, resources and support to students and is responsible for implementing appropriate structures and mechanisms for student engagement. Structures and mechanisms for student engagement should normally be consistent with those of the University, albeit recognising the different scale and structure of the institutions.

GSA students are associate students of UofG. This status provides access to services and facilities at UofG as set out in the relevant MoA.

4.6. Academic Appeals

GSA operates its own procedure for academic appeals which is approved by UofG. Formal appeals are submitted using GSA documentation and subject to evidence requirements which are set out in the Code of Procedure. Appeals are considered by a Joint Appeals Committee (JAC). There is right of appeal against decisions and disposals of the JAC to UofG's Senate Appeals Committee in accordance with the University Regulations.

A report of all academic appeals activity is made to the UofG as part of the GSA Annual Report.

4.7. Admissions and Registration

GSA determines and manages its own requirements for admission, as set out in each relevant programme specification and subject to the validation process. Any students admitted are registered with GSA. Subsequently, GSA students are registered at UofG as 'associate students' which provides access to agreed facilities and resources and allows for the creation of a student record at UofG for progression and awarding purposes. This is not the same as being a full-time UofG student.

4.8. Fees, contracts and student status at UofG

GSA is responsible for determining its own fee structure and for liaising independently with any funding bodies. Where tuition fees are charged, students pay fees directly to GSA and the University receives no share of fee income. Contractual arrangements are concluded between GSA and the students directly. GSA pays the University an agreed amount for the provision of validation services and for access to certain facilities and resources for its staff and students. GSA students are subsequently registered at UofG as 'associate student' which provides access to certain facilities and resources in line with the agreements between the institutions. Any queries about the level of access provided should be referred to GSA. Associate student status also enables the creation of a record of the student at UofG, which is then used for the purpose of administering the final academic award (degree).

Arrangements for joint degree programmes can differ from those set out above.

4.9. Complaints

GSA manages its own complaints process. This should be consistent with the requirements and expectations of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), as set out in the MoAs governing the validation arrangements between GSA and the University. GSA should notify UofG of any complaints in relation to academic standards and quality as soon as possible after they are received.

Any complaints concerning the provisions of services, facilities or teaching delivered by the UofG is subject to the complaints process of UofG.

GSA provides UofG (via its Annual Report) with a summary of complaints, resolution thereof and comparative data. It also notifies UofG of any changes to policy, regulations, procedures or practices as an outcome of student cases.

4.10. Student Conduct

GSA has a Student Conduct Policy & Misconduct Procedure which covers both non-academic and academic misconduct. It sets out informal, formal and appeals related policy and process for dealing with misconduct. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of GSA staff and students in relation to the relevant procedures. It also

describes the penalties and sanctions that may be imposed. GSA will report all cases of academic misconduct to the University in the annual report to Senate.

4.11. Award and Graduation

GSA reports academic results to the University and, subject to students satisfying the requirements set out in the associated programme regulations, UofG confers the relevant academic award on GSA students. GSA is responsible for issuing an academic transcript to the students in line with the requirements of the UK Quality Code. GSA organises graduation ceremonies for its students, although these may take place at UofG.

4.12. Staff

GSA employs its own staff and is responsible for their appointment and management in accordance with prevailing employment law. The appointment of academic staff is subject to standards of qualification and experience as agreed by the UofG's Academic Standards Committee (ASC). UofG provides GSA teaching staff with Associate University Lecturer (AUL) status which allows them to access the University Library and relevant IT systems. GSA notifies UofG of teaching staff requiring AUL status through its Annual Report or may request this at other points if the situation requires.

4.13. Collaborative Provision

GSA may collaborate with other institutions (UK and international) in relation to validated programmes. However, in the case of collaborative provision (except with UK institutions or in the case of student exchanges) the prior approval of the University is required.

GSA operates collaborative provision policies and has agreed to ensure these are in accordance with the requirements of the UK Quality Code. The University has approved these policies and must be notified and agree to any subsequent changes to these policies.

4.14. Public Information, Marketing and Publicity

GSA submits any information/publicity relating to the relationship to UofG for prior written approval of UofG. This includes graduation brochures. This can be done at any point throughout the year but it is also a standing item for discussion at the Joint Liaison Committee.

5. Oversight Structures and Representation

The following committees, groups and meetings have been established between the institutions.

- The Joint Liaison Committee (JLC) is a sub-committee of UofG's Academic Standards Committee (ASC). The JLC is convened by UofG's Clerk of Senate and the GSA Deputy Director Academic. It meets annually (in April) to consider the GSA Annual Report to Senate. It is the main mechanism for oversight of the validation arrangements in place between the institutions.
- JLC Sub-Group. Convened by UofG's Clerk of Senate and the GSA Deputy Director Academic, the Sub-Group also includes staff from the UofG Academic Policy and Governance (APG) team and GSA Academic Quality Office. It meets between meetings of the JLC (from Oct 2021) and provides a discussion forum for issues which may need review prior to the main JLC meeting in April. The Group also identifies issues which will require full JLC review and subsequently will inform the content of the

Annual Report to Senate. The Sub-Group also reviews the GSA responses to External Examiner reports received at the time of meeting (this will ordinarily be UG reports, with PGT reports considered at the main meeting).

- Strategic Partnership Group. This Group is convened by UofG's Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor and provides a forum for senior leadership at both institutions to manage the operation of the overall partnership. It does not replace the oversight mechanisms in place through the JLC, JLC Sub-Group or operational meetings.
- UofG/GSA Joint Planning and Educational Liaison Group (draft title). This Group advises both institutions on responses to the QAA ELIR and SCS reports, ensuring an appropriate plan is implemented. It also provides a mechanism for notifying the institutions of planned policy/process changes flowing from the ELIR process. The Group operated for a period of one year in the first instance and a review of its continuation took place in June 2022. It was jointly decided that the Group would continue to operate with a focus on continued implementation of GSA's Educational Enhancement Plan and as a mechanism for sharing expertise and experience (including establishing a wider range of institutional contact points). It does not replace the oversight mechanisms in place through the JLC, JLC Sub-Group or operational meetings.
- Operational meetings between the Academic Policy and Governance team at UofG and the Academic Quality Office at GSA (at least annually). These meetings provide the opportunity to discuss operational issues and any matters requiring escalation to the JLC or JLC Sub-Group. Matters can also be referred to wider UofG or GSA staff as required.
- Other ad hoc meetings between staff as required.

UofG Representation on GSA Committees

- 2 representatives on GSA Academic Council (presently: Dean of Learning and Teaching, College of Arts; Director of Academic Services)
- 1 representative on GSA Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting Event (held in November). The UofG representative for this reporting event also receives Academic Council papers.
- 1 representative on Research Degrees Sub Committee.