



Policy on Dual and Joint Research

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Policy on Dual and Joint Research Awards

1. Dual Awards

- 1.1. The QAA defines dual awards as “two degree-awarding bodies jointly designing a course of study comprising a joint initial curriculum [...] leading to two separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies.”¹

2. Joint Awards

- 2.1. A joint award is a research programme which is co-developed by two (or more) degree-awarding bodies. All components must be successfully completed and lead to a single joint award. The single award can be conferred with multiple certificates, all specifying the joint degree, and validated by and bearing the names of the joint award partners.
- 2.2. Staff who would like to develop a joint research award or dual research award should refer to the [Partnership approval process](#) and the [University’s strategic framework for partnerships](#) (Essex login required) which apply to all types of academic partnership.
- 2.3. Advice should be sought from the Partnerships Office in the first instance.
- 2.4. This applies only to agreements where all institutions have the right to award research degrees in their home jurisdiction and all other criteria stated under section 5 of the [Partnership approval process](#) have been met.
- 2.5. All agreements will be at institutional level and approval will need to be sought from the Registrar and Secretary or Vice-Chancellor.
- 2.6. Institutions without research degree awarding powers or without specific expertise who would like to deliver a University of Essex research degree should refer to [4 below](#).

¹ [Qualifications Involving More Than One Degree-Awarding Body Characteristics Statement \(.pdf\)](#), QAA (Second edition, February 2020)

- 2.7. The rules and regulations relating to joint awards are agreed as part of the Due Diligence and Institutional Approval process. The standard University Regulations, such as the *Principal Regulations for Research Degree* (.pdf), do not apply to Joint Research Awards.
- 2.8. The agreed Memorandum of Understanding formalises the responsibilities of all parties involved in co-supervised research degrees leading to a joint award from the partners involved. The Memorandum of Understanding or legal agreement (as appropriate), outlines the agreed academic rules, regulations and arrangements for the joint degree, including admissions arrangements, registration arrangements, supervision arrangements, research training and the examination process.

3. Validated research degrees

- 3.1. A validation arrangement is where the University, as an awarding institution, judges that a research programme developed and delivered by another institution or organisation is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a University of Essex award. This form of academic partnership may be established with a delivery institution which does not have research degree awarding powers; or which may lack the requisite specialism. This type of arrangement will require an institutional level agreement.
- 3.2. Advice should be sought from the Partnerships Office in the first instance. Please contact partnerships@essex.ac.uk

4. Co-supervision

- 4.1. Co-supervision can take two forms:
- 4.2. A student at another institution requests that a member of academic staff at the University of Essex be their second supervisor (having obtained the requisite permissions from their home institution). The University of Essex considers this a matter for discussion by the student, the potential supervisor and the University of Essex head of department. Advice may be sought from People and Culture.
- 4.3. A University of Essex research student, with the support of their department, requests an external academic to be an Associate Supervisor. The purpose of an Associate Supervisor is to permit departments to 'buy in' supervisory expertise if necessary. Advice may be sought from the Postgraduate Research Office and these will be approved on a case-by-case basis. The Associate Supervisor's fee is usually paid by the department. Only in exceptional circumstances approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research Education in consultation with the Deputy Director of Academic Services (Quality and Development) or nominee will the cost be met by Academic Services.

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