University of Essex
Policy on Dual and Joint Research Awards

1. Dual Awards

The QAA defines dual awards as “two degree-awarding bodies jointly designing a programme of study comprising a joint initial curriculum [...] leading to two separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies.”¹ The University of Essex does not currently offer any dual awards for research.

2. Joint Awards

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 award and a single certificate. The University of Essex does not currently offer joint awards for research.

3. Staff who would like to develop a joint research award or dual research award should refer to the Partnership approval process (http://www.essex.ac.uk/partners/new/approval-academic.aspx) and the University’s strategic framework for partnerships (https://www.essex.ac.uk/partners/documents/restricted/partnerships-framework.pdf) which apply to all types of academic partnership.

3.1. Advice should be sought from the Partnerships Office in the first instance.

3.2. 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.

3.3. All agreements will be at institutional level and approval will need to be sought from the Registrar and Secretary or Vice-Chancellor.

3.4. 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.

4. Validated research degrees

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.

4.1. Advice should be sought from the Partnerships Office in the first instance. Please contact partnerships@essex.ac.uk

5. Co-supervision

Co-supervision can take two forms:

5.1. 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 Human Resources.

5.2. 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.