Appendix II

Multiple site delivery, franchised study, validated study, study and work placements and distance learning

Introduction

There is a set of varying arrangements where students achieving an award of an HEI do so in ways that reach beyond the traditional residential delivery and assessment of a curriculum. These include:

Multiple site delivery – where a programme of study of an HEI is delivered and assessed independently at different campuses of the HEI.

Franchised study – where a programme of study of an HEI's designed and approved curriculum is delivered and potentially assessed by an organisation other than the awarding HEI. Such students may complete the study entirely at the franchisee organisation (total franchising) or transfer to the franchisor at some stage beyond the entry level of the curriculum (partial franchising).

Validated study – where the programme of study is designed and delivered by an organisation other than the awarding HEI but is validated and overseen by that HEI as one of its awards.

Study placements – where students undertake part of their studies at locations other than the awarding HEI. These might be in a different HEI or organisation within the UK or overseas.

Work placements – where students undertake some form of intercalated internship in support of their studies, which is assessed and features as a part of their achievement of the overall award: e.g. a sandwich degree.

Distance Learning – where students are supported in whole or in part in their learning and assessment remotely located from the delivering HEI. The method of delivery of the teaching and assessment may be by posted textual material or by electronic means. Programmes where delivery is delegated to another institution will normally be viewed as franchised programmes.

In each of the above arrangements, the processes of accreditation undertaken by BCS will be founded upon the basis that the study is suitable, well supported, and is undertaken within a sound framework of quality assurance and enhancement, thus ensuring that student achievement can be reliably assured. The detailed accreditation processes employed in any one instance will reflect this. Where any of these activities is outside the UK then permission will need to be sought from the local government and any indigenous professional computing society for such an accreditation visit to proceed.

Multiple site delivery

A statement on the HEI's organisation and the relationships between the various centres will be required.

The review of the programme and its set of intended learning outcomes will be undertaken once. Interest will focus upon the delivery and fulfilment of the programme at each centre. Matters of quality assurance and enhancement including resourcing, student support and achievement as positioned against the foregoing intended learning outcomes will be undertaken through a visit by a subset of the full Panel at each of the other centres. Documentation and related evidence in support of these interests will be required.

Any major variation of programme intended learning outcomes between centres will require a full separate visit to each centre.

Franchised programmes

In all cases the submission should include statements on:

- the motivation and the nature of the franchise
- the format and content of the certificates and transcripts

The review of partially franchised programmes will be similar to that for multiple site delivery as above. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the synergy of the quality assurance and enhancement arrangements across the two organisations involved. Documentation and related evidence in support of these interests will be required.

It should be noted that for students to be eligible for accreditation they must spend at least the final taught year (full time equivalent) of study of the accredited award at the awarding HEI.

The review of totally franchised programmes will require a full visit to the franchisee organisation. It is assumed that the approved programme and its intended learning outcomes will have been reviewed at the franchising centre. Interest will focus upon the delivery of the programme at the franchisee organisation in terms of quality assurance and enhancement including resources, student support and achievement as positioned against the HEI's approved intended learning outcomes for the programme. Documentation and related evidence in support of these interests will be required.

Validated programmes

The review of validated programmes will require a full visit to the validated centre offering the curriculum and this will need to include representatives of the awarding HEI. A full set of documentation and supporting evidence will be required. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the synergy of the quality assurance and enhancement arrangements across the two organisations involved.

Study and work placements

Study and work placements that support the achievement of intended learning outcomes are of interest in the accreditation of programmes. BCS will not review these activities where they are supplementary to such achievement. Interest will focus upon the quality assurance and enhancement activities that underpin the validity of the study/work and assessment. Thus the preparation of students for such activity along with the equity of learning opportunities, supervision and assessed achievement will be of concern. Documentation and related evidence in support of these interests will be required.

Distance learning

It is acknowledged that there is a spectrum of activities that underpin distance learning programmes; from those that are supplementary to on-campus students through to complete off-site/remote teaching, learning and assessment. The society has an expectation that such supplementary activities and the corresponding student support will be employed in the delivery of most programmes. However, if an HEI is engaged in delivering a curriculum that relies upon the latter methods of student engagement and assessment, then it would be useful for the HEI to discuss the detail of their delivery and assessment mechanisms with the Education Department so that an agreed process of accreditation can be put in place. A copy of the contract with the remote campus will be required as part of the accreditation process.

A. Overview

The home institution is responsible for ensuring that distance learning programmes are designed, delivered and assessed so that the achievement of the intended learning outcomes can be assured. It is understood that distance learning programmes may be delivered to the student by a variety of media and that, in some cases, HEIs may use local partners to support the delivery of a distance learning programme.

In considering distance learning programmes BCS will pay particular attention to areas which are directly affected by the distance learning aspect, i.e. the methods of delivery, the provision of tutorial support, the extent and nature of practical activities (including group work), the supervision of projects, the methods of assessment, access to library and computing facilities, student involvement with programme monitoring and review, and the involvement of external examiners.

B. HEI submission

Full details of the programme content and structure will be required as specified in this document. The home institution should also supply information highlighting the differences in provision between programmes delivered directly at the host site and those delivered by distance learning, where appropriate, although it is recognised that some programmes may only be offered in distance mode.

Any programmes which are delivered via the distance learning method should complete an additional application form. This can be found in Appendix III, iii.