

Session Title:	Working with partners: we have an MoU, now what?
Speaker(s):	Moyra Throssell
Chair:	Andy Cotterill
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Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	<p>Moyra Throssell, Quality Manager for Partnerships at London Metropolitan University.</p> <p>Moyra's background is in law and education, where she has twenty years of experience working as a teacher in further education. Her previous roles include Dean of Faculty in an FE college and Head of UK Collaborative Partnerships at the University of Wolverhampton. Moyra has therefore worked on all sides of collaborative partnerships.</p>
Overview/Aim of session:	<p>To develop an understanding of the different types of partnership agreement, distinguishing between legally binding agreements and non-legally binding agreements, and how non-legally binding agreements can be used effectively by student recruitment and marketing teams.</p>
Workshop Content	<p>Legally binding partnership agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MoC: a form of contract that sets out the agreements between two parties. ● IMoC: a variation of an MoC, that usually has CLAs sitting behind it. ● CLA: Separate agreement for every course running within the partnership agreement.

- **Collaboration agreement:** This agreement is not necessarily legally binding; it depends on what it's being used for. Arrangements can be validated or franchised.
- **Collaboration / Co-operative agreements.**

Non-legally binding partnership agreements:

- **Articulation agreements:** Forming an agreement with a provider, where they may be responsible for delivering Level 4 & 5 content and your institution is responsible for delivering Level 6 content. This is not legally binding unless you make it so. Usually, you would look at what the feeder provider is offering and map it against your qualifications, with regular reviews. In some instances, universities may require learners to retake Level 5 modules however, this is problematic if it is a funding decision.
- **Progression agreement:** This covers lots of different arrangements and feeder institutions are often keen to set these up. Often, it's less about the substance of the agreement and more about how the agreement strengthens ties. It is however important to be cautious with the terms.
- **MoUs:** An MoU is a promise that you're going to work together, setting out the parameters of where you're going to work. This is not legally binding in England & Wales, however, it can be legally binding overseas. Moyra stated that MoUs are pretty much a waste of time!
- **Strategic Partnership Alliance:** This is very similar to an MoU but looks much more impressive and gets people excited! The sentiment is much more important than what's agreed. The marketing can be very powerful, and this type of agreement

	<p>has the potential to create a great relationship between institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Articulation Agreements: This will often involve students starting their journey in further education and progressing to university. These agreements present a great opportunity for UK Recruitment teams. It is however important to ensure that colleges aren't swapping and changing modules too much, which is why regular reviews are vital. These are the most underused agreements & they could be utilised by UK Recruitment teams. ● Moyra signposted to Pearson's Degree Finder which is free to use. ● Progression Agreements: A useful way of building good relationships with your local providers although, it's important to be careful that these agreements don't tip into an unconditional offers.
<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	<p>Have you (Moyra) seen a successful MoU?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The University of Wolverhampton formed Strategic Partnership Alliances with three feeder FE colleges in the local area. ● This involved working directly with the Principle to focus on specific course areas (Health & Uniformed Services). ● Strategic Partnership Alliances set out what the university was going to do with these courses, what the university was going to do with the partner more generally, and what the college was going to do re. progression to the University. ● High level focused meetings were held four times per year, to review the success of the Strategic Partnership Alliance and tweak terms of agreement.

<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>We discussed the importance of reviewing partnership agreements, as these arrangements can be time consuming, so it's important that they benefit both parties.</p>
<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>Who are your institutions closest partners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sixth forms and FE colleges ● Charities ● Agents <p>What do your partners request from you the most?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic engagement ● Lower offers ● Campus visits ● T Level work experience ● Information, advice, and guidance ● Degree apprenticeships <p>Why do you think your feeders are asking for partnership agreements with you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It creates good business for both providers. ● Sixth forms / colleges are looking to produce something that gives their students the f'ull higher education experience'. <p>Do you think more colleges will seek degree awarding powers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some colleges dabble with HE, but it isn't always cost effective, and they tend to do FE best! ● FE colleges focus on technical qualifications because they receive funding for this. ● The FE institutions that are doing HE well, have made great links with industry and are occupying a

space where there is a lack of provision in their local area.

- Rather than offering HE, colleges can develop pathways for level 6.

Is there a conflict of interest, as colleges want their students to go to a diverse range of universities?

- FE colleges have to offer a range of options, but there is usually a need for partnership agreements.

How do you propose a partnership agreement as someone that works in SR / Marketing?

- Partnership activity is different in every university, but it's important that the recruitment and marketing teams talk to the partnership team to identify opportunities.

What are the risks when it comes to formal collaborative arrangements?

- A partner might go bust, which is the worst-case scenario.
- In this case, you are responsible until the last student completes.
- However, universities can only ever mitigate against the risk.
- This is why robust and ongoing due diligence is so important.
- Partnership reviews are also essential in ensuring that both parties are holding their part of the bargain.
- If the review is favourable, you might extend the partnership for another five years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the review is unfavourable, you might terminate the partnership or reduce the length of the agreement.
Summary Key takeaways:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Non-legally binding partnership agreements can be utilised by recruitment and marketing teams.- Often, it's less about the substance of the agreement and more about how the agreement strengthens ties.- Partnership agreements create good business for both providers.- It's important to have regular reviews, to review the success of the agreement & ensure arrangements benefit both parties.