



***Guidelines for Polytechnics and Institutes of
Technology applying for approval of a consortium
arrangement for delivery of education and
training***

(below degree level and for NQF Scopes)

Guidelines for Approval of Consortium Arrangements:

These guidelines have been prepared for the assistance of ITP Quality Panel Chairs who may be asked to evaluate an application from an ITP for approval of a consortium arrangement. They will also be useful to ITPs in their development of applications, and in the revision of such arrangements as Memoranda are reviewed.

Note: these guidelines should be read in conjunction with the NZQA publication “Principles and Parameters for Agreements between Tertiary Education Providers Involved in Collaborative Arrangements (November 2005).

Note: *Approval of the consortium arrangement by ITP Quality is an indication that ITP Quality is satisfied with the quality assurance arrangements related to the programme as described in the application and in the Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (MOA). Such approval does not bind the Tertiary Education Commission to approve the arrangement for the purposes of the ITP’s profile or for funding.*

Why Have Consortium Arrangements?

A consortium arrangement is seen as a possible way of delivering a programme or programmes to its students where the ITP does not itself have the specialist staff and resources which are necessary for the delivery of such a programme or programmes. Consortia may also provide for the delivery of specialised programmes outside of the ITP’s own region. The consortium partner should have a successful history in delivering on its own account the types of programmes the ITP desires to make available to its students. Where the ITP has the necessary specialist staff and resources to enable it to deliver a programme itself, a consortium arrangement is generally considered unnecessary.

Typical Features of a Consortium

The consortium partner is typically an NZQA registered PTE, although another ITP could also be a consortium partner, or a secondary school. Almost certainly it will be **a quality assured training provider in its own right**. An individual, or company, which is not a recognised quality assured training provider may be used to assist in the delivery and assessment of programmes by an ITP, but the consortium model is inappropriate, and in such cases a **Contract For Services** may be considered. (See *Contracts for Service*-below)

The typical features of a consortium arrangement are:

- The consortium partner is a quality assured training provider
- The consortium partner generally holds the necessary accreditations for the programmes. Where the ITP holds the accreditations and the consortium partner does not, then ITP Quality will need to be satisfied that the consortium partner has the capacity to deliver the programme. In such cases the ITP will need to provide a rationale for the consortium arrangement and evidence that the consortium partner has met the ITP Quality Approval and Accreditation Criteria. Note that this is the ITP’s responsibility to be verified by ITP Quality.
- Where the consortium partner does hold the necessary accreditations and the ITP does not – then the ITP will need to apply for accreditation. Such application may be made on the basis of the expertise of the consortium partner, and early contact with the SSB/ITO is recommended.
- Students are enrolled by the ITP and are clearly understood to be the ITP’s students

- Formal results are supplied to NZQA for relevant programmes by the ITP
- Responsibilities for all aspects of the administration and delivery of the programme are allocated between the QMS of the ITP and that of the consortium partner, however, the final responsibility both to students and for the delivery of a quality programme must always rest with the ITP.
- The consortium partner may be involved in marketing the programme, but the programme must always be readily identifiable as belonging to the ITP.
- Certificates issued for satisfactory completion will always be in the name of the ITP, although information related to the consortium partner may be included.
- The ITP must always have the quality oversight of the programme, and ultimate responsibility for moderation, review and programme monitoring.
- The ITP must demonstrate the capacity to manage the arrangement.
- The ITP will generally have an involvement (e.g. stipulate person specifications) in the approval of the staff who will be delivering the programme.
- Application forms are available on the ITP Quality website

The Consortium Approval Report (information for ITP Quality Panel Chairs)

The report should include the following:

- Introduction. This should include information on the internal approval process for the application by the ITP, including details of Academic Board approval.
- Name of consortium partner
- Identification of the Programme(s) to be delivered under the arrangement
- Rationale for the proposed arrangements (Why are they doing this?)
- TEC Approval – Is this arrangement approved in the ITP's profile? Has it been signalled to TEC?
- Delivery sites
- Status of the consortium partner (NZQA Provider number? last NZQA audit? Outcome? Next audit scheduled? History in the delivery of programmes of this type?)
- Approval status of the programme(s)
- Accreditation status of the consortium partner (if not accredited, then ITP Quality Approval and Accreditation Criteria should be addressed for the consortium partner by the ITP) If ITP not accredited, then ITP should have applied for Accreditation.
- Assess the MOA according to the ITP Quality template: Note that the comment column should provide sufficient information so that the ITP Quality Board can be satisfied that the responsibilities are adequately covered.
- Recommendation for approval/non approval
- List of Matters of Concern requiring a response from the ITP
- List of Suggestions

Note: The ITP Quality Board is unlikely to approve applications that include Matters of Concern.

Contracts for Service

Where an ITP wishes to deliver a programme using the expertise and specialized equipment belonging to an individual or a company which is not a quality assured training provider, a consortium arrangement is inappropriate, but a contract for services may be considered.

In contrast to a consortium arrangement, a programme delivered under a Contract for Services is delivered directly according to the ITP's own QMS which applies in every respect.

So, from an ITP Quality perspective, while the Contract for Services will differ from the regular employment contract for other staff, as there might be a greater flexibility in the terms of employment, and the contract is likely to include the supply and use of specialized equipment and facilities, in all other respects the programme **should not be easily distinguishable from any other programme delivered directly by the Polytechnic itself**. Because programmes delivered under contracts for service are deemed to be delivered directly by the ITP itself, ITP Quality does not require ITPs to seek specific approval for such arrangements. Note however, that where these programmes are delivered away from the main ITP campus, then ITP Quality should be notified of the site(s) and the quality assurance arrangements that the ITP will use to ensure that the delivery is indistinguishable from other programmes delivered directly by the ITP. This is particularly important if more than one additional site was being contracted by the ITP.