INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS POLICY

Section	University Management
Contact	Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students and Global Engagement Office of the Provost
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Next Review	August 2026
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Purpose:

This policy and its associated procedures govern the initiation, development, execution, and monitoring of Institutional Agreements between Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University and an Institutional Partner. The policy acknowledges that working in partnership is an integral part of the University's strategic aspirations and mission for Pou Ako (Learning and Teaching), Pou Rangahau (Research), Pou Tangata (People) and Pou Hono (Connections).

Institutional Partnerships can be formal or informal, but for the purpose of this policy the focus is on formalised partnerships that involve an Institutional Agreement.

Aim:

Massey University is a significant research intensive dual-mission university that operates across Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally through a local and global network of people and partners. University staff teach and research within their respective fields, sharing their expertise and skills to advance knowledge. University students benefit from our staff connections at the discipline and institutional levels. Working together, we solve national and global problems through fundamental, applied, and interdisciplinary research and teaching, while culturally and artistically enriching our world.

This policy aims to:

- ensure Institutional Partnerships are aligned with the University's strategy, our Te Tiriti o Waitangi aspirations and maintain the University's standard for quality, reputation, and integrity of outcomes.
- provide a set of principles to guide decisions and set clear responsibilities regarding the development, approval, and management of the University's Institutional Agreements.
- ensure alignment with the University's business practice; and
- recognise that partnerships can have many starting points, including those that could be described as informal.

Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Both domestic and international Institutional Partnerships.
- All academic delivery options with Institutional Partners including, but not limited to, those Partnership Types listed in this policy.

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- Institutional Partnerships that involve research and/or consultancy as part of the partnership.
- Māori and other Indigenous People's Institutional Partnerships.
- Non-delivery Institutional Partnerships that involve student recruitment and mobility of staff or students.

This policy does not apply where:

- Institutional Partnerships and/or Institutional Agreements are established for the sole purpose of Research or Consultancy. These are managed under the Research and Consultancy Contracts Policy.
- Institutional Partnerships and/or Institutional Agreements are established for the sole purpose of commercial activities (such as procurement of equipment or IT products or services). These are managed under the Contract Management Policy.
- Institutional Partnerships that are informal and/or where an Institutional Agreement does not currently exist, however it is still expected that this policy should guide their development as these may lead to a formal partnership in future.

Endorsements:

For the development of any formal Institutional Partnerships and/or Institutional Agreement the following endorsements must be granted by the relevant Strategic Leader before any agreement is made. The University recognises three Strategic Leaders who will work with the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellors:

- Provost
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Global Engagement

The relevant endorsements apply:

- The relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor must endorse all College linked Institutional Agreements.
- The Provost must endorse all Institutional Agreements involving research.
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori must endorse all Institutional Agreements with Māori institutions, organisations, community groups, iwi organisations or hapū.
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Global Engagement must endorse all Institutional Agreements with international institutions or organisations, including those with international indigenous peoples.
- Either the Provost or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Global Engagement must endorse all Institutional Agreements with domestic institutions or organisations involving teaching.
- All Institutional Agreements for Offshore Delivery, must be contracted through Massey Global Ltd, and must be endorsed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Global Engagement. Exemptions to operate outside of Massey Global Ltd can only be granted by approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Global Engagement.

Any Institutional Partnership and/or Institutional Agreement which involve multiple categories must have the endorsement of all applicable Strategic Leaders.

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Principles:

Institutional Partnerships should be based on a set of principles that align with the University strategy, while complementing existing partnerships. The University is committed to demonstrating authentic leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand as we uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi through our practice. The University sees this as a critical requirement to advance more inclusive and socially progressive outcomes for Aotearoa New Zealand. The Strategic Leader will use this set of principles to make decisions for endorsement.

Core Principles:

- **Mātāpono** – that at the heart of all Institutional Partnerships is a common set of agreed mātāpono that will at a minimum focus on excellence and access, and a commitment to teaching, discovery and innovation.
- **Opportunities** – that the Institutional Partnership is connected to providing students and staff with opportunities that are not always available to the institution alone.
- **Benefit** – that the Institutional Partnership offers value not only to the University, but to Aotearoa New Zealand and its people.
- **Sustainability** – that there is an academic and commercial commitment to the Institutional Partnership that is ideally long-term focused.
- **Risk** – that there is a clear and transparent approach to risk that considers political, economic, technological/cyber, sociological, and financial risks (although not limited to these only).
- **Tikanga** – that the Institutional Partnership considers the implications on both Māori and non-Māori, ensuring cultural practices are authentically recognised and embraced.
- **Quality** – that quality assurance underpins all aspects of the Institutional Partnership.
- **Reputation** – that the reputation of all Institutional Partners is linked to appropriate partner selection, including the use of institutional or subject rankings, ideally with those institutions placed similarly or ahead of the University.

Based on these core principles, the University will seek to:

- Broaden and deepen existing partnerships before looking to expand to new Institutional Partners.
- Be both reactive and proactive in seeking any new Institutional Partnership opportunities.
- Work with partners that have a similar culture to the University – recognising that the University aspires to be Te Tiriti-led and this may differ to other institutions, making clear linkages to Pou Ako, Pou Rangahau, Pou Tangata or Pou Hono within the University Strategy.
- Focus on opportunities that grow our people. The University will seek Institutional Partnerships that offer students and staff innovative and enhanced educational opportunities.
- Negotiate, endorse, approve, and manage relationships in accordance with this policy and the associated procedures.
- Grow and follow best practice, such as those defined in the Qualification Policy, Qualification Frameworks (including those internationally), Education (Pastoral Code of Practice for Domestic Tertiary and International Learners), Research Practice Policy and other related practices.

Types of Institutional Partnerships:

See Partnerships Type Table.

Definitions:

Institutional Agreement(s) refers to any formal instrument or document entered by the University and another party which sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of the parties (including financial obligations and deliverables)

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in respect of a partnership. For the purposes of this policy, Institutional Agreements include Memorandums of Understanding and only relate to Institutional Agreements in scope. By way of example, some of the main types of Institutional Agreements that are currently used at the University are MOU's, Letters of Intent, Non-Disclosure Agreements, Collaboration Agreements, Study Abroad and Student Exchange Agreements, Articulation and Pathway Agreements, Internship Agreements and Scholarship Agreements.

Institutional Partner includes institutions and organisations providing education and/or research activities/services (such as university, private training establishment, wānanga, schools, museum, business, kura, zoos, iwi organisations, defence force).

Institutional Partnership(s) means any formal partnership between the University or a University subsidiary and an Institutional Partner to achieve specified objectives in scope of this policy.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are institution-to-institution framework documents used for the purpose of formalising an Institutional Partnership. MOUs are legally non-binding, high-level, non-specific partnership documents. It is important to note that Institutional Partners may interpret the form and function of MOUs differently.

Offshore Agreements are agreements where the teaching, research or other services are provided outside New Zealand.

Partnership Category includes activities categorised as: research, international, domestic and/or Māori.

Partnership Types Partnerships Types Table.pdf.

Research or Consultancy means the provision by university staff of expert or professional advice, information and/or service to individuals or organisations (whether internal or external), or research (as defined in the Code of Research Conduct) as agreed by contract and resulting in the receipt of a negotiated remuneration.

Strategic Leader refers to the SLT member deemed as the primary/strategic leader of a Partnership Category. The Strategic Leaders are listed in this policy and in the procedures alongside their responsibilities and accountabilities.

Audience:

All staff.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Training Act 2020
Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
Privacy Act 2020
Public Records Act 2005
Export IP (MFAT)
Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

Legal compliance:

Compliance is expected with all aspects of the relevant legislation, including any relevant legislation in the country of delivery.

The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 ("the Code") exists to support education objectives for domestic and international learners, recognising that the community expects providers to support wellbeing, and providers need flexibility to respond to their learners' needs in different ways. The Code

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acknowledges the importance of supporting learner wellbeing and safety in education, and the value New Zealanders place on wellbeing and safety.

Collection, use and disclosure of personal information, and access to and correction of personal information and the use of unique identifiers, must comply with the principles of the Privacy Act 2020.

The Public Records Act 2005 provides for the selection of public records and archives for creation, maintenance, and retention.

Compliance with CUAP regulations and approvals is required.

Related procedures / documents:

Institutional Partnerships Procedures
Subcontracting of Teaching Activity Policy
Approval Pathways and Quality Assurance Guidelines for Domestic and International Subcontracting of Teaching Activity
Contract Management Policy
Contract Management Procedures
Massey University Qualifications Policy
Research and Consultancy Contract Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy
Teaching and Learning Framework
Delegations of Authority Policy
Massey University Strategy 2022-2027

Document Management Control:

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