University Partnerships Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This policy sets out the framework for the establishment, management and governance of partnerships entered into by Charles Sturt University (the University) with third parties, and is intended to support:

a. alignment of partnership opportunities with University Strategy and priorities
b. clarity on roles and responsibilities within the University in relation to partnerships, and a consistent framework for partnership formation and implementation
c. compliance with:
    i. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Standard 5.4)
    ii. Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
    iii. Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020
    iv. Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018
    v. other relevant legislation and University policies applicable under the scope of this policy.*

Scope

(2) This policy applies to all:

a. University partnership categories described at clause (6) of this policy, entered into between the University and other entities
b. individuals and entities involved in the partnerships, subject to the terms of individual agreements.

(3) This policy does not apply to:

a. procurement activities where the University is purchasing the supply of goods or services
b. employment and consultancy agreements
c. international education agent arrangements as defined in the International Education Agent Policy.

Section 2 - Policy

Partnership principles

(4) The University engages in partnerships with a broad range of organisations both in Australia and overseas to support its strategic objectives. The development and delivery of these partnerships are guided by the following key principles:

a. Partnerships and proposed outcomes align with the strategic direction and values of the University and the ethos of 'Yindyamarra winhanganha': of knowing how to respectfully live well in a world worth living in.
b. Partnerships enhance the University's domestic and international reputation and brand.

c. Partnerships are managed in accordance with the University's commitments and responsibilities outlined above at clause (1)c.
d. Appropriate governance, due diligence, risk assessment and quality assurance structures and processes are in place to ensure that partnerships are well managed and monitored, and that the quality standards (including academic quality standards) of the University are maintained.
e. Educational partnerships and cooperation will support a positive student experience.
f. Research partnerships and cooperation will align with the overarching Research Strategy 2030, as sponsored by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research).
g. The University seeks to develop partnerships resulting in strong relationships, mutually beneficial outcomes, a breadth of opportunities for engagement, competitive neutrality and a positive return on investment for all parties (with reference to various funding instruments, e.g. the Commonwealth Grants Scheme, full-fee paying arrangements).
h. Where the University enters into contractual agreements for institutions or other third parties to deliver a University course in Australia or overseas, the University holds full responsibility for the quality assurance and management of the courses and programs.

(5) Partnerships must:

a. be established and approved in accordance with the appropriate delegations and authorities
b. comply with relevant laws (including international jurisdictional laws and regulations) and University rules, policies and directives
c. for arrangements with international governments and their entities, be consistent with Australian foreign policy and reported and approved as required by Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 and Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018.

University partnership categories

(6) The following categories describe the types of University partnerships. Partnerships may fall under one or more of the following categories:

Category	Description
Educational delivery (award or non-award)	Arrangements where a University award course or non-award course is delivered under an agreement with a third party, in Australia, overseas or online. These include: 1. dual or joint award arrangements 2. delivery of University award or non-award courses either in Australia or overseas 3. licensing of course materials 4. co-provider arrangements involving the delivery of training services associated with training package qualifications and vocational education training (VET) accredited courses within the University's scope of registration 5. short courses 6. training events 7. single subject study 8. delivery of workshops or events.
Educational cooperation	Arrangements where the University participates in academic cooperation but does not undertake any form of educational delivery. This includes: 1. credit transfer 2. articulation agreements 3. student and staff mobility including exchange 4. regional study centres 5. hosting of scholarship recipients funded by an institution or entity 6. other hosting arrangements such as those that facilitate visiting staff or students, partner use of facilities etc.

Category	Description
Regional/community partnerships	Arrangements that the University has with local or regional organisations (such as Regional Consultative Committees, Councils, Regional Development Australia) to support the development of our regions, build higher education aspiration and awareness, and develop commercial relationships with rural and regional communities. Includes sponsorship arrangements such as the Community-University Partnerships.
Industry partnerships	Arrangements with industry for research and educational activities (such as work placement, course accreditation or research training), collaborative funding, internships, cadetships, commercial arrangements or other purposes.
Government partnerships	Arrangements with a federal or a state government department for research, educational or other activities that support the University's objectives, to optimise community/business/industry benefits from government programs. Includes entities such as: 1. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2. Austrade 3. NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services 4. Regional Development Australia (RDA).
Research partnerships	Arrangements with an entity in Australia or overseas where the main purpose is to facilitate collaborative research and commercialisation. This includes but is not limited to: 1. commercialisation activities and strategic precinct development 2. research student enrolment including coursework masters degrees linked to HDR 3. hosting of visiting researchers 4. research training partnerships, including partnered, joint or dual supervisory arrangements. 5. First Nations research as a core activity for all research institutes.

Executive sponsors – partnerships

(7) Partnership proposals must have appropriate sponsorship by the relevant delegated authority.

(8) The appropriate sponsor will be a Band 7 or above responsible for the category of the partnership. If a proposed partnership could fall under more than one category and more than one sponsor, the sponsor should be determined by negotiation or by the Vice-Chancellor.

(9) Partnership sponsors must ensure that:

a. attraction, development, delivery and monitoring of partnerships is compliant with this policy, the University Partnerships Procedure, and other University policies and delegations
b. relevant internal and external stakeholders are consulted in a timely manner with view to partnership initiation and implementation
c. legislative and regulatory requirements are identified and complied with
d. all relevant internal and external approvals are obtained before entering into a partnership agreement
e. there are appropriate structures and processes in place to maintain, monitor and report on the delivery of the partnership and resolution of any issues
f. the purpose and contractual obligations of the partnership are met and benefits to all parties to the partnership are maximised
g. risks are identified and risk management strategies are in place
h. resource obligations (including use of the University's physical or virtual assets) are appropriately valued and assessed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, and principles of competitive neutrality are observed (see the NSW Treasury Policy Statement on the Application of Competitive Neutrality).

(10) Band 8 portfolio leaders must ensure that a register of partnership agreements within their portfolio is maintained and is accessible to other partnership sponsors and the Office of the Executive Director, Engagement and Enterprise.

(11) Partnerships that are also commercial activities with a monetary value exceeding $100,000 must also be entered into the register of commercial activities (see the Commercial Activities Policy).

Roles and responsibilities

(12) While many organisational units may have responsibilities in relation to University partnerships, the following will have specific roles and authorities under this policy and must be involved in the initiation and development of partnerships as relevant:

a. Office of the Executive Director, Engagement and Enterprise: for facilitation and coordination; education partnerships and business development; partnerships involving third parties and communities; and relationship management.
b. Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic): for all partnerships that involve delivery of the University's curriculum (existing or proposed) under partnership arrangement.
c. Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research): for all research activities and partnerships.
d. Office of Global Engagement: for partnerships that involve foreign entities or international partners.
e. Division of Finance: for assistance and endorsement of partnership business cases (where required).
f. Facilities Management and/or Division of Information Technology: for partnerships that involve the use of the University's physical and/or virtual assets or infrastructure.
g. Legal Services: for review of all contracts and MOU agreements.
h. Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor First Nations Strategy: for partnerships that involve First Nations Australian organisations, communities or students.
i. Communications and Government Relations: for partnerships involving Australian state and federal government partners.

Section 3 - Procedures

(13) The following procedures support this policy:

a. University Partnerships Procedure

Section 4 - Guidelines

(14) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(15) For the purposes of this policy:

a. Memorandum of understanding (MOU) - an agreement that sets out the intentions of the parties but does not impose any legally binding obligations or liabilities on the University.
b. Partnership – refers to a formal relationship between the University and another party to achieve a particular purpose (as outlined in the specific partnership arrangement categories in this policy). 'Partners' has a corresponding meaning. Most University partnerships described in this policy will fall under the category of cooperative and collaborative arrangements as described in Delegation Schedule A - Governance and Legal. A number of University partnerships may fall under the partnerships at law category also described in Schedule A, but that particular business arrangement is less common for the University and requires Council approval. [Note that edits to Schedule A to support this definition are pending Council approval].

c. Partnership agreement - refers to the written agreement between the University and the relevant partner recording the partnership arrangements.
d. Research activity – means research and experimental development activities as defined by the HERDC specifications for the collection of data.
e. University programs – refers to a course of study undertaken with the University.

* Including the University's Sustainability Statement and Reconciliation Action Plan

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