IADT Linked Provision – Procedure 1: Procedure for considering and establishing a linked provision relationship

Document Reference and Version Number	LPPro1/V1.0
Purpose	Procedure for considering and establishing a linked provision relationship with prospective linked providers
Policy Author	Office of the Registrar
Policy Owner	Office of the Registrar
Intended Audience	Staff, prospective linked providers
Approved by Academic Council	16 June 2025
Commencement Date	from Academic Year 2025-26
Related Documents	- IADT Policy on Linked Provision Framework - Procedure for approving the Quality Assurance procedures of linked providers (Procedure 2) - Procedures for monitoring and reviewing the QA procedures of established linked providers (Procedure 3)

Document Version History

Previous Version	Notes	Replaced by
V1.0, 2024-25	New - First Version of this procedure	N/A

Contents

1.   Introduction and Context

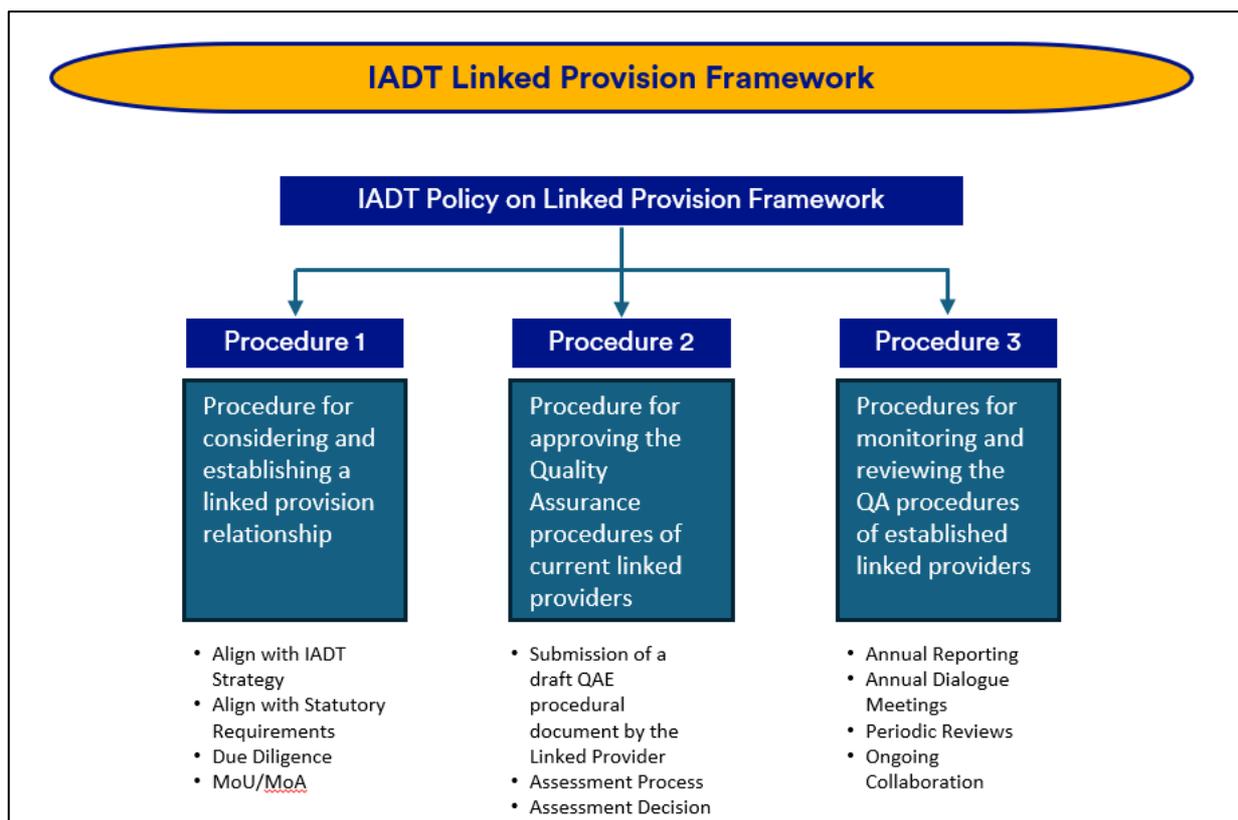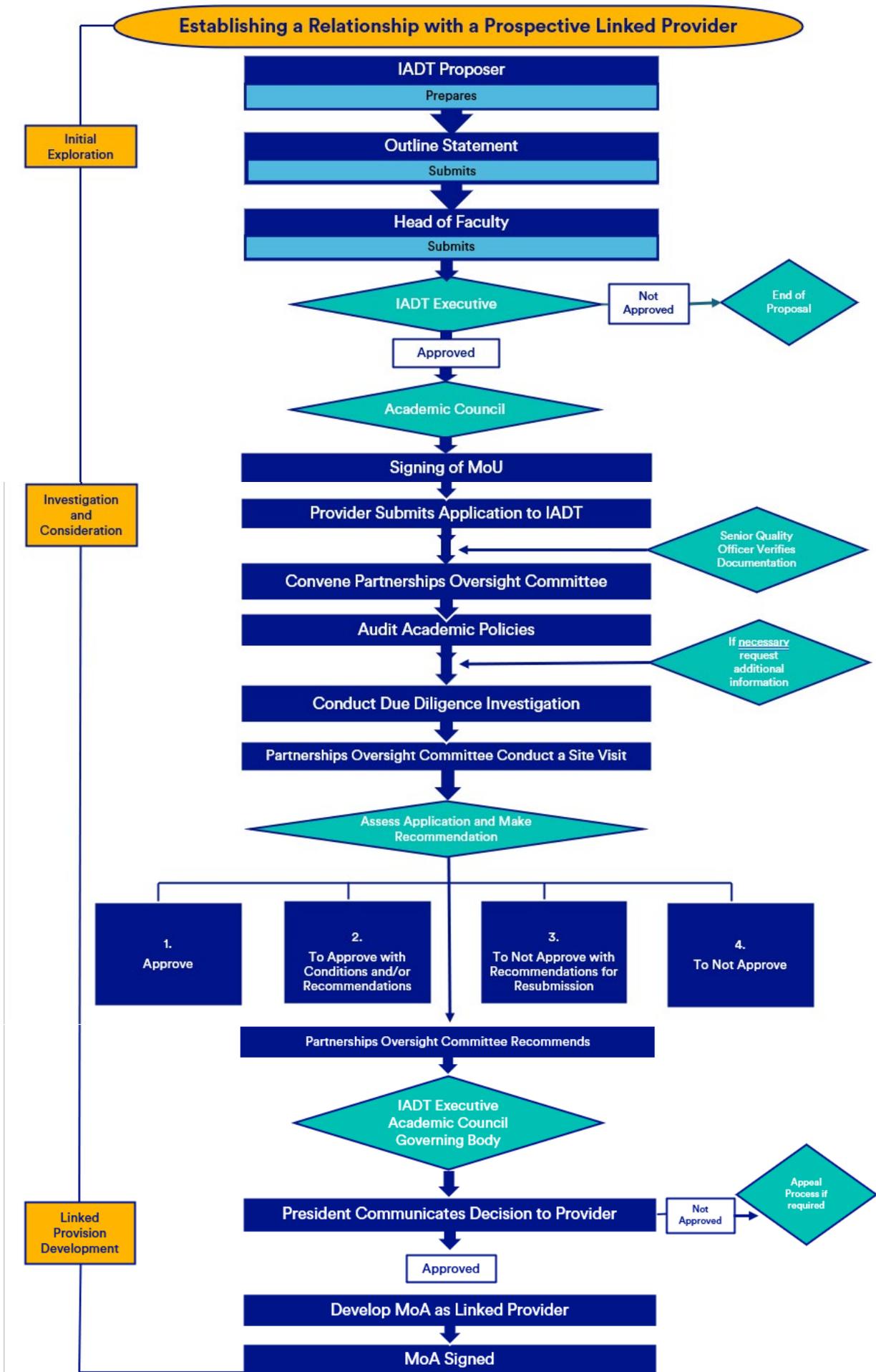## 1.1 IADT Linked Provision Framework

<div align="center">Figure X: IADT Linked Provision Framework</div>

This procedural document refers to **Procedure 1**, and the first stage of the IADT Linked Provision Framework and outlines the process for IADT to consider and establish a relationship with a prospective linked provider. This section of the IADT Linked Provision Framework outlines the procedures IADT will follow when considering and establishing a linked provision relationship with a prospective new Linked Provider. There are 2 other Procedures and Documents that outline the next steps, following the establishments of a linked provision relationship.

- *Procedure for approving the Quality Assurance procedures of linked providers* (Procedure 2)
- *Procedures for monitoring and reviewing the QA procedures of established linked providers* (Procedure 3)

This procedure and process will align with the IADT Strategic Plan 2024-28, 'Towards a university for the Creative Industries' and incorporates the relevant statutory requirements as specified in the relevant Acts and the QQI Sector-specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies as noted in the IADT Policy on Linked Provision Framework.

*Refer to Figure X for a workflow of the overall process for **Establishing a relationship with a Prospective Linked Provider**, which incorporates Procedure 1 and Procedure 2.*

Establishing a Relationship with a Prospective Linked Provider

Initial Exploration

IADT Proposer
Prepares

↓

Outline Statement
Submits

↓

Head of Faculty
Submits

↓

IADT Executive — Not Approved → **End of Proposal**

Approved

↓

Academic Council

↓

Signing of MoU

Investigation and Consideration

↓

Provider Submits Application to IADT ← **Senior Quality Officer Verifies Documentation**

↓

Convene Partnerships Oversight Committee

↓

Audit Academic Policies ← **If necessary request additional information**

↓

Conduct Due Diligence Investigation

↓

Partnerships Oversight Committee Conduct a Site Visit

↓

Assess Application and Make Recommendation

↓

1. Approve	2. To Approve with Conditions and/or Recommendations	3. To Not Approve with Recommendations for Resubmission	4. To Not Approve

↓

Partnerships Oversight Committee Recommends

↓

IADT Executive Academic Council Governing Body

↓

Linked Provision Development

President Communicates Decision to Provider — Not Approved → **Appeal Process if required**

Approved

↓

**Develop MoA as Linked Provider**

↓

MoA Signed

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

- **IADT Proposer**
  The IADT representative who identifies linked provision opportunities in the capacity of their role and prepares a proposal for linked provision consideration.
- **IADT Head of Faculty** is responsible for submitting the proposal and Outline Statement to Executive for consideration.
- **Provider**
  The third-party educational provider (this could be an FE, private college, etc) who is interested in engaging with IADT to provide an award for one or more of the programmes the provider offers. The Provider is responsible for making the application, providing all necessary documentation, and engaging with IADT throughout the process.
- **IADT Executive**
  The Executive Team will review and consider the initial proposal made by the IADT Proposer ensuring the proposal aligns with the strategic aims and objectives of IADT and is compatible with and supports IADT's Quality Framework.
- **Academic Council**
  IADTs Academic Council will note the approved proposal at meetings and the recommendations made following the investigation and consideration stage.
- **IADT President**
  The President will engage with the Provider, communicate the application decision and sign the MOU and MOA as required.
- **Office of the Registrar & Senior Quality Officer**
  Manage the coordination of the process between IADT, the POC and the Provider as required.
- **Partnerships Oversight Committee (POC)**
  A POC will be convened by the President to consider the application of a Provider, review to submission, conduct a site visit and make recommendations regarding the application. The POC will ensure that the application and prospective relationship aligns with the strategic aims and objectives of IADT and is compatible with and supports IADT's Quality Framework. The composition and terms of reference for the POC are available from *IADT Policy for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision.* The POC is responsible for carrying out the due diligence and will ensure that statutory requirements associated with linked provision can be fully met and that the Provider meets the provisions of the QA process necessary. The POC will typically report within 6 months of being established.
- **Governing Body**
  IADT's Governing Body will note the recommendations made following the investigation and consideration stage ensuring that the new relationship aligns with the strategic aims and objectives of IADT.

2. Initial Exploration

2.1 Overview of the Initial Exploration Stage
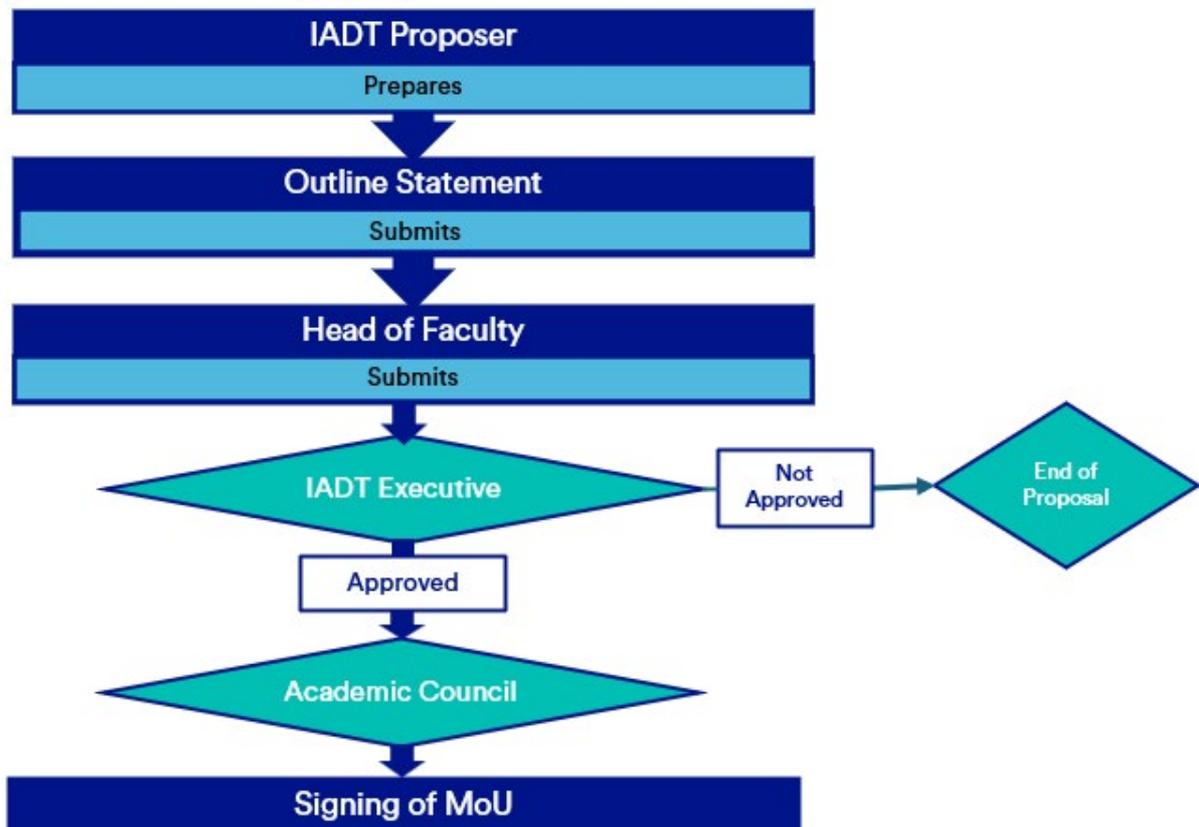
It is recognised that proposals for linked provision may arise from a range of sources including strategic alliances between higher education providers and the emergence of common teaching or research interests in different institutions. The commencement of any linked programme provision typically involves a Head of Faculty or Head of Department undertaking exploratory discussions with, and preliminary background research on, potential linked partners.

2.2 Outline Statement
Any planned linked provision activity shall be notified to the relevant Head of Faculty by the Proposed submitting an **Outline Statement** regarding the third-party educational provider. The Head of Faculty submits the Outline to IADT Executive and requires approval to proceed to full investigation. Academic Council are informed of the approval. If the proposal is not approved by Executive, the proposal ends.

Successful proposals allow any emerging arrangement to be governed and managed strategically and systematically and in full integration with the overall strategic goals and development plan of IADT.

The **Outline Statement** sets out overall parameters of the linked provision proposal in terms of:
- strategic justification
- legal considerations
- negotiation and development
- management and/or oversight
- quality assurance
- nature and ownership of programmes and awards
- programme(s) involved and programme validation
- delivery and assessment mechanisms

- professional/regulatory body recognition
- learner entitlements
- business case and estimate of costs

While the individual points do not require elaboration in detail, the Outline Statement needs to provide sufficient information on each point to allow for an informed decision on the part of IADT Executive.

2.3 Decision of IADT Executive

Executive will consider the proposal as detailed in the Outline Statement and makes one of the following recommendations:

i.   grants approval to perform a detailed investigation and consideration of the linked provision proposal;

ii.   requests further information and the resubmission of the Outline Statement;

iii.   does not grant approval to proceed with the proposed investigation.

Following approval by IADT Executive, and noting at Academic Council, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) may be agreed and signed by IADT and the third-party educational provider.

2.4 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The MOU will enable the sharing of information to enable a Due Diligence Investigation and an assessment of the QAE procedures of the Linked Provider and to be completed. The MoU will be established prior to these steps to set the enabling framework for the sharing of confidential information including a data sharing agreement. Both institutions shall ensure full compliance the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Acts 1988–2018[9] and with IADT Data Governance. The President, or their nominee, signs any MoU on behalf of IADT. The MoU must be countersigned on behalf of any other party by a representative of similar status and with the authority to enter into such an agreement.

The Provider will be invited to commence the application and provided with documentation and templates.

3. Next Stage

At this point, the next stage, investigation, and consideration may now commence. Refer to Procedure 2: *Procedure for Approving the Quality Assurance Procedures of current linked Providers*.

References and Resources

1. [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
2. [Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012)](#)
3. [Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment Act) 2019](#)
4. [QQI Sector-specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
5. [ESG Guidelines](#)
6. [QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016](#)
7. [General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679](#)
8. [Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018](#)
9. IADT Quality Framework*
10. IADT Policy on Linked Provision Framework*
11. IADT Policy for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision*
12. IADT Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision*
13. IADT Marks and Standards
14. [IADT Strategic Plan](#)
15. [IADT Performance Agreement](#)
16. [IADT GDPR and Data Protection](#)

IADT Policies and Procedures are available via the IADT website:
https://iadt.ie/about/iadt-policies-procedures/

The following documents were consulted when drafting this document

QQI Sector Guidelines for DABs https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/qg-4-sector-specific-qa-guidelines-for-universities-and-other-designated-awarding-bodies.pdf (see Section 5)

Other HEI Procedures
1. TUS Policy on Linked Provision
   https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL4/12_TUS-Policy-on-Linked-Provision-and-Linked-Provider-Framework-2022-%E2%80%93-2025-AC-29.04.2022.pdf
2. UL Linked Provider Framework
   https://www.ul.ie/media/8680/download?inline
3. UCC Linked Providers Outline Procedure for Approval of LP QA Procedures
   https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/qualityenhancementunit/guidelines/UCCLinkedProvidersProcedure.pdf
4. UCD procedures for approval of UCD linked provider
   https://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/Procedures%20for%20the%20Approval%20of%20UCD%20Linked%20Provider%20QA%20Procedures.pdf