

Partner Vetting Checklist

*A comprehensive checklist for evaluating, approving, and monitoring external partners for global programs, consulting projects, and study-abroad experiences. Checklist items with an * denote items that should be included in an SOW, MOU, or Agreement. A General Counsel approved Agreement template is available here by contacting the Office of General Counsel.*

1. Organizational Legitimacy & Background Verification

- * Confirm the organization's legal registration and business status in its home country.
- * Verify the physical address, operational facilities, and primary place of business.
- Collect and review documentation (e.g., registration certificates, business licenses).
- Confirm the organization's mission, structure, and years of operation.
- * Require transparency regarding ownership and leadership.
- Conduct an independent reputational check (e.g., publicly available information, professional networks).

2. Financial Credibility & Operational Stability

- Request general financial information sufficient to establish credibility (not proprietary details).
- * Verify the organization's capacity to host students (staffing, resources, physical space).
- Assess whether the partner's business model is ethical, sustainable, and aligned with program objectives.
- Ensure the partner is not engaged in activities that would violate university policy or applicable laws.

3. Ethical Standards & Values Alignment

- Review the organization's publicly stated values and ensure they align with institutional ethics.
- * Require agreement to a MOU that includes:
 - Respectful communication
 - Commitment to student safety
 - Compliance with local and international law
 - Zero tolerance for discriminatory or inappropriate behavior
- Conduct interviews with key partner representatives to assess professionalism, communication style, and expectations.
- * Confirm that staff who will interact with students understand and accept behavioral expectations.

4. Academic Fit & Project Suitability

- * Ensure the partner can provide a meaningful, structured project aligned with academic goals.
- * Review and approve project scope, deliverables, and expectations before student assignments.
- Assess whether the partner genuinely needs and intends to use student work.
- * Verify the partner's capacity for supervision and feedback throughout the project.
- * Require all project details (timelines, tasks, deliverables) to be finalized prior to program/course launch.

5. Risk Management & Student Safety

- Conduct a risk assessment of the partner's location, facilities, and organizational practices.
- * Confirm the partner's willingness to uphold university policies regarding student safety.
- * Require emergency contact information for local staff.
- * Ensure the partner understands reporting requirements for any incidents or concerns.
- * Validate that the environment where students will meet or work is professional and safe.

6. Communication & Oversight Expectations

- * Establish clear communication channels between the partner, faculty, and administrators.
- * Define the partner's responsibilities versus the university's.
- * Confirm the partner is willing to participate in check-ins, progress reviews, and feedback sessions.
- * Ensure faculty or administrative oversight is built into each phase of the program.

7. Compliance With University Policies

- * Require signature of all institutional agreements (MOUs, partner contracts, conduct forms).
- * Confirm understanding of the university's anti-harassment, non-discrimination, and ethical guidelines.
- * Verify that all legal and insurance requirements are met.

8. Pre-Approval Review by University Faculty/Administration

- Collect feedback from faculty subject-matter experts on the partner's suitability.
- Document all vetting steps and store them in a centralized system.

9. Continuous Monitoring & Mid-Program Evaluation

- Faculty or staff must check in with students regularly during the program.
- Confirm that the partner continues to meet expectations once the program begins.
- Provide a confidential reporting mechanism for students to report concerns.
- * Establish a plan for immediate intervention if issues arise and a "plan B" if the partner fails to meet expectations.

10. Post-Program Review & Accountability

- Conduct a debrief with students to evaluate the partner's performance.
- Interview faculty or administrators who oversaw the experience.
- Evaluate whether the partner met academic, ethical, and safety standards.
- Decide whether the partner should be retained, placed on probation, or removed.
- Document lessons learned to improve future vetting processes.