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Collaborative business relationship management — Guidelines for university-business collaboration

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 286, *Collaborative business relationship management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

With the rapid development of economic globalization, international exchanges and collaboration in education are also deepening constantly. Good practices of university-business collaboration (UBC) have been formed in many other countries. The UBC model should be promoted in more countries and regions around the world. Therefore, it is essential to develop international standards related to UBC, provide exemplary practices and collaboration guidance for UBC, and promote the sustainable development of UBC.

The participation of multinational business partners in UBC is becoming more common. However, there are significant differences between UBC models across different countries, and establishing a common standard for UBC will provide guidance to the varying UBC practices. Through this, different interested parties to the internationalization of UBC can clearly understand expectations, realize in-depth exchanges and collaboration in international human capital and science and technology innovation, encourage business partners to explore international markets, and promote global industrial transformation and economic development.

This document will stimulate the innovation and development of business partners, especially small and medium-sized business partners, and universities, cultivate applied and innovative talents through the advantages of UBC, and improve the level of social innovation and the quality of talent employment.

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Collaborative business relationship management — Guidelines for university-business collaboration

1 Scope

This document gives guidance for universities, business partners and other interested parties on using the 12 principles of collaborative business relationships provided in ISO/TR 44000 to improve their capability in university-business collaboration (UBC).

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

university-business collaboration **UBC**

collaboration between a university and its *business partners* (3.2), in order to achieve innovation, knowledge development, capacity building, workforce development, employment promotion and other collaborative opportunities

Note 1 to entry: The term “university” in this document refers to an institution of higher (or tertiary) education which awards academic degrees in several academic disciplines or offers vocational education, including but not limited to research-oriented university, applied university, business school, art school, college, polytechnic, higher vocational and technical university (college), and community university (college).

3.2

business partner

organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by the realization of the goal of university and business

3.3

relationship management

series of management activities, such as systems, methods, consultation mechanism and evaluations, which are carried out to achieve the collaborative relationship expected by a university, their *business partners* (3.2) and their interested parties

4 Structure of this document

This document is based on the 12 principles of collaborative business relationship given in ISO/TR 44000. For each principle there are the following three main subclauses:

- What: a summary of the intent of the principle.
- Why: an explanation of its relevance to university and business.

— How: guidance on its implementation.

5 Implementation of the principles of university and business relationships management

5.1 Relationship management

5.1.1 What: summary of the intent

UBC is based on collaborative working relationships established between universities and business partners. Relationship management is essential to sustaining collaborative relationships that are ethical and socially responsible, and that underpin success. This does not have to be a complex process but should be one which can be easily understood and communicated across the university, business and UBC interested party.

5.1.2 Why: explanation of the relevance

Academia and business communities often operate very differently and can therefore have a varying focus on outcomes. The UBC should have a joint focus on agreeing and effectively managing the relationship, which can be supported by identifying and documenting a common process of engagement. A collaborative working relationship management approach helps ensure consistent operation and continual improvement due to the changes over time and in personnel. In addition, relevant personnel can clarify the management mode of UBC and the expectations of interested party through a structured and documented engagement model. It is possible to develop these relationships into a broader, interdisciplinary and lasting relationship.

5.1.3 How: implementation guidance

5.1.3.1 Establishment of the relationship management plan (RMP)

The university and its business partners can consider establishing a system of identifying and evaluating interested parties and various relationships in the UBC, clarifying the contents and methods of relationship management, and coordinating the relationship among the members of the project.

The university and its business partners should develop a joint RMP to clarify the objectives of the UBC and its environment, and the external and internal factors of achieving their objectives. It also includes the partners, collaboration environment and interested party expectations.

The formulation of a joint RMP can be an iterative and continual optimization process.

5.1.3.2 Identifying relationships

It is important to assess the collaborative relationship and determine the mode of collaboration in all stages of the UBC, including current, future and possible collaboration.

Best practice alliance benchmarking is a continual improvement process utilized to continually seek improvement to practices. When developing relationships, both the university and its business partners should understand their individual and joint advantages from collaborative work, define where they will have sustainable relationships, and define what methods can promote the sustainable development of the UBC.

The existing or potential collaborative relationships can have different outcomes at different periods of the UBC. The university should prioritize and distinguish various types of relationships and consider where a collaborative approach can deliver maximum benefit.

5.1.3.3 Establishing organization and leadership

The UBC should establish a joint management team, including the leadership team, to clearly identify the senior administrative personnel or its designated representatives responsible for the UBC, and identify the members, their roles, responsibilities and powers.

The joint management team should build an environment to support the implementation of the UBC, including but not limited to resources, equipment, property, personnel and risk management.

The joint management team should ensure continual management and upgrading of the UBC in accordance with the objectives and governance requirements.

The joint management team can develop collaborative partners according to project needs, and establish and implement the joint RMP, so that all partners can benefit from it.

5.2 Visions and values

5.2.1 What: summary of the intent

The visions and values of a UBC should reflect the alignment objectives and concepts of collaborative work, avoid moral or ethical clashes, and articulate the future direction, culture and values required to effectively work with business partners.

5.2.2 Why: explanation of the relevance

Visions and values provide guidance for universities, business partners and their interested parties in order to align the direction of any development, culture, reputation, ethics and behaviour. The consistent expression of the visions and values will help collaborators and interested parties in optimizing collaborative outcomes.

5.2.3 How: implementation guidance

5.2.3.1 Identifying the visions and values of collaboration

There are important factors that affect the development of collaborative work and the success of the UBC, including the anticipation of visions and values and the profiles of relevant parties, and potential compatibility between the university and its partners. All interested parties to the UBC should have a clear and consistent understanding of their visions and values, and maintain a clear focus on value creation.

5.2.3.2 Implementing the visions and values of collaboration

UBC management should implement the visions and values of all parties throughout the process of collaboration. Common goals and clear responsibilities should be established for all parties. The university and its business partners should focus on internal and external objectives, which include:

- strengthening the research quality and education capacity of the university;
- strengthening institutional collaboration between university researchers and potential users of research in government, industry and communities;
- mobilizing resources for research from funding bodies while adhering to ethics guidelines;
- protecting the intellectual property rights of interested parties.

5.3 UBC objectives

5.3.1 What: summary of the intent

The objectives of the university and its business partners can be achieved through collaborative work and is established by identifying the driving factors. The interested parties of the UBC should agree on the objectives and express them in their RMP. Interested parties should carry out their responsibilities and provide adequate resources to realize the objectives. They should also consider key elements and value embodiment of the UBC, so that they can address the differences in thoughts or behaviour that can arise in the process of collaboration.

5.3.2 Why: explanation of the relevance

Collaboration and exchange between universities and business partners is one of the important channels for industry development and curriculum design, talent cultivation and resource mobility, and also promotes innovation in society. The effectiveness and feasibility of the objectives are the basis for restructuring any limited resources, enhancing competitive advantage, and realizing the value for the university, its business partners and UBC interested parties. Clarity of the objectives is the basis for effective collaboration and provides guidance on the implementation of activities, key points, development direction and behaviour for all parties. A clear statement of the objectives of collaboration directly contributes to the consistency of the actions and conduct of all parties.

5.3.3 How: implementation guidance

5.3.3.1 Establishing objectives

All parties should have a clear and consistent understanding of their objectives and should consider the value of participating in the collaborative arrangement.

In the process of collaborative working involving all interested parties, each party should define its own objectives, understand the other party's objectives and find the common objectives of all parties.

This is necessary to ensure compatibility between a party's own objectives and the common objectives, achieve effective participation of all parties, and maintain mutual benefit between and among the parties.

5.3.3.2 Coordinating preparation

All parties should clarify the objectives and values of collaboration in advance, integrate resources and establish effective collaboration mechanisms. Defining the objectives ensures that the collaborative approach can be carried out better in order to improve the efficiency of the relationship and reduce the negative impact of external conditions on the partnership.

5.3.3.3 Coordinating preparation

Consideration should be given to the individual risks of collaboration for each party. The joint risks should be considered in a holistic manner.

5.3.3.4 Refining objectives

All parties should clarify the development direction of the objectives, and consider the setting of milestones.

All parties can set small, phased objectives according to the time limitation. The objectives can be divided into short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives.

All parties may set clear objectives for each sub-item according to the various contents of the collaboration.

5.3.3.5 Implementing objectives

All parties should formulate clear action plans according to the collaboration objectives.

In the process of implementing a collaborative venture, all parties should effectively communicate and implement the established objectives.

The formulation of the action plans should fully assess the actual capabilities and influencing factors of all parties to ensure that the plans are able to be executed, quantified and assessed.

During the implementation process, the execution should be checked and monitored according to the objectives, and all the relevant information should be summarized in a timely manner.

5.3.3.6 Adjusting target

In the process of achieving the objectives, the corresponding clear revision mechanism should be established.

The revision mechanism should clearly define the conditions for the revision, the criteria for revising the initiator, the revision process and the revision itself.

5.4 Collaborative leadership

5.4.1 What: summary of the intent

The appointment of several senior leaders who are in charge of managing the relationship between the university and its business partners is key to the success of the UBC. The senior leaders of the UBC are jointly appointed, representing all the parties. They are fully empowered and supported, effectively supporting and guiding the UBC, and creating an environment conducive for collaboration.

NOTE The title of the senior leaders of the UBC can be UBC Project Manager or UBC Manager.

5.4.2 Why: explanation of the relevance

Senior leaders make a clear commitment to the relationship between the university and its business partners. They set an example and work hard to achieve common visions, which are very important in establishing and strengthening the relationship between the university and its business partners. The participation of senior leaders provides direction, focus and trust for all parties directly involved in the UBC, which in turn sets the tone and behaviour in all levels of the UBC. This promotes collaborative behaviour and ensures the success and sustainable development of relationships and project outcomes.

5.4.3 How: implementation guidance

5.4.3.1 Appointing senior leaders for UBC

All parties in the UBC should determine the requirements, responsibilities and powers of senior leaders.

All parties in the UBC should elect and appoint senior leaders who are competent in managing the relationship between universities and business partners.

Senior leaders should have the support of all levels of the UBC in supervision and management and resource allocation.

5.4.3.2 Provisioning required resources

The UBC should allocate enough resources for senior leaders to manage it.