



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
OF MYANMAR

Post-secondary Education: An International Perspective

By Craig Evan Klafter & Stephanie Kauv, American University of Myanmar

This pamphlet has been written to be a resource to assist the people of Myanmar in understanding post-secondary education outside of Myanmar. The information contained herein describes the nature, types, governance, administration, and regulation of universities, institutes of technology, and colleges around the world or in key countries. It is not designed to be a comprehensive account, but rather to provide essential information in a non-partisan manner.

1. Forms of Education

Education is divided into academic, professional, and vocational. Academic education pertains to areas of study that focus on the provision of theoretical and scholarly knowledge (e.g., Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Bachelor of Arts in Pure Mathematics, etc.). Professional education focuses on educating students for admission to a specific profession consisting of a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards, possess special knowledge and skills in a widely recognized body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others (e.g., divinity, medicine, law, etc.). Vocational education prepares students for a specific trade and it directly develops expertise in techniques related to technology, skill and scientific technique to span all aspects of the trade. Vocational education is classified as using procedural knowledge (e.g., plumber, cook, electrician, etc.).

The distinctions between these forms of education are not always clear. A specific course of study needs to be carefully reviewed to determine whether it is academic, professional or vocational. A course of study in a specific subject could be classified differently depending on its nature and focus. For example, Oxford University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Law degree and its curriculum consists of topics “chosen primarily for their intellectual interest” and which “aim to develop in ... students a high level of skill in comprehension, analysis and presentation.” Graduates can pursue careers in law, but can also pursue many other careers for which the education they received would prove useful. Hence, this degree is classified as academic. Contrast the Bachelor of Laws degree offered by McGill University in Canada. It aims to qualify students for the Bar Admission Programs in all Canadian provinces; no additional formal education is required to secure admission to practice law in Canada. It would be classified as professional. Contrast again the Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies degree offered by the for-profit Kaplan University in the United States. The curriculum for this course of study “offers a broad knowledge base and a strong foundation in law while helping [to] further develop practical paralegal skills in legal writing, drafting, legal research, interviewing, using legal technology, and more.” The course of study is designed to prepare students for employment as non-lawyer paralegals or legal assistants. This degree is classified as vocational.

Academic and professional education has been the traditional domain of universities, institutes of technology, liberal arts colleges, and some military academies. Vocational education has been the traditional domain of City & Guilds and Colleges of Further Education in the UK, community colleges and private for-profit colleges in the USA and Myanmar, and universities of applied sciences in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Greece. In most countries, the separation of academic and professional study from vocational study has been regarded as more efficient and highly desirable. This is because universities, institutes of technology, and liberal arts colleges require substantial research facilities (e.g., libraries, laboratories, etc.) and vocationally-focused institutions generally do not. Consequently, educational institutions that provide academic and professional education do not usually compete with the institutions that provide vocational education.

Table 1: Forms of Education

	Academic	Professional	Vocational
Definition	Focus on the provision of theoretical and scholarly knowledge	To meet the requirements for entry into a profession	To prepare students for a specific trade
Examples	Philosophy	Medicine	Carpentry
Where taught?	Universities, institutes of technology, and colleges	Universities, institutes of technology, colleges, and some military academies (USA, France, etc.)	City & Guilds (UK), Colleges of Further Education (UK), Community Colleges (USA), private for-profit colleges (USA, Singapore, Myanmar, etc.), universities of applied sciences (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, etc.)

2. Types of Qualifications

Academic qualifications are fairly standardized around the world, although some diplomas and degrees do not exist in all countries. The initial generally recognized academic qualification is a high school diploma, which signifies completion of secondary school. In England, the equivalent of a high school diploma are AS and A levels. There is also an International Baccalaureate - an internationally recognized qualification for students aged 16 to 19 that is based around detailed academic study of a wide range of subjects, including languages, the arts, science, mathematics, history and geography. The second level of academic qualification are associate degrees (which are most common in North America), Foundation degrees (England), Diploma of Higher Education (Scotland) and Higher Certificate (Ireland) are typically awarded by community colleges, junior colleges and colleges of further education upon completion of a course of study usually lasting two years. Next on the list are bachelor's degrees, which represent either 3 or 4 years of study after secondary school. These are nearly exclusively awarded by universities, institutes of technology, colleges, and some military academies. Master's degrees are granted to individuals who have undergone study demonstrating a mastery or high-order overview of a specific field of study. The Doctor of Philosophy is typically regarded as the highest academic degree, but other academic doctorates are awarded (e.g., Doctor of Science, Doctor of Letters, etc.). In the context of academic degrees, the term philosophy does not refer solely to the field of philosophy, but is used in a broader sense in accordance with its original Greek meaning, which is "love of wisdom." A Doctor of Philosophy is exclusively awarded by universities or institutes of technology usually on the basis of course work, comprehensive examinations, a dissertation consisting of a body of original academic research worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed context, and an oral defense of that dissertation. The length of time needed to earn a Doctor of Philosophy typically ranges from 3 to 5 years.

Table 2.1: Academic Qualifications

Level	Qualifications
1	High School Diploma, AS and A levels, International Baccalaureate
2	Associate degrees, Foundation degrees, Diploma of Higher Education, Higher Certificate
3	Bachelor's degrees
4	Master's degrees
5	Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science, Doctor of Letters

A professional degree program prepares students for a particular profession by emphasizing skills and practical analysis over theory and research. Most, but not all, of the professions associated with professional degrees are professions that require licensing in order to practice as a professional in the field. Consequently, professional bodies influence what degrees can be classified as professional degrees. Since professional bodies

are country specific, the level of required professional degrees varies around the world. At the bachelor’s level, the professional degrees usually include Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Science, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Divinity, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Pharmacy, and Bachelor of Laws. Professional degrees at the bachelor’s level are most common in the UK and Commonwealth. At the master’s level, the professional degrees usually include Master of Divinity, Master of Education, Master of Social Work, and Master of Business Administration when including a major that requires professional licensure (e.g., accounting). Professional degrees at the master’s level are most common in Europe and North America. At the doctoral level, the professional degrees usually include Juris Doctor, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Chiropractic, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Doctor of Pharmacy, Doctor of Psychology, Doctor of Social Work, Doctor of Dental Surgery, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Doctor of Optometry, and Doctor of Nursing Practice. Professional degrees at the doctoral level are most common in North America. In the United Kingdom, there are no doctoral level professional degrees; doctorates are exclusively academic degrees.

Table 2.2: Professional Qualifications

Level	Qualifications
1	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Science, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Divinity, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Pharmacy, and Bachelor of Laws
2	Master of Divinity, Master of Education, Master of Social Work, and Master of Business Administration in Accountancy
3	Juris Doctor, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Chiropractic, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Doctor of Pharmacy, Doctor of Psychology, Doctor of Social Work, Doctor of Dental Surgery, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Doctor of Optometry, and Doctor of Nursing Practice

Vocational qualifications are designed to give learners the skills and knowledge to do a particular job, work in a particular industry, or acquire more general skills to do a variety of jobs. The United Kingdom has one of the most developed systems of vocational qualifications in the world – a system followed in many commonwealth countries, even though vocational education is universal. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work based awards in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that are achieved through assessment and training. In Scotland they are known as Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) and are identical to NVQ. They are offered by a variety of awarding bodies such as City and Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, and the Scottish Qualification Authority. NVQ or SVQ are based on National Occupational Standards that describe the “competencies” expected in any given job role. There are five levels of NVQ or SVQ ranging from Level 1, which focuses on basic work activities, to Level 5 for senior management. NVQs or SVQs are not formally defined in terms of equivalence to conventional academic qualifications even though vocational bodies have been advocating for their academic equivalencies for more than a decade.

The Higher National Diploma (“HND”) is the most common vocational qualification awarded in Myanmar. It is usually studied full-time, in 2 to 3 academic years, but can also be studied part-time. Traditional British universities do not recognize the HND as being equivalent to academic study. Some former British polytechnics anxious to maintain or increase enrollment, however, are admitting with advanced standing students with HNDs into a limited number of degree programs. Such students are usually deemed to have completed the equivalent of one year of study towards a bachelor’s degree.

Table 2.3: Vocational Qualifications

Level	Qualifications
1	GCSE (grades D-G)
2	GCSE (grades A*-C)
3	Higher National Diploma

3. Restricting the Use of Terminology

“Universities” have traditionally been institutions, which award bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in a wide range of academic and sometimes professional degree programs. “Institutes of technology” have traditionally awarded bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in academic (natural sciences) and professional (engineering, architecture) degree programs. “Colleges” have traditionally been institutions with a more modest range of academic degree programs, usually award only bachelor’s degrees, and rarely offer professional degree programs. Some military academies are also colleges, and award professional bachelor’s degrees (e.g., US Military Academy – West Point, Les écoles de Saint-Cyr Coëtquidan, etc.). Community Colleges in the United States are only authorized to award associate degrees and Colleges of Further Education in England award foundation degrees, in Scotland award Diplomas of Higher Education, and in Ireland award Higher Certificates.

Table 3.1: Institutions and the Degrees they Award

Types of Institution	The qualifications they award
Community Colleges (USA), Junior Colleges (USA), and Colleges of Further Education (UK and Ireland)	Associate degrees (USA), Foundation degrees (England and Wales), Diploma of Higher Education (Scotland), Higher Certificate (Ireland)
Colleges, Some military academies	Bachelor’s degrees
Universities and Institutes of Technology	Bachelor’s, Master’s, Doctoral degrees

Many countries regulate the use of the terms “university,” “college,” and “degree.” In the United Kingdom, the terms “university” and “college” can only be used by institutions approved by the government, and institutions offering degrees must be approved by the Quality Assurance Agency and be on a list maintained by the Department for Education and Skills. In Australia, it is a criminal offence to use the term "university" or to purport to offer university degrees (bachelors, masters, and doctorate) without government authorization. In the United States, the term "college" or "university" is not legally protected on a national level; however, such terms are restricted by most states. In Delaware, for example, the terms can only be used by public or nonprofit corporations approved by the government, and only universities can award doctoral degrees. In Switzerland, no prior authorization is required to use the terms “university” or “college” or to offer higher education courses, organize examinations or issue private degrees. Swiss tradition has been to allow clients or the labor market itself to decide whether a private institution offers education quality rather than to leave this decision up to the State.

Table 3.2: Regulating the Use of Higher Education Terminology

Location	Regulation
United Kingdom	Prior government approval required
Australia	Criminal offence to use terminology without authorization
Delaware (USA)	Prior governmental approval required and restricted to public and nonprofit institutions
Switzerland	No restriction

4. Measuring Courses or Modules

Determining the equivalency of courses or modules between universities, institutes of technology, and colleges is necessary to ensure quality, to facilitate transfer of students between institutions, to accurately measure student performance, and to gauge faculty member workload. In North America, credits are based on faculty-student contact hours. A typical semester-long course would meet three hours per week for fifteen weeks and earn 3 credit hours. A typical year of study would consist of 30 credit hours. In the United Kingdom, the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (“CATS”) measures contact time plus an allocation for self-study. A full study year normally consists of 120 CATS. In Europe, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (“ECTS”) bases its credits on estimates of student workload. A typical year of study equals 60 ECTS. Some universities, institutes of technology, and colleges are now recording study on transcripts using multiple systems of credit to facilitate international student mobility.

Table 4: Measuring Courses or Modules

Location	Formula	Equivalency (per year)
USA, Canada	Faculty-student contact	30 Credit Hour
United Kingdom	contact time plus an allocation for self-study	120 CATS
Europe	student workload	60 ECTS

5. Types of Universities, Institutes of Technology, and Colleges

Universities, institutes of technology and colleges vary depending on country and type of institution, but there are common elements in all universities, institutes of technology, and colleges. There are three broad types of universities, institutes of technology, and colleges: public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit.

a. Public Universities, Institutes of Technology and Colleges:

Public universities, institutes of technology, and colleges are the most common form, and they exist in nearly every country in the world. These institutions receive all or the majority of their funding from government. In general, these institutions are regulated by government ministries or departments, but also enjoy considerable autonomy with regard to issues of curriculum, research, the appointment of faculty, and the admission of students. However, they are still subject to government regulation usually in the form of a government agency charged with higher education quality assurance.

In most countries, public universities, institutes of technology, and colleges have governance that is shared between a Board (e.g., Board of Regents, Council, etc.) and faculty members. These boards share governance authority with the faculty on academic matters, but have broad authority over non-academic matters. The members of these boards are typically appointed by government executives (e.g., heads of state, prime ministers, governors or premiers). In communist countries, such as China, public colleges, institutes of technology, and universities are associated with different levels of political administration. Accordingly, presidents, party secretaries, heads of administrative affairs, and deans of schools at higher education institutions are appointed by their respective government authorities. Presidents and party secretaries (representatives of the Communist Party who usually have considerable administrative authority) of public institutions are appointed by central or provincial governments. Substantive academic authority is in the control of presidents, party secretaries, office heads, and deans; resources are distributed by these groups.

Regardless of the country, government ministries or departments seldom intervene directly in the governance of a public universities, institutes of technology, or colleges. They rely on the people appointed to the governing boards or to senior positions in the universities, institutes of technology, or colleges, quality assurance agencies, and government's financial appropriation authority to ensure that institutions serve the public interest.

b. Private Nonprofit Universities, Institutes of Technology, and Colleges:

Private nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges are most common in the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Thailand, Turkey, Japan and South Korea, but exist in most ASEAN countries and around the world. They are companies that use their surplus revenues to further achieve their purpose, rather than distribute their surplus income to the company's directors as profit or dividends. They are not "owned" by the person or persons that started them, and cannot be sold. They are public institutions that belong to the public at-large. Many European private nonprofit universities and colleges and some American universities and colleges (e.g., Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Dartmouth, etc.) have charters.¹ In Europe, these institutions are usually governed by their faculty members through their representatives on some form of governing council. In the rest of the world, the parties usually responsible for governing these and indeed all private nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, or colleges for the public at-large are the members of a board of trustees or board of governors. These members are typically men and women of prominence who volunteer their time for the benefit

¹ Some universities and colleges receive charters directly from monarchs (royal charters) or heads of state (charters) or from the Pope (papal bulls). These charters confer on a university or college the right to exist, the authority to grant degrees, and exemption from taxation and governmental interference. The power to grant charters is generally regarded to be a core discretionary power of a monarch, head of state or Pope.

of the institution. They are most akin in organizational structure in Myanmar to pagodas, which are operated for public benefit by Gaw-ba-ka.

The Board of Trustees or Board of Governors of private nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges typically share governance with faculty members on matters of academic affairs. Policies established by the Board are carried out by an administration that typically includes a chief executive officer, chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, and Deans or Faculty Chairmen and Chairwomen. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees is the liaison between the Board of Trustees and the CEO.

Governments typically encourage the creation of private nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges because they tend to provide higher quality education than public institutions of higher education, tend to be less political than public institutions of higher education, and do not place a burden on the limited resources of government. Private nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges also usually do not have faculty and student unions, and tend to focus on academic and professional, rather than vocational, courses of study. Since nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges act in the public interest and since none of its income can be paid to its trustees (with the exception of a reasonable salary, benefits and expenses paid to its chief executive officer), nonprofit universities, institutes of technology, and colleges are routinely exempt from taxation.

c. Private For-profit Universities and Colleges²:

Private for-profit universities and colleges developed during the second half of the twentieth century in the United States and have spread around the world. These institutions are operated by private, profit-seeking businesses, and typically focus on vocational education. Hence, they do not compete directly with public and private nonprofit universities and colleges. Kevin Carey of the New American Foundation wrote that "For-profits exist in large part to fix educational market failures left by traditional institutions, and they profit by serving students that public and private nonprofit institutions too often ignore."³ Some private for-profit universities and colleges are publically-traded companies such as the Apollo Education Group, Inc. (NASDAQ) and Raffles Education Corporation Limited (Singapore Exchange). Recently, the US Department of Education has proposed "gainful employment regulations" that would provide more transparency and accountability to institutions that offer vocational training. These regulations require for-profit universities and colleges to compile and publish statistics about the percentage of their graduates who secure employment in the fields for which they were educated. The goal is to provide consumers with information that could help them shop for vocational education wisely.

Table 5: Types of universities, institutes of technology and colleges, their Governance and Sources of Funding

Types of universities, institutes of technology and colleges	Definition	Governance	Source of Funding
Public	Receives all or the majority of their funding from government	Board of Regents, Board of Governors, or Council appointed by government	Government appropriation and tuition
Private nonprofit	Uses its surplus revenues to further achieve its purpose, rather than distributing its surplus income to the organization's trustees as profit or dividends	Board of Trustees comprising prominent men and women volunteers	Tuition and charitable gifts
Private for-profit	Operated for the profit of owners	Board of Directors	Tuition

² Private for-profit institutes of technology are extremely rare in the world, and are thus not discussed here.

³ Kevin Carey, "Why Do You Think They're Called For-Profit Colleges?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (July 25, 2010).

6. Degree-awarding Authority

In most countries, universities, institutes of technology, and colleges can only award degrees if authorized to do so by the government of the jurisdiction in which they are established. Most governments require new universities, institutes of technology, or colleges to comply with rigorous standards before degree-awarding authority is conferred. In the United Kingdom, applicants to secure degree-awarding authority must meet or surpass minimum standards for governance and academic management, academic standards and quality assurance, scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of academic staff, and the environment supporting the delivery of taught higher education programs. In the United States, degree-awarding authority is conferred by Departments of Education in individual state governments. In Delaware, for example, applicants must detail the institution's purposes and objectives, administrative organization, financial administration, student personnel program, admission policies and procedures, faculty, curricula, graduation requirements, facilities, library, outcomes, catalogue and announcements. In both cases, the focus is to ensure that universities, institutes of technology, and colleges granted authority to award degrees have the governance, management, faculty, facilities, policies, procedures, and quality assurance systems to deliver a well thought out curriculum to standards expected by the jurisdiction.

Table 6: Degree-awarding Authority

Country	Minimum Standards for
United Kingdom	governance and academic management, academic standards and quality assurance, scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of academic staff, and the environment supporting the delivery of taught higher education programs
United States (Delaware)	purposes and objectives, administrative organization, financial administration, student personnel program, admission policies and procedures, faculty, curricula, graduation requirements, facilities, library, outcomes, catalogue and announcements

7. Higher Education Quality Assurance

Higher education quality assurance is a program for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of an higher education institution's objectives, policies, and procedures to ensure that standards of quality are being met. Most countries impose quality assurance requirements on universities, institutes of technology, and colleges when they seek degree-awarding authority. Countries known for having the highest quality universities, institutes of technology, and colleges have also established secondary quality assurance regimes by means of independent organizations. In the United Kingdom, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education ("QAA") is an independent agency established to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education. It checks how universities and colleges maintain their academic standards and quality and, to support this work, develops guidance in cooperation with the higher education sector, principal among which is the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. QAA's main business is to conduct external peer reviews of all UK degree-awarding bodies as well as colleges that provide higher education programs in partnership with UK degree-awarding bodies.

In the United States, most higher education quality assurance has been overseen by a set of six regional accrediting agencies, which are membership organizations of educational institutions in their respective geographic regions. Regional accreditation of higher education applies to entire institutions, rather than specific programs within an institution. There are national accreditation agencies that focus on for-profit institutions with vocational, career or technical programs, and specialized and professional accreditors that focus on professional programs to ensure that graduates meet the standards expected for entry to a given profession (e.g., American Bar Association for law schools, Association of American Medical Colleges for medical schools, etc.).

The method of ensuring the quality of universities, institutes of technology, and colleges in both the United Kingdom and the United States is based on the principles of quality assurance management. Minimum standards suitable for the type and foci of institutions are set by the quality assurance agency (e.g., the ratio of

faculty members to students, the qualifications of faculty members, the number of volumes in libraries, the level of financial resources available, etc.). Institutions are required to have policies and procedures, to set standards for their own operation and to produce an abundance of statistics and statistical analysis concerning their operations, and quality assurance organizations review the institutions to determine the extent to which they meet or exceed the minimum standards and operate in compliance with their own policies and procedures. Peer review in the form of site visits by academics and academic administrators from like institutions supported by quality assurance agency staff are critical to the quality assurance process.

In Singapore, the Council for Private Education (“CPE”), is a statutory board under the Ministry of Education of Singapore. It is charged with the power to regulate the private education sector in Singapore. CPE sets out the basic standards that private education institutions need to adhere to in order to operate. There is also a voluntary EduTrust Certification Scheme which is a quality assurance scheme that sets out higher and more comprehensive criteria and standards that private education institutions can choose to meet to differentiate themselves. A key focus of the CPE is to require private education institutions to publish an extensive array of educational outcome statistics (verified by external audit) to educate potential consumers about the value of such institutions. The theory behind this approach is that consumers will shun private education institutions that have poor outcomes (e.g., low degree-program passage rates, poor job placement rates, low university admission rates, etc.) and thus force such institutions to close.

Table 7: Quality Assurance

Countries	Method	Detail
United Kingdom	Centralized quality assurance	Peer review + compliance with UK Quality Code for Higher Education
United States	Decentralized quality assurance	Peer review + meet self-imposed standards and comply with self-imposed policies
Singapore	Market-driven quality assurance	Basic standards + outcome statistics that must be published

8. Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is a bedrock principle of universities, institutes of technology, and colleges recognized by nearly all governments around the world. However, the concept of academic freedom is often misunderstood and misused. It is not a license to espouse personal beliefs, encourage political dissent, or instigate political activism. Rather, it is the freedom of faculty members and students to teach, study, and pursue knowledge and research without unreasonable interference or restriction from law, institutional regulations, or public pressure.

It is recognized in nearly all countries that the rights of the faculty member and the student to academic freedom carry with them duties and responsibilities. The faculty member is entitled to freedom to engage in research, scholarship, and creative work and to publish or produce the results, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties and as may be constrained by law. The faculty member is likewise entitled to freedom in teaching and discussing the subject matter. Yet, as in research, the concomitant of this freedom must be a commitment to accuracy and integrity. Debate is a normal aspect of free academic inquiry and teaching, and it is proper to incorporate the knowledge of the faculty member into that which is taught; however, the freedom to teach must be joined by a constant effort to distinguish between knowledge and belief and faculty members must refrain from using their positions to espouse their own personal political beliefs or to advocate political engagement.

Universities throughout the world are generally expected to ensure academic freedom. Indeed, it is usually a requirement for securing degree-awarding authority and for compliance with quality assurance standards. However, academic freedom nowhere extends beyond the campus of a university, institute of technology, or college. The expectations of governments and society may be different, and faculty members and students are universally expected to abide by the laws of the country in which they live.

Table 8: Academic Freedom

Questions	Answers
What is it?	The freedom of faculty members and students to teach, study, and pursue knowledge and research without unreasonable interference or restriction from law, institutional regulations, or public pressure
What isn't it?	A license to espouse personal beliefs, encourage political dissent, or instigate political activism
What are its constraints?	Responsible performance of academic duties, accuracy, integrity, law

9. International Partnerships

The types of international partnerships that institutions of higher education engage in depends on several factors - the pedagogy they employ, regulatory constraints, curricula, and accreditation requirements. Institutions often offer degrees through distance education (on-line, video conference, or by flying faculty members to teach in a foreign location). Institutions may enter into a partnership with a foreign university, institute of technology, or college to award joint or double degrees. Under such an arrangement, the foreign institution must be authorized by its government to award degrees. Articulation or progression arrangements are sometimes developed where a program of one institution is approved as a progression, direct entry or advanced route to programs delivered by another institution. Universities, institutes of technology, or colleges will occasionally partner with a foreign institution to market their programs, to recruit students, to provide facilities, and to collect tuition. In the UK, these are called "Support provider arrangements." The partner/support provider is not involved in the teaching or assessment of students, and is not connected to the achievement of program learning outcomes. There are no instances of a university, institute of technology, or college jointly owning a foreign school. This is because joint ownership of a foreign school can compromise quality assurance agency approval and raises significant liability issues.

British universities⁴ engage with foreign partners in several additional ways that higher education institutions in other parts of the world tend not to. This is because British universities often award degrees on the basis of examinations at the conclusion of a course of study rather than on the basis of continuous assessment as is the case in other parts of the world. The additional types of partnerships are:

- Instructional arrangements - This involves a British university having a foreign institution teach students according to a curriculum established by the British university. The student sits exams produced by the British university, those exams are graded by the British university, and (if the student passes) the British university awards the degree. University of London Extension is a leader in this type of delivery.
- Franchised programs - A franchised program is where all or parts of a British university's program are also delivered and assessed in a foreign institution leading to a qualification awarded by the foreign institution or in conjunction with the foreign institution (i.e., a joint degree). It may be that one year of a two year program or individual modules are part of the franchised program leading to a qualification either awarded by or in conjunction with the British university. The UK Quality Assurance Agency requires that the external organization be approved by its country of operation to award the qualification that is the basis of the franchise, and that the British university provide strong evidence of the partner institution's quality.
- Validation service – A British university is able to provide a validation service which may validate a whole program or a particular module which is developed by and taught at another institution. The university deems this program or module to be of an appropriate standard to lead to an award from the university. Such partnerships are rare and are closely scrutinized by the UK Quality Assurance Agency. The foreign institution must have faculty, facilities, and curricula comparable to what is offered by the British university.

Please note that none of these arrangements involve the joint ownership of a foreign school.

⁴ British universities, rather than institutes of technology and colleges, are exclusively permitted to enter into the following types of international partnerships.

Table 9: International Partnerships

Partnership Types	Description	Country
Distance Education	On-line, video conference, fly-in faculty	USA, UK
Joint Degrees	One diploma; two crests	USA, UK
Multiple Degrees	Multiple diplomas	USA, UK
Articulation Agreements Progression Arrangements	Agreement to accept prior study to admit a student with advanced standing	USA, UK
Non-instructional Agreements Support Provider Arrangement	Agreements to market, recruit students, collect tuition, and provide facilities	USA, UK
Instructional Arrangements	Foreign institution teaches students to take UK university's exams and receive partner university's qualification	UK
Franchised programs	Foreign institution teaches UK university's curriculum awarding its own degree	UK
Validation service	UK university approves a foreign university or college to award the UK university's degree	UK

10. Overseas American universities and colleges

The United States pioneered the concept of independent overseas universities and colleges in 1919 when the American University of Cairo was founded. Since then, more than thirty overseas American universities and colleges have been founded in Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia. In Southeast Asia, there are three independent American universities being established – the American University of Phnom Penh, the American University of Vietnam, and the American University of Myanmar. All overseas American universities and colleges are incorporated in the United States as nonprofit and non-political corporations, are subject to U.S. law and government oversight, are governed by a Board of Trustees with substantial representation from the host country, have degree-granting authority from the United States, have or are pursuing U.S. accreditation, ensure academic freedom, and have a liberal arts core curriculum. The two oldest overseas American universities (American University of Cairo and American University of Beirut) are the top research universities in their host countries and are ranked among the best universities in the world.

Table 10: Characteristics of Overseas American universities and colleges

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in the USA as Nonprofit and Non-political corporations • Subject to US law and government oversight • Governed by Board of Trustees with substantial host country representation • have degree-granting authority from the United States • have or are pursuing U.S. accreditation • ensure academic freedom • have a liberal arts core curriculum
--

Overseas American universities have been highly successful because, in part, they abstain from engagement in the political and religious affairs of their host countries and because their campuses have not become centers for faculty and student unrest. For example, the American University of Cairo and the American University of Beirut have continued to operate and indeed flourish in spite of political and religious upheaval in their respective countries, and the American College of Greece and American College of Thessaloniki are places of calm in the storm engulfing Greece. Indeed, American overseas universities have tended to be the least controversial institutions in the countries that host them.

In the United States, individual states regulate domestic and overseas universities and colleges. Delaware, as noted above, has extensive regulations that a university, institute of technology, or college must comply with before being granted degree-awarding authority. These regulations cover governance, administration, curriculum, faculty appointments, finances, and facilities, and require periodic site visits by officials of the Delaware Department of Education. Overseas American universities and colleges are also required to have their accounts audited by a U.S. Certified Public Accountant, and to file with the US government annually tax returns (even though they are exempt from U.S. taxation). In addition, overseas American universities and colleges must secure U.S. accreditation – although doing so is a long process (upwards of 10 years) that cannot begin until after an institution begins degree-program instruction. The vast majority of countries that host overseas American universities and colleges accept the U.S. system of quality assurance in lieu of their own. This is because U.S. quality assurance standards are regarded as the most stringent in the world and because requiring overseas American universities and colleges to comply with local quality assurance standards creates the possibility of conflicts of law between the U.S. system and the host country system that could result in the overseas American university or college not being able to maintain its U.S. degree-awarding authority or its U.S. accreditation and thus forcing it to close.

In all countries that host overseas American universities and colleges, the nonprofit status of the institution is recognized. That means that the institution is not subject to local income, sales, and property tax and is often exempted from importation duties on goods needed to support their educational mission. Moreover, since overseas American universities and colleges are required to centralize their finances within the U.S. and are expected to garner donations from American foundations, corporations and individuals, all host countries permit the free flow of the institution’s capital between the host country and the United States.

Figure 10: Geographic Location of American Overseas Universities



11. Satellite Campuses

In recent years, a different international strategy has been established, and not necessarily for the better. Enticed by money in the form of direct grants from foreign governments or from student fees, some universities and institutes of technology have established overseas satellite campuses. New York University operates remote campuses in the United Arab Emirates and China. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology offers degrees in Singapore. The Università di Bologna operates in Buenos Aires, where it offers a graduate program in international relations. In each of these cases, and in many others like them, the host cities and countries believed that the satellite campuses would be equal in quality to the parent institutions.

Few of these overseas campuses are, in fact, on par with their parent universities. Few faculty members who teach in them would be hired into tenure track or tenured positions at their parent institutions. The admission

standards for students at the satellite campuses are usually below what is required by the main campus. Satellite campuses seldom undertake significant research. Indeed, many host countries have complained that they have not received what they paid for.

Financially, many of these satellite campuses failed to cover their expenses after an initial period of host city or country subsidy. The Johns Hopkins University opened a Hopkins-Nanjing Center in China in 1986, and to date has lost more than \$32 million on the venture. George Mason University opened a satellite campus in the United Arab Emirates in 2005 and closed the campus at considerable expense in 2009 when its local subsidy was reduced. The University of New South Wales withdrew from Singapore in 2007, just three months after opening, at a cost of \$17.5 million. The local subsidy was not sufficient to sustain the initiative given student demand. Satellite campuses used for business education (e.g., INSEAD in Singapore, etc.) and for summer intensive foreign language instruction using faculty and students from the parent university (e.g., Saint Louis University Madrid Campus, etc.) have fared better economically.

Conclusion

The provision of higher education around the world varies from country to country and within countries. Nevertheless, nearly all countries have established laws regulating the establishment of universities, institutes of technology, and colleges, and regulating the use of terms such as “university,” “institute of technology,” “college,” and “degree.” Most countries encourage the creation of private nonprofit and for-profit institutions of higher education. Most countries ensure the quality of institutions of higher education established according to their laws by means of independent organizations. Such organizations nearly always rely on the principles of quality assurance management rather than directly intervene in the operation of the institutions they regulate. Although all countries limit freedom of expression in the public arena, nearly all countries permit the exercise of academic freedom within universities, institutes of technology, and colleges. Although nearly all countries exercise control over public institutions through the appointment of members to their governing boards and through financial appropriations, nearly all countries recognize the autonomy of private institutions to govern themselves, and exempt private nonprofit institutions from taxation. Myanmar has a rich civilization, an abundance of natural resources, and a young population eager to help the development of the country. Institutions of higher education (public and private, nonprofit and for-profit, and academic, professional, and vocational) have been instrumental in developing other countries. Myanmar needs these institutions too if it is going to realize its full potential.