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International partnerships: a legal guide for universities

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Greetings mid-July. Susan and I have been travelling a lot via our respective jobs, so please excuse the slow pace of updates to *GlobalHigherEd*.

My return to Madison a few days ago corresponded with an embargoed (until today) press release from the [UK Higher Education International Unit](#). The press release relates to a new report (*International Partnerships: A Legal Guide for UK Universities*) that was published today. The UK Higher Education International Unit is funded by the [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#), the [Scottish Funding Council](#), the [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#), the [Department for Employment and Learning \(Northern Ireland\)](#), [Guild HE](#) and [Universities UK](#). The press release notes:



International Partnerships: A Legal Guide for UK Universities, written by international law firm [Eversheds](#), is designed as a practical 'route map' which gathers together in one place all the issues that need to be considered by a university serious about doing business abroad and getting it right from start to finish.

Key features of the guide include:

- * Chapters on managing and documenting a partnership, including laying the groundwork, due diligence, troubleshooting and risk assessment with accompanying lists of 'dos' and 'don'ts'.
- * Guidance on what to do if things go wrong.
- * Country-specific case studies detailing legal and higher education jurisdiction, (Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Qatar, UAE and USA)

Professor [Rick Trainor](#), President of Universities UK, said, 'International activities should protect and enhance a university's brand, reputation and mission. Getting an international academic relationship right at the outset is always preferable to fixing mistakes later. It is my belief that this guide will prove to be of considerable and lasting practical use to our colleagues in the HE sector who are charged with establishing and running the full range of collaborative ventures with our counterparts abroad.'

[Glynne Stanfield](#), partner and head of international education at [Eversheds](#), said: 'Having been involved in providing legal support to the International Unit at Universities UK since its inception, we are delighted to have produced a guide for the sector on international activities. We have seen a major increase in the international activities of universities over the last few years; we expect that trend to accelerate and we hope the guide assists universities to do so. As an international law firm we fully recognise the increasing importance to the UK of international activities particularly in education, one of the UK's key export markets.'

International partnerships have, to date, been a success story for UK universities, but gone are the days when the terms of collaboration could be agreed between Vice-Chancellors on no more than a handshake. UK universities are sophisticated international collaborators and are increasingly taking account of legal issues when entering overseas partnerships. The guide conveys the complexities of the law in an accessible and readable format.

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