

Frequently asked questions

At Pearson, we partner with 35 institutions and speak with CFOs at many more. So we've compiled the questions we hear most often to help you find the right partner and your best path forward.



Why Pearson Online Learning Services?

Pearson Online Learning Services is the pioneer in the marketing, recruitment, and retention categories of online learning. We've spent two decades building and perfecting these services and have developed an impressive infrastructure and staff.



What does a partnership with Pearson Online Learning Services look like?

A partnership with Pearson is an open relationship built on trust, where transparency is key. It's a learning opportunity for both sides, working together to meet your institutional goals, from helping you envision a starting point, to identifying and implementing what's coming down the road in the future.

Using data as our driving point, we provide informed solutions backed by research and experience. At the same time, we don't get so lost in the numbers that we lose the human side of it. Our ideal partners are committed to maintaining high academic standards and are entrepreneurial in terms of educational delivery. They recognize that success in the online learning arena means being flexible, market-driven, and performance-based.



What's the typical revenue share split?

This can vary by services, but generally between 45–65% to Pearson. If we stick to core services and your university funds all course development, etc., it's likely closer to 50/50. However, there are some cases where we act as a bank to fund new positions for a university, so naturally our share will increase.



Why sign a long-term contract with Pearson Online Learning Services?

Pearson makes a sizeable up-front investment for each program — we only make money if we bring you qualified students who stay continuously enrolled. A long-term contract is in the best interest of both parties. It ensures that we will invest enough to make the program successful for years to come with high enrollments of qualified students. Our agreement includes performance criteria that the university expects and that we have determined are attainable within a specified time frame.



When will my institution see revenue from a partnership?

Online programs typically take 3–5 years to break even, and revenue generated after the recovered investments will vary based on performance. Launching a meaningful online presence generally requires seven-figure start-up capital and large ongoing investments. Institutions that choose to partner with us can offload much of the risk, and Pearson can work with the institution to develop a strategy that can create revenue as soon as students enroll. However, if the institution decides to go it alone and advances this upfront cash and the program comes up short, the institution bears the loss alone.





How will I hold Pearson accountable? What if there are problems, or Pearson doesn't meet the recruitment and retention goals we've agreed on?

We work hard to avoid problems upfront by making sure everyone's expectations are clear, establishing specific accountability metrics, and building cross-functional teams where our professionals work closely with their institutional peers towards shared goals.

Pearson responds quickly when problems arise, and we work collaboratively and vigorously towards solutions. If, however, our services ultimately don't perform to the performance criteria we've both agreed upon in advance, either side can terminate the partnership.



Can we just contract for services we think we need help with?

Yes, you absolutely can, and it's an option to explore. However, what you might "save" may likely cost more in the end, as there are direct and indirect costs to doing it, such as time, efficiency, etc. Plus, there may be no single point of accountability. Partnering with an OPM provider like Pearson provides alignment and accountability.



If we have internal teams that perform the same functions, how can we analyze insource vs. outsource to determine if we're making the best decision?

At the end of the day, it comes down to bandwidth and experience. Pearson's services are dedicated by program, while most central services at a university are just that — central. They support everyone and every department. We're confident in our projections and the ability to achieve them. We invite your internal team to put together a plan or justification that indicates how they'd support the enrollments we're projecting. This is often a good way to understand how resources at your institution may or may not be limited.



How do I get more information?

That's easy. **Contact us** for more information or to request a free consultation. We also encourage you to visit [pearson.com/opm](https://www.pearson.com/opm), review our partner case studies, and download our new white paper: [*Build or Buy: Key considerations for strategic, successful online growth.*](#)

Today's increasingly competitive landscape requires a strategic approach to successfully reach more of the right students where they are. Partnering with Pearson can help you accelerate strategic change while reducing the risks associated with growing your online presence. Our online program management services and community can help your students thrive as you build the brand and reputation you're striving for.

Dare to change.

Digital learning removes limits and gives us the freedom to provide education anytime and anywhere, empowering us to overcome our most difficult challenges.



Pearson