

Chapter 10

Short Courses, Professional Practice Framework, Contributing Partners and Accreditation

10. SHORT COURSES, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FRAMEWORK, CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS AND ACCREDITATION

10.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the overall framework in place for the approval and monitoring of short courses, contributing partners and accreditation.

10.2 Models of Provision

This chapter covers the approval processes for four different models of provision:

10.2.1 Short courses delivered by the University;

10.2.2 Programmes delivered with a contributing partner;

10.2.3 Programmes wholly designed and/or owned by an employer, sector body, or PSRB but delivered by the University;

10.2.4 Programmes designed and/or owned by an employer or sector body but linked to validated University modules for assessment purposes;

10.2.5 Short courses delivered by an employer or sector body and accredited by the University.

10.3 Types of Recruitment for these courses

10.3.1 For these courses the University defines two different types of recruitment: “open” or “closed”.

10.3.1.1 “Open” courses/programmes are advertised publicly, and anyone may apply and register on the course.

10.3.1.2 “Closed” courses/programmes are not advertised publicly (e.g. they are developed for a cohort within a company).

10.4 Occasional Modules

Institutes may allow students to enrol on an individual existing module. These students are registered on an occasional module. The student would normally be entitled to a transcript following the completion of the module.

10.5 Short Courses

10.5.1 A short course is provision designed and delivered by the University; it comprises equal to or fewer than 60 credits or non-credit bearing. It is normally less than a year in duration and does not lead directly to an award on the credit framework (the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales). This includes individual modules independently offered as a short course, individual micro-credentials (i.e. normally no more than 10 credit modules), and other short educational experiences. For credit bearing short courses, external examiners should normally be appointed.

10.5.2 Credit bearing short course awards are not classified but follow the rules for progression and award for the appropriate level set out in Chapter 6 of the AQH.

10.5.3 Credits from short courses may be applied to University awards through the University’s RPL processes or may be embedded into a validated award.

10.5.4 Students may enrol on more than one short course during an academic year but should not normally enrol on more than 120 total credits in any given year.

10.5.5 Validation Processes

The initial approval of new short courses is the responsibility of the Academic Planning Team (via Appendix PV2f) and the process of validation is overseen by ASC. Both activities are undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 4 of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) and its associated appendices, including the documentation required to support the process.

10.5.6 Annual Monitoring

Short Courses are monitored by the University in accordance with its standard arrangements for annual review, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

Short Courses would normally be “clustered” either with cognate programmes or as groups of short courses. This cluster should normally be identified during the approval process. For each programme cluster the teaching team, led by the programme leader, is responsible for providing a reflective evaluation of the programme, using the template provided by the University.

Short Courses are subject to a revalidation, normally in the fifth year of delivery. Short Courses are revalidated by the University in accordance with its standard processes, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

10.5.7 Student Engagement Principles

Courses with more than 40 credits must follow the principles outlined in Chapter 5.

In line with the principles in Chapter 5, all students must have an opportunity to formally feedback on their course. Non-credit bearing and courses with 40 or fewer credits will normally have different systems of academic representation reflective of the credit value and short-term nature of the course. This may include surveys at the end of the course, designated contacts within the University or Students’ Union, or focus group meetings to allow students to feedback on their experience.

10.6 Professional Practice Framework

This is a suite of validated credit-bearing modules and programmes that operate as a shell for assessing professional or work-based learning including training and application within practice. Standard limits on the number of credits apply. Defining characteristics include:

- the framework is provided either to an individual learner or to a client cohort;
- students are enrolled;
- the framework comprises University modules and learning outcomes;
- delivery may be provided either by the client or the University;
- the University always undertakes moderation or second marking of assessment as a minimum;
- learner performance is considered at standard University examining boards;
- credits achieved can be in the form of a validated award or occasional modules;
- bespoke student engagement mechanisms are in place for the Framework which include nominated student voice representatives on the Student Staff Committee.

10.6.1 Approval of the client

The provision for a new client must be approved by the University, via the Academic Planning Team (using Appendix AC3), and may be required to undergo a due diligence process as described in Chapter 9 (see Appendix AC4). A site visit is required as part of the approval process, where appropriate.

An Institute representative will be assigned to oversee a particular client.

Following final approval of the provision, the Institute informs the client of the outcome and an Agreement is completed, which will include a Service Level Agreement and Cost Schedule. This is reviewed every five years.

10.6.2 Revalidation, Monitoring and Review of the Framework

The Framework is revalidated, monitored and reviewed by the University in accordance with its standard arrangements, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

10.6.3 Validation of a contextualised programme title

The Framework is designed for generic application but contextualisation is provided through a specific programme title added to the Framework (approval must be sought via PV1a Major Modification process).

10.7 Credit-bearing provision run with a contributing partner

This is credit-bearing provision where an external organisation (contributing partner) contributes to a validated University provision and should follow normal requirements set out in the AQH. Additional requirements are set out below.

10.7.1 Contributing Partners

The University defines contributing partners as an arrangement where an external organisation contributes to validated University provision with specific resources and/or delivery input, typically providing industry expertise. The operational and quality assurance arrangements will be agreed for each contributing partnership and detailed in the agreement between the parties.

10.7.2 Approval of contributing partner

Prior to the approval of the validated provision, the contributing partner must be approved by the University, via the Academic Planning Team (using Appendix AC1), and undergo a due diligence process as described in Chapter 9. A site visit is required as part of the approval process, where appropriate.

10.7.3 Validation Processes

The initial approval of the new validated provision is the responsibility of the Academic Planning Team and the process of validation is overseen by ASC. Both activities are undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 4 of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) and its associated appendices, including the documentation required to support the process. A risk event will always be included as part of the process, normally organised by the Institute. A site visit may also be required as part of the validation process.

10.7.4 Monitoring and Review

The provision is monitored by the University in accordance with its standard arrangements for annual review, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

The provision is reviewed by the University in accordance with its standard arrangements for revalidation, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH.

The overall arrangements for each contributing partner are reviewed by the University, normally every 5 years.

10.8 Programmes wholly designed and owned by an employer, sector body, or PSRB but taught by the University

The University offers a number of externally accredited professional programmes for which the University itself is not the awarding body. The curriculum, assessment and quality assurance strategies for such programmes are wholly determined by the external awarding body, thus limiting the scope for discussion and modification at the validation stage. The procedures described below will therefore normally apply to such programmes.

10.8.1 Approval and Confirmation Processes

The initial approval of new programmes is the responsibility of the Academic Planning Team (using Appendix PV1) and the process of programme confirmation is monitored by ASC (using Appendix AC5). Both activities are undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 4 of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) and its associated appendices, including the documentation required to support the process.

These programmes normally require specific documentation as relevant:

- the application form for PSRB permission to deliver, where such a document exists;
- the syllabus provided by the external body, where such a document exists;
- a programme document using the appropriate University template (see Appendices AC5-AC5a);
- the external accreditation report, centre approval form or other evidence of accreditation of the University by the external body.

10.8.2 Annual Monitoring

These programmes are monitored by the University in accordance with its standard arrangements for annual review, as set out in Chapter 4 of the AQH. For each programme the teaching team, led by the programme leader, is responsible for providing a reflective evaluation of the programme, using the template provided by the University.

Programmes are subject to a review, in line with the PSRB.

10.9 Programmes designed and taught by clients (e.g. employer, sector body or charity) accredited by the University and not linked to validated provision

University Accreditation is the official recognition, acceptance, approval and monitoring of an external learning and development course or learning provision. Through the accreditation process the University assigns credit to a learning and development course or programme delivered by an external organisation (e.g. an employer). Students on these programmes are external to the University. Accreditation may take a number of forms, for example:

- In-house learning course;
- Course for specific commercial delivery.

The accreditation process uses UWTSD's academic credit framework to evaluate and quantify such learning in terms of credit points at a particular level. Such recognition is an important contribution by the University to the personal and professional development of individuals and it also operates to quality assure the learning outcomes and assessment of education and training activities delivered by employers and other organisations. The maximum credit recognised is normally 60 credits at Levels 4-7.

10.9.1 Approval of Accredited Provider

Prior to the approval of the provision, the accredited provider must be approved by the University, via Academic Planning Team (using Appendix AC2), and undergo a due diligence process as described in Chapter 9.

10.9.2 Recruitment and Registration

The accredited provider is responsible for recruitment for the provision. The recruitment to the provision is normally not advertised publicly and applications and registration on the course will be limited by the arrangements made with accredited provider. The accredited provider organisation will be responsible for registration of learners as specified in the Service Level Agreement. Students are registered for the purpose of examining or review boards and the provision of certificates only.

10.9.3 Validation and Monitoring Processes

The validation and monitoring processes are as follows:

The detailed accreditation information is presented to the RPEL and Accreditation Board to consider specific risks relating to delivery of the proposed provision and for scrutiny and initial approval of level and credit value. The meeting will include internal and external advisers, as well as representatives of the provider and the relevant Institute as appropriate.

The accreditation information is presented to the Academic Standards Committee for final approval.

Following final approval of the provision, the Institute informs the client of the outcome and an Agreement is completed, which will include a Service Level Agreement and Cost Schedule. Appropriate external examiner arrangements are in place for the RPEL and Accreditation Board.

A representative from the Institute team is nominated to oversee the accredited provision. Their role will include:

- Moderating the submitted work by the students on the accredited provision;
- Reviewing student feedback provided at the completion of every cohort;
- Ensuring that accurate information is provided to Institute, Registry and RPEL and Accreditation Board as appropriate;
- Liaising with the lead on the accredited provision in relation to all matters pertaining to the accreditation and academic standards;
- Reporting annually to Academic Standards Committee (ASC), via the RPEL and Accreditation Board, on its operation.

The University issues certificates and transcripts.

Accreditation will be awarded for a period of five years, after which an application must be made for re-accreditation. Re-accreditation will involve the submission of an application form, an updated portfolio and a review with the Institute. Applications will be submitted to the Academic Planning Team for approval.