

# Part 10

## Approval and Quality Assurance of Short Courses

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Principles of Short Course Approval

All **credit rated** Short Courses must follow the formal approval and monitoring processes described below.

All **non-credit rated** Short Courses that are an integral part of a recognised HE course must also be approved using the formal process:

- For example:
  - A preparatory or access course to facilitate progression to a HE qualification as a condition of entry.
  - Short periods of study within a course which generally takes place in vacation time, and are normally for students to catch up with others on the course.
  - Bridging courses, e.g., between completion of a foundation degree and the BA or in order to facilitate students transferring in at an advanced stage (e.g., as part of an articulation arrangement).

It is recommended other types of **non-credit rated** Short Courses also follow these processes, however this will not be necessary or appropriate in all cases. In deciding whether to formally approve a non-credit rated Short Course, please contact Quality Assurance and Enhancement. This will enable the activity being proposed to be logged for reporting purposes and a decision to be made regarding a process for setting up the course.

Factors that will be taken into consideration include:

- Whether the course is to be repeated
- If there is a need to register the participants via UEL records systems

- Whether the participants will require access to other UEL services e.g., Library and Learning Services

1.2 The university is required to report on any activity that falls into the definitions of:

### **Continuing Professional Development**

Training courses for learners already in work who are undertaking the course for purposes of professional development/up-skilling/workforce development.

### **Continuing Education**

Training courses for learners that might be employed or unemployed who are undertaking the course for the purpose of continuing their education. This includes courses to develop/enhance specific employability or professional skills and courses that may feed learners into higher education (level 4 and above).

For more information on these types of activity please see: Definitions of Continuing Professional Development and Continuing Education, on the QAE forms and guidance page:

<https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Forms-and-Guidance.aspx>

1.3 The **School Quality Committee** is responsible for the validation and quality assurance procedures applicable to courses developed and delivered by UEL Schools. Specifically, these are:

- Non-credit rated Short Courses delivered by UEL staff at UEL and off campus;
- Credit rated Short Courses delivered by UEL staff at UEL and off campus;
- Courses offered by distance learning (not in collaboration with external partners);
- Courses delivered in partnership with UEL services.

Details of the approval process are provided in section 5 below.

Details of documentation requirements are provided in section 4 below.

1.4 **The Short Course Panel** is responsible for the approval of Short Courses involving delivery by a collaborative partner; or for the accreditation of externally designed courses; details are provided in section 6 below. Specifically, these are:

- Short Courses delivered in collaboration with external partners;
- Recognition, approval and accreditation of externally designed Short Courses.

## **2 Accreditation**

- 2.1 Short Courses enable the allocation of credit for learning that is achieved outside UEL's main provision of credit-rated courses that lead to recognised awards.
- 2.2 In determining the appropriate credit-rating for a Short Course, the amount of credit and level of credit need to be determined. Credit is allocated on the basis of 10 hours of notional student study time for each credit. In this context, 'study time' incorporates formal contact time, assessment, and other student learning time.
- 2.3 Credit rating can only be applied to those courses which have study time equivalent to a minimum of 4 credit points (40 hours) up to a maximum of 40 credits (400 hours) for courses at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 or 30 credits (300 hours) at level 7. Courses of less than 40 hours cannot be credit-rated.
- 2.4 Where a Short Course enables a student to accumulate credit to the value of an UEL award, the student will be entitled to receive this award, the award will be unnamed (details may be found in Part 1 of the Manual of General Regulations, Descriptions of Awards).
- 2.5 Short Courses are reviewed as part of the Periodic Academic Review process (details may be found in Part 8 of this manual).

## **3 Criteria for Approval**

- 3.1 The Quality Criteria (Part 4 of this manual) should be used as a basis for determining the suitability of the proposal for approval.

## **4 Documentation Requirements**

- 4.1 All requests for the approval of a Short Course should be submitted on the Short Course Proforma (available at <https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Forms-and-Guidance.aspx>). All boxes must be completed and relevant documentation attached (see 4.2 below).
- 4.2 The documentation to be included with the Short Course Proforma is as follows:
  - Module specification(s);
  - External Adviser comments (see 4.3 below);
  - Confirmation of financial viability (see 4.4 below);
  - Report on facilities and resources;
  - Where the Short Course is to be delivered by non-UEL staff, staff CVs should be included;

- For distance learning proposals, evidence via the report of the External Adviser, that materials and support meet the quality assurance requirements for distance learning proposals.

4.3 A proposal for a Short Course must have been submitted to an External Adviser prior to submission to the School Quality Committee or Short Course Panel. The Chair of the relevant Committee / Panel will be responsible for approving the adviser after reviewing their nomination form. Advisors will be appointed based on:

- The depth of subject knowledge;
- The relevance of subject knowledge;
- Impartiality (the nominee should not have any formal links with UEL during the last five years as a former member of staff or the last three years as an External Examiner);
- Professional expertise.

4.4 The proposal must be accompanied by approval from a Finance Manager of the financial viability of the proposal.

4.5 For credit rated Short Courses, appropriate arrangements for the assessment of students and appointment of External Examiners will be made to ensure that the output standard is appropriate to the level/credit rating proposed.

4.6 For non-credit rated Short Courses where there is a qualification awarded, an External Examiner will need to be appointed and the moderation process outlined; an External Examiner is not required for Short Courses where no academic credit or qualification is being awarded.

4.7 Documentation should include a report from the course proposer that the facilities and resources for delivery are appropriate. The purpose of the report is to ensure that the physical resources/accommodation are appropriate for delivery, and that any required pastoral care and learning support services are available to students. Where the Short Course is to be delivered by non-UEL staff, staff CVs should also be included

## **5 Procedures for the approval of Short Courses delivered by UEL staff**

5.1 The School Quality Committee, is responsible for the approval of any Short Courses, whether credit-rated or non-credit rated, that are to be delivered by UEL Schools.

5.2 The proposal will be submitted to a full meeting of School Quality Committee. Proposals cannot be considered by correspondence. The Quality Assurance Officer and internal external from another School (normally a School Quality Leader) will be present at the meeting, as specified in the standard terms of reference and constitution of the School Quality Committee. The leader of the proposed course must be present to answer any queries.

- 5.3 School Quality Committee will reach a decision about whether the proposal can be approved on the basis of the documentation and the External Adviser recommendations. For credit rated courses, the following issues should be agreed:
- The credit rating;
  - The level of credit;
  - The appropriateness of the proposed assessment.
- 5.4 The School Quality Committee can either (a) approve the proposal or; (b) reject the proposal and require that it be revised and re-submitted for further consideration at a future meeting. The School Quality Committee may not impose conditions of approval.
- 5.5 The minutes of the School Quality Committee will record details of the discussion with regard to the proposal and the outcome agreed by the Committee.
- 5.6 The minutes of the School Quality Committee and approved Module Specification(s) shall be lodged with Quality Assurance and Enhancement for formal noting of the approval of the Short Course on the Course Register and at Education and Experience Committee.
- 5.7 School Quality Committee is responsible for ensuring that the School has in place a method for monitoring the quality of its Short Courses, seeking student feedback and acting to make improvements where appropriate. Schools may find it appropriate to prepare Continual Monitoring reports for Short Courses, incorporate evaluation in Department Continual Monitoring report, or prepare one report to cover all Short Courses offered during the academic session. Issues arising from Short Courses should also be addressed in the School Continual Monitoring Report.

## **6 Procedures for the approval of Short Courses delivered in collaboration with external partners**

- 6.1 Following receipt of an expression of interest from a potential collaborative partner, and agreement to proceed, a representative from the academic school (the course proposer) will be designated to support the partner. All Short Courses carrying credit need to be associated with an academic School.
- 6.2 The Short Course Proforma will be completed (see section 4 above).
- 6.3 Proposals will be considered by the Short Course Panel, which will be convened by Quality Assurance and Enhancement. The panel will be constituted of two members from Education and Experience Committee and / or Validation Process Peer Reviewers plus the Head of Quality or a Quality Manager. The Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement or Quality Manager will act as Chair. The course proposer and partner representative should be in attendance.

- 6.4 The minutes of the panel will record details of the discussion with regard to the proposal and the outcome agreed by the panel.
- 6.5 Quality Assurance and Enhancement will formally note the approval of the Short Course on the Course Register and at Education and Experience Committee.
- 6.7 The panel will determine whether the proposal can be approved and will determine the following, as appropriate:
- The credit rating;
  - The level of credit;
  - The appropriateness of the proposed assessment.
- 6.8 Following the decisions of the panel, the chair will then:
- Confirm that the proposal has been approved.  
**or**
  - Issue a statement of conditions to be met pending approval.  
**or**
  - Notify the partner that the proposal has been unsuccessful and that further work is not justified.
- 6.9 Where conditions of approval are set, the deadline for submission of responses to approval conditions shall be determined by the panel. Short Courses may not be offered until all conditions have been satisfied. The following standard conditions will be set where appropriate:
- **External Examiner Nominations** - that the Short Course proposer should take action to ensure that an external examiner is nominated and approved to cover delivery of the approved Short Course(s) (see the Quality Manual Part 9);
  - **Memorandum of Cooperation** - that the final memorandum of cooperation is agreed and signed by the parties;
  - **Local laws and regulations** – that the partner presents verifiable evidence to confirm that government approval to deliver the courses(s) has been obtained.
- Such standard conditions will be set along with any other outstanding matters that Short Course proposer needs to address prior to commencement of the Short Course.
- 6.10 If conditions are imposed, it is the responsibility of the Short Course proposer to ensure that the conditions are satisfied within the time scale specified.
- 6.11 The response to conditions of approval should be submitted to Quality Assurance and Enhancement which will arrange for it to be considered.

- 6.12 The Chair of the panel will be responsible for formally determining that the conditions of approval have been satisfied.
- 6.13 Where the proposal is in collaboration with a partner, a memorandum of cooperation or equivalent legal contract will be required. The contract will include, inter alia, details of arrangements for registration, monitoring, assessment, student feedback, financial arrangements, and mechanisms for managing the course or collection of courses.
- 6.14 Where a course confers academic credit or a qualification, an External Examiner will be appointed and the relevant UEL Assessment Board will ratify the results. The External Examiner will be appropriately remunerated for the additional elements of work associated with the course.

## **7 Transcripts/Certificates of Attendance**

- 7.1 Transcripts and certificates for credit rated Short Courses will be produced by the Student Registry.
- 7.2 For the production of certificates for any other kind of Short Course, the student registry should be contacted in the first instance for advice.

## **8 Modification and Withdrawal of Courses**

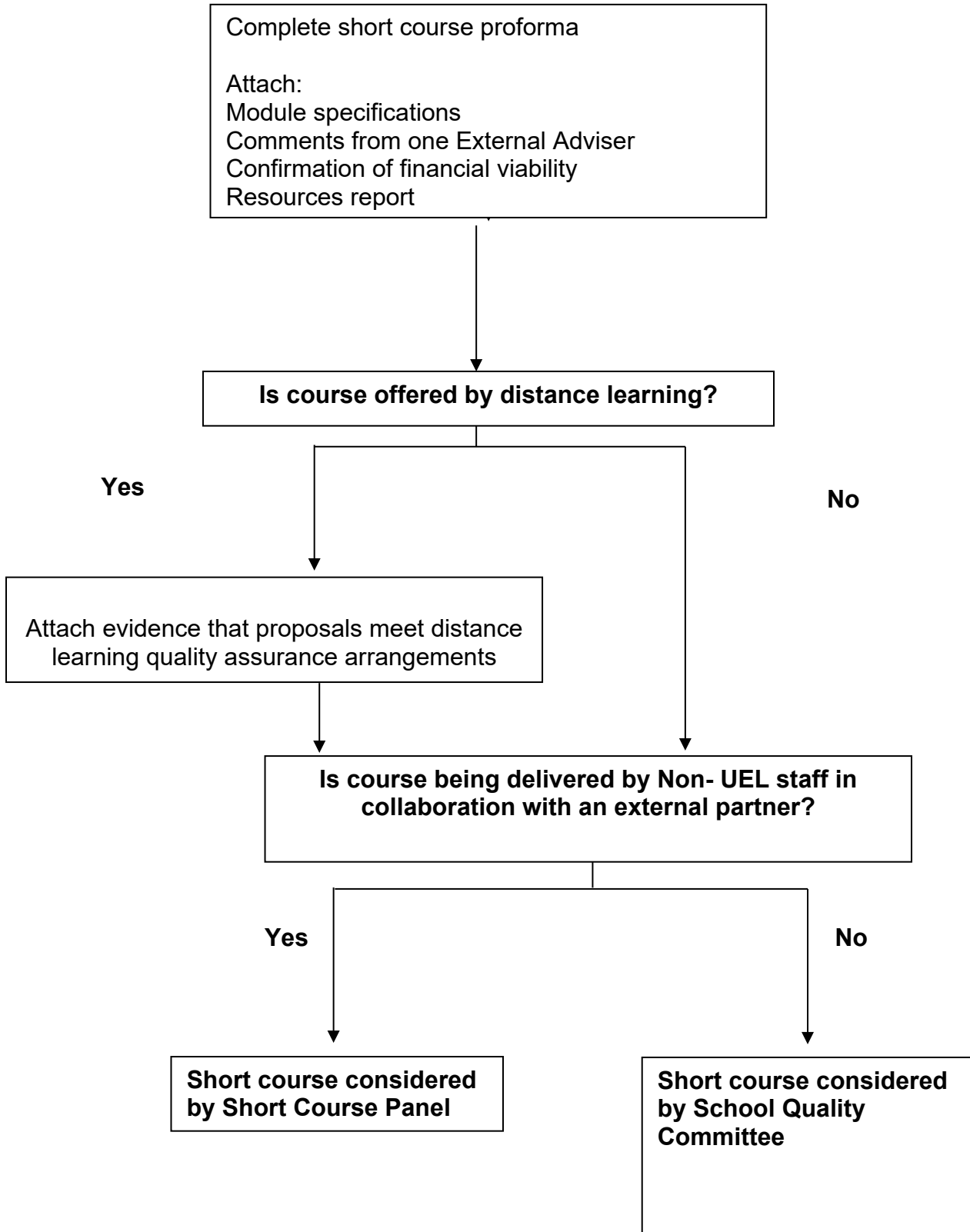
- 8.1 Modifications to Short Courses require the approval of the School Quality Committee. School Quality Committee may approve changes that do not involve changes to the curriculum content, on receipt of an appropriate rationale and where appropriate, a revised module specification. Such changes include for example a change in the form, length or nature of assessment (for credit rated Short Courses), Short Course title changes without any changes in curriculum content or learning outcomes and changes in standard start dates for the Short Course.
- 8.2 The following modifications to Short Courses require the full re-approval of the Short Course:
- Any allocation to a different level of a module that is part of a Short Course;
  - Any change in the credit weighting of a module that is part of a Short Course;
  - Any change to the learning outcomes of a module that is part of a Short Course (with or without a change in the title of the module / Short Course);
  - Any change to the curriculum content of a module that is part of a Short Course other than routine updating (with or without a change in the title of the module);
  - Any change in the mode of delivery of a module that is part of a Short Course.

The procedure to be followed for the re-approval of a Short Courses is the same as for the approval of new Short Courses.

- 8.3 Normal and regular updating of indicative reading lists does not require approval by the School Quality Committee.
- 8.4 Short Course withdrawals are considered and validated by the School Quality Committee at the time the decision is made to withdraw the Short Course, using the standard proforma (available from Quality Assurance and Enhancement and at <https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Fo-rms-and-Guidance.aspx>). Such proposals must include a rationale for the withdrawal of the Short Course. Where students currently enrolled on the Short Course will be affected by the proposed changes, evidence of consultation of all students affected must be provided and detailed transitional arrangements supplied.



## SHORT COURSE APPROVAL FLOWCHART



## **Manuals, Forms and Guidance notes relevant to Part 10**

<https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Forms-and-Guidance.aspx>

- Checklist for courses delivered off site (*School use*)
- Definitions of CPD and CE
- Operational procedures for credit rated courses
- Operational procedures for non-credit rated courses
- Proforma for approval of short courses
- External Adviser approval proforma – non-credit rated courses
- External Adviser approval proforma – credit rated courses
- Short course approval flowchart
- Short course withdrawal form