

Master's Level Modules offered as Short Courses: A Guidance Note for Programme Directors

1. Introduction

This guidance is for staff interested in offering existing modules on award-bearing programmes of study as short courses.

- 1.1. A growing number of Programme Directors are offering modules/units¹ of their Master's level programmes as short courses. This may be for continuing professional development, outreach, marketing or other purposes.
- 1.2. Modules offered as short courses must be administered either by the department directly or by the Centre for Continuing Professional Development (CCPD) within the School of Professional Development (SPD), and not by any third party. The rationale for this is that it is important that the reputation of Imperial award bearing programmes of study are not compromised.

2. Short Course Approval Process

- 2.1. Where offering modules via the Centre for Continuing Professional Development, the process is as follows:
 - 2.1.1. The Programme Director/department decides which module(s) to offer as standalone short course(s) and the number of places available per module for short course delegates and discusses this with the Centre for Continuing Professional Development (CCPD).
 - 2.1.2. The CCPD arranges for College approval for the module(s) as standalone short course(s) from the Programmes Committee. (In order to be considered by the Programmes Committee all short course proposals must be authorised by the Faculty).
 - 2.1.3. As part of the approval process the Programme Director/department decides whether the short course(s) will be assessed (for the award of credit) or non-assessed (no credit will be awarded). Short courses which are assessed should have the same assessment as the Imperial students registered for the award bearing programme of study. Normally, departments offer the assessment option at an additional cost.
 - 2.1.4. The CCPD will advertise the short course and register short course delegates, obtain payment and maintain records of attendance and completion.

¹ A module/unit is defined as a self-contained, formally structured, learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. For the purposes of this guidance note the term "module" will be used throughout.

- 2.1.5. Details of how to apply and any entrance requirements must be published in the short course specification. Where appropriate, applicants should be asked to provide a brief CV and a supporting statement. In some cases (for example where fees will be paid by an employer) applicants should also provide a letter of support from their employer. Admissions decisions are made by the Programme Director who will notify CCPD who will inform the applicant.
- 2.1.6. Short course delegates must agree to the Terms and Conditions set out by the CCPD. A copy of these is available on request from the CCPD.
- 2.1.7. Normally, the short course delegates join existing Imperial students on the existing module. Where numbers and resources allow a separate session of the module specifically for short course delegates may be run.
- 2.1.8. On completion of the short course the CCPD will provide a certificate of attendance and, for those who took the assessment, the CCPD will also provide a transcript (see section 6).
- 2.2. Where offering modules as short courses directly, and not through the CCPD, the process is as follows:
 - 2.2.1. The Programme Director/department decides which module(s) to offer as short course(s) and the number of delegate places available per module and discusses this with the Registry' Quality Assurance & Enhancement Team (email: short.courses@imperial.ac.uk).
 - 2.2.2. The Quality Assurance & Enhancement Team support the department completing the short course approval paperwork for approval by the Programmes Committee. (In order to be considered by the Programmes Committee all short course proposals must be authorised by the Faculty).
 - 2.2.3. As part of the approval process the Programme Director/department decides whether the short course will be assessed (for the award of credit) or non-assessed (no credit will be awarded). Short courses which are assessed should have the same assessment as the Imperial students registered for the award bearing programme of study. It is recommended that departments offer the assessment option at an additional cost.
 - 2.2.4. If approved, the department will be responsible for advertising the short course and registering external delegates, obtaining payment and maintaining records of attendance and completion. Departments are advised to consider the cost of these activities in their planning processes.
 - 2.2.5. Details of how to apply and any entrance requirements must be published in the short course specification. Where appropriate, applicants should be asked to provide a brief CV and a supporting statement. In some cases (for example where fees will be paid by an employer) applicants should also provide a letter of support from their employer. Admissions decisions are made by the Programme Director who will notify the applicants of the outcome of their application.

- 2.2.6. Short course delegates must agree to appropriate Terms and Conditions. Where these are not already in existence, the Programme Director must draw these up with the assistance of the Legal Services Office.
- 2.2.7. Normally, short course delegates will join existing Imperial students on the existing module. Where numbers and resources allow a separate session of the module specifically for short course delegates may be run.
- 2.2.8. On completion of the short course the department may provide a certificate of attendance and, for those who took the assessment, should provide a transcript (see section 6).

3. Credit Transfer and Short Course Delegates

- 3.1 Credit transfer is currently only permitted on part-time Master's level programmes.
- 3.2 The Programme Directors should set a limit on the number of modules short course delegates can take per programme of study. This is to ensure that delegates cannot claim they have done the equivalent of an Imperial award via the short course route.
- 3.3 Imperial students registered for award bearing programmes should not be allowed to register for individual modules via the short course route in order to complete their degree programme sooner.
- 3.4 Where Programme Directors\departments are happy to accept short course delegates on to the associated award bearing programme they must also stipulate in the programme specification for the award bearing programme the maximum number of the a credits which may be allowed via the short course route, the time expiry for accepting the course for credit transfer on to the programme (this should not be more than 5 years) and the existence of any further prerequisite. This protocol must be approved by the Programmes Committee (ideally at the time of short course approval).

For Example:

Imperial Short Course Delegates should note the following credit transfer arrangements for Imperial awards:

Applications for credit transfer will only be considered for part-time students.

Credit from short courses can only be transferred where the short course is currently a part of the award bearing programme.

A maximum of **7.5** ECTS studied at Master's level FHEQ 7 may be used towards the Postgraduate Certificate in **Cardiology**, a maximum of **15** ECTS

studied at Master's level FHEQ 7 may be used towards the Postgraduate Diploma in **Cardiology**, a maximum of **30** ECTS studied at Master's level FHEQ 7 may be used towards the MSc in **Cardiology**.

Credit derived from short courses may be accepted for transfer onto the award bearing programme provided that the award-bearing programme is commenced within **3** year[s] of the date of completion of the short course and where the short course is still equivalent to the current module provided on the award bearing programme.

To be accepted on to an Imperial award, applicants must normally meet the minimum entry requirements set by the College.

4. Short Course Delegates applying for the Award Bearing Programmes

- 4.1 Applications for credit transfer must be made during the admissions process for the award bearing programme. Possession of academic credit from (or attendance on) one or more of the College's short courses does not confer right of entry to any programme of study. Short course delegates must normally meet the College's minimum entrance requirements. However success in a short course can help determine whether a student has the ability to successfully complete the award bearing programme.
- 4.2 In order for the transfer of credit to take place, the assessment option must have been taken (this is normally offered at an extra cost) and the module(s) must have been passed. The grades obtained in the short course(s) will count towards the student's final award classification. Students cannot be permitted to retake a passed short course assessment in order to improve their grades. Students who are unhappy with including their short course(s) grade(s) in the assessment profile for their award should be advised against using the credit transfer option.
- 4.3 Short course delegates who did not take the assessment option as part of the short course may be exempted from attending the module as part of the award bearing programme but they will be required to take the module assessment(s).
- 4.4 Applications for admittance will be considered initially by the Programme Director. The Director of Undergraduate Study/Director of Postgraduate Study (or equivalent) will make the final decision on whether credit awarded from the short course can be transferred to the award bearing programme or, where no assessment has taken place, whether the student can be exempted from the attendance requirement but take the assessments.

5. Fees

- 5.1 When setting the fees for short courses, Programme Directors should ensure that the cost of taking all individual modules on an award is not cheaper than the fees of the award as a whole.
- 5.2 Programme Directors are encouraged to set separate fees for attendance only and for attendance with assessment.
- 5.3 There is no reduction in fees for the award bearing programme for students accepted with credit transfer from short courses. Applications for credit transfer will only be considered for part-time students.

6. Transcripts for short courses

- 6.1 A short course delegate who opts for the assessment option will receive a College transcript stating their results/grades.
- 6.2 For courses offered via CCPD, the Programme Director must inform CCPD of the delegate's results and CCPD will then issue the transcript. For all other courses, the department is responsible for producing the transcript.
- 6.3 An example transcript is available from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team on request.

7. Library access for delegates

- 7.1 The Library currently allows only limited access for short course delegates as they are not fully registered Imperial College students.
- 7.2 For courses provided via the Centre for Continuing Professional Development (CCPD):
 - 7.2.1 CCPD delegates can access the Library's collection on the South Kensington campus but not borrow books. Due to licensing issues, delegates do not have access to online journals. However, those delegates who have registered for the assessment option can be given enhanced Library access (e.g. access the online journals) for the purpose of submitting assignments.
 - 7.2.2 Programme Directors must send a request for enhanced Library access by emailing cpd@imperial.ac.uk at the Centre for Continuing Professional Development (CCPD) before the start of the course, CCPD will then setup this access in their student registration system.
- 7.3 For courses provided by departments:
 - 7.3.1 The Programme Director must contact the Library for advice.

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