

Short Courses: Approval Process and Guidance

Introduction

Short courses are units of study which are delivered by the College but do not lead to an award of the College, such as a degree or postgraduate certificate. Short courses may be assessed or non-assessed. It may be appropriate for some assessed courses to lead to the award of academic credit (i.e. ECTS).

Imperial offers a diverse range of short courses, often providing courses detailing the most up to date developments in specific areas of interest. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the types of short courses offered by the College:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Pre-sessional
- Summer Schools
- Outreach
- MOOCs or SPOCs

Short Course Approval Process

The approval of short courses is undertaken by the College's Programmes Committee. There are slightly different processes depending on whether the proposed course already exists in some format, for example, as a module on an existing degree programme or whether the new course is to be an online course, for example, a MOOC, in which case strategic approval by the Online Learning and Innovation Group is also required. Summer Schools also have an additional approval step and must be approved by QAEC and Senate after Programmes Committee.

The following guidance relates to entirely new short courses which are offered in a primary face-to-face mode of study.

Departments wishing to offer existing modules on degree programmes as short courses should read: [Master's Level Modules offered as Short Courses: Guidance Note for Programme Directors](#) [pdf].

Departments wishing to develop MOOCs or SPOCs should read: [MOOCs/SPOCs: Approval Process and Guidance](#) [pdf] document.

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. For help on this process please email: short.courses@imperial.ac.uk

Departments should complete the following forms for each proposed course:

- [New short course proposal \(form B - new courses\)](#) [doc] form
- [Short Course Specification](#) [doc] form

The course proposal form requires departments to outline the rationale for the introduction of the course, the market demand, the resources required, the marketing strategy and the admissions process. The form also acts as a declaration for strategic approval from the department/faculty.

The course specification is intended as a definitive record of the main features of the programme, including teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Once approved by the Programmes Committee, Short Course Directors should make the course specification public by linking to the document from their own webpages.

As part of the planning process the Short Course Director must decide whether the short course will be assessed (and where this is for the award of academic credit) or non-assessed (no credit will be awarded). It is recommended that departments offer the assessment option at an additional cost.

Details of how to apply and any entrance requirements must be detailed 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.

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 is not compromised.

Further practical issues related to delivering short courses are detailed in the document: [Master's Level Modules offered as Short Courses: Guidance Note for Programme Directors](#) [pdf].

If you intend to submit suite of short courses for approval at any one time, please email short.courses@imperial.ac.uk for some additional guidance on this process.

The Registry maintains a database of the College's short course provision and carries out an annual audit of short course delegate numbers in the late summer.

All short courses will be reviewed periodically and Short Course Directors will be asked to submit a course evaluation/feedback report as part of this review.

Participants on short courses (delegates) are subject to the College's [Short Course Regulations](#) [pdf].

The quality assurance approval and review procedures for short courses are intended to monitor and enhance the quality of short courses offered by the College. The processes also ensure that short courses are appropriately costed; that the courses meet the needs of the target customers; that professional standards associated with developing and running courses are considered; that Short Course Directors have a clear understanding of copyright and intellectual property issues, and that course evaluation processes are in place for feedback purposes. Quality assurance is also an essential part of maintaining best practice across the College and protecting the global reputation of the College, as well as ensuring the best possible experience for participants. In addition, the process can ensure all short courses are publicised in a consistent and professional image.

All short course queries should be sent to: short.courses@imperial.ac.uk.

Office Use:

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