



# Short Courses Procedure

## Purpose

This procedure sets out principles and requirements for the design, delivery, governance, quality assurance and certification of UNSW short courses and professional certificates.

## Scope

This procedure applies to short courses offered by UNSW, including those developed or delivered under third party arrangements.

For the purposes of this procedure, the term ‘short course’ is used as an overarching term to describe shorter forms of learning other than accredited award courses, including offerings such as professional certificates.

Short Courses Procedure.....	1
1. Overview .....	1
2. Key requirements .....	2
Requirements for short courses:.....	2
Credit eligible short courses .....	2
Professional Certificates .....	2
3. Approval of short courses .....	3
4. Credit towards award programs .....	3
5. Quality assurance and oversight.....	4
Quality Assurance .....	4
Monitoring and review .....	4
Certification and digital badging .....	4
Recordkeeping.....	5
Appendix 1 .....	6
Legislative compliance .....	6
Related Documents.....	6

## 1. Overview

- 1.1. Enabling the development and offering of high-quality short courses, is consistent with UNSW’s strategic objectives.
- 1.2. UNSW short courses support lifelong learning, professional development and engagement with industry and community, and are designed in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and legislative requirements.
- 1.3. Short courses are a shorter form of learning, separate from accredited award courses, that offer a structured learning experience.

- 1.4. 'Credit eligible' short courses may be used for credit towards UNSW award programs. They include assessment, align with the academic standards of award courses and are delivered at an AQF equivalent level.
- 1.5. Short course learners are members of the UNSW community and subject to the Code of Conduct and Values. However, they are not considered award students of the University. Any implications of this for insurance, licensing, copyright, and the provision of services should be checked with the relevant University offices, eg. Library, IT, Insurance, and Student Services.
- 1.6. Short courses cannot be listed in the rules of award programs, and do not provide direct entry to award programs.

## 2. Key requirements

**Requirements for short courses:** All short courses offered by UNSW must:

- have clearly articulated learning goals
  - state an expected volume of learning
  - have structured learning activities
  - be delivered under appropriate academic oversight by suitably qualified UNSW academic staff or approved third-party providers
  - be recorded in the University's curriculum management system and listed on the central University webpage for professional development offerings
  - be delivered on a centrally approved learning management system
  - state any assumed knowledge or entry requirements
  - support university and faculty priorities and strategies
- 2.2. Names of short courses comply with UNSW naming conventions.
  - 2.3. Learning outcomes may be described as equivalent to AQF levels, however short courses may not be marketed as AQF qualifications.

### Credit eligible short courses

- 2.4. Credit eligible short courses must align with requirements in clauses 2.1-2.3 and:
  - align with the relevant AQF level and associated learning outcomes to ensure consistency and uphold integrity.
  - include assessment and feedback in compliance with the Assessment and Progression Policy, assuring that participants have achieved the stated learning goals.
  - publish details of potential credit arrangements with UNSW award programs.
  - involve a volume of learning of at least 50 hours, equivalent to 2 units of credit (UOC).

### Professional Certificates

- 2.5. A professional certificate is a non-award offering recognising completion of a defined body of learning made up of one or more short courses.
- 2.6. In addition to the requirements listed in 2.1-2.4, Professional Certificates must:
  - be equivalent to 12 UOC and represent approximately 300 hours of learning.
  - have structured and integrated curriculum design.

- ensure assessment of learner attainment in line with the Assessment and Progression Policy. This applies either to individual short courses or separately for the professional certificate.
- be offered at postgraduate level, equivalent to AQF level 8 or 9.

### 3. Approval of short courses

- 3.1. The Lifelong Learning Reference Group (LRG) is the approving body for all short courses. The Group advises on:
  - alignment with University strategy and policy,
  - quality assurance requirements, and
  - consistency of short course offerings across the University.
- 3.2. Proposals to establish, revise or disestablish short courses must be:
  - endorsed by the Head of School or unit director (or equivalent)
  - endorsed by the Faculty Associate Dean, Lifelong Learning (or equivalent, as decided by the Faculty)
  - approved by the LRG.
- 3.3. Proposals for new short courses must include:
  - the purpose and intended audience
  - learning goals
  - volume of learning
  - delivery mode
  - pricing and costing
  - whether the short course is credit eligible
  - delivery arrangements, including involvement of external parties
  - assessment arrangements where applicable.
- 3.4. The Dean, Lifelong Learning may apply fast-track approval on behalf of the Lifelong Learning Reference Group to support timely responses to tenders and partnership opportunities.
- 3.5. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality must approve tenders and proposals involving government initiatives or access to HELP loans.

### 4. Credit towards award programs

- 4.1. Short courses may be considered for credit towards award programs in line with the Recognition of Prior Learning (Coursework Programs) Procedure, Program Design Procedure and Academic Offerings Approval Procedure.

Approval pathways for credit and advanced standing arrangements for award programs are outlined in these documents, and sit outside the short course approval process.

- 4.2. A maximum of 12 UOC from short courses may be counted towards a UNSW award program, including nested or articulated programs. Where credit derived from short courses has been granted towards one program, additional credit cannot subsequently be applied if a student articulates into a related program.

- 4.3. Credit is only granted for whole award courses.
- 4.4. Formal advanced standing arrangements for an award program may only involve credit eligible short courses offered by UNSW.
- 4.5. Professional certificates are the primary mechanism for formal advanced standing arrangements for short courses.

## **5. Quality assurance and oversight**

### **Quality Assurance**

- 5.1. Short courses must be designed and delivered with consideration of academic, reputational and operational risks.
- 5.2. UNSW is responsible for academic oversight and quality assurance of short courses delivered through third-party arrangements. Offerings delivered with external partners will align with UNSW requirements for managing educational third-party arrangements.

### **Monitoring and review**

- 5.3. Short courses are reviewed by the LRG every three years to determine continuation or disestablishment.
- 5.4. Short courses must provide opportunity for participant evaluation each time they are offered.
- 5.5. Faculties and organisational units offering short courses monitor delivery and outcomes to ensure ongoing quality and integrity. Monitoring includes consideration of:
  - participant feedback
  - completion rates
  - demand and market relevance
  - alignment with Faculty and/or University strategy.
- 5.6. Short courses that are not offered for three years may be administratively disestablished.
- 5.7. The LRG reports annually to the Academic Board on the University's portfolio of short courses.

### **Certification and digital badging**

- 5.8. Completion of short courses is recognised through UNSW-approved certificates or digital badges, issued by the Lifelong Learning Business Unit.
- 5.9. Certificates and digital badges must comply with UNSW branding requirements and identify the:
  - participant
  - course title
  - date of completion
  - volume of learning
  - nature and outcome of assessment, where applicable.
- 5.10. The outcome of a short course is a certificate of completion.

## Recordkeeping

- 5.11. Records relating to short courses are maintained in line with the Information Governance Policy.
- 5.12. Records include sufficient information to support reporting, oversight and any future assessment of RPL.

Effective: ##

Responsible Officer: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality

Policy Lead: Dean, Lifelong Learning

# Appendix 1

## Legislative compliance

This Procedure supports the University's compliance with the following legislation:

1. Australian Qualifications Framework 2013
2. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)
3. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth)

## Related Documents

For the latest version of all UNSW policies and procedures visit [Governance – UNSW Policies](#)

- Academic Offerings Approval Procedure
- Academic Offerings Governance Policy
- Education Quality Policy
- Program Design Procedure
- Recognition of Prior Learning (Coursework Programs) Procedure