

## QUALITY ASSURANCE & AWARD OF CREDIT FOR SHORT COURSES

### Definitions (agreed at UTLC in 2008)

- Stand-alone Modules/Accredited CPD – assessed, credit-bearing stand-alone modules); academic credit awarded on completion
- Non-accredited CPD – non-credit-bearing modules or short courses; participants are not assessed and are not awarded academic credit on completion
- Credit accumulation: The process by which credits may be accumulated and retrospectively brought together to qualify the student for an award.
- Credit transfer: Allows students to move between courses and institutions and to have recognised the credits they already have.

### Principles that underpin Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) as agreed at UTLC in Feb 2009:-

- The academic standards of modules and awards involving credit accumulation and transfer must be equivalent to those of comparable modules and awards delivered at the University
- Students progressing through CAT must be treated comparably with other students
- Modules and awards involving CAT must operate within the context of the University's Qualifications and Credit Framework
- A student may enrol on a stand-alone module that may or may not be part of an existing programme
- A student who has successfully completed a module may keep the credits and use them to satisfy the credit requirements of any award for which the credited learning is deemed relevant. CATS awards will have 'programme' regulations, which define which modules are relevant
- There is a normal maximum limit of 5 years for the life of credit, ie the length of time since a student has passed the credits, however since the currency of a module will differ across disciplines academic units have discretion to apply for longer or shorter limits depending on the requirements of the subject or professional bodies
- APL requests for inclusion of credit studies elsewhere into a Newcastle CATS award will be subject to the University's standard procedure
- Credits that have been used to gain an award may not be re-used towards another award of the same volume and level. They may however be used towards an award of a greater volume. For example, it is not permitted to use a 10 credit module towards two Postgraduate Certificates, but it would be possible to use a 10 credit module in a Postgraduate Certificate and then accumulate a further 60 credits and be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma. The 'higher' qualification subsumes the former but a student will not be required to surrender their 'lower' qualification.

Specific University regulations relating to the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme are already in place:- <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/2010.html>

*The following guidance is provided pending publication of the full range of University policies updated to take account of CATS.*

### The Award of Credit

#### *Stand-alone modules (Accredited CPD)*

Participants who successfully complete a specific number of credits as part of a credit-bearing short course will be issued with a University transcript entitled “Certificate of Credits Achieved” showing the module title, level and number of credits is created for each module successfully completed. These are generated following the posting of confirmed module results.

Transcripts can be printed for each module – they can either show the modules completed during that academic year or the full record.

At present there are no award ceremonies for sub-degree awards.

#### *Other short courses and non-credit bearing modules (Non-accredited CPD)*

Students who take non-credit-bearing modules / short course will NOT receive a transcript. They may receive a simple ‘certificate of completion’ from the host School (however, it should be made clear that this does NOT constitute a University award).

NB. The University does not expect or require existing non-accredited (non-assessed) CPD to become credit-bearing.

### Quality Assurance arrangements

Non-accredited CPD (non-credit-bearing, non-assessed modules) remain the responsibility of the relevant School and are not subject to formal University QA procedures. However, if an academic unit decides to add assessment to a non-accredited short course it will need to submit a proposal under the module approval process.

The following arrangements apply to all short credit-bearing courses, including those already being delivered:-

#### Module Approval

Requests for a new module that will be available on a stand-alone basis and is not part of an existing or new programme should include:

- A fully completed Module Approval Form
- A fully completed Module Outline

All documentation should be submitted for approval as follows:

- To relevant School Committee/Board of Studies
- To relevant Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee

### External Examining

- All accredited CPD is required to have an external examiner to act as a ‘moderator’ with respect to assessment. Existing modules currently taught on other programmes may ask an existing external examiner to fulfil this duty on the short course. All external examiners are subject to the nomination and appointment criteria detailed in the University’s [Policy and Procedures for External Examiners of Taught Programmes](#). She/he will have appropriate subject expertise and will submit a short report to School BoS after each cohort after considering participant feedback and performance.

### Monitoring and Review

- Accredited CPD/stand-alone modules are subject to Annual Monitoring and Review and should be reviewed separately of standard programmes. This includes any programmes listed on the CATS Programme Register and any stand-alone modules not part of an existing programme; these modules can be reviewed as a group of related modules if appropriate. For provision where an external organisation is actively involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme, the AMR report should be written in collaboration and/or consultation with the partner and jointly agreed prior to submission to FTLC. See the [QUILT website](#) for further details.
- For provision where the University is delivering provision on behalf of a client; the final AMR report should be shared with an agreed named contact at the client organisation.
- A module evaluation questionnaire will be used for each cohort/module. In lieu of attendance/representation at Boards of Studies which may not be possible for practical reasons, students should be asked for feedback after each module (e-mails are acceptable).
- All accredited CPD/stand-alone modules will undergo ISR every 6 years alongside degree programmes provided by the host subject area. See the [ISR policy](#) for further details.

### Course Management

- Each course is required to have a leader/director appointed by the Head of School. Responsibility for quality management could be handled as a separate part of an existing BoS’s schedule of business. The BoS could include a representative from any employer involved in the design and/or delivery of the module/course.
- There must be a Board of Examiners for the course which will make pass/fail and classification decisions. See CATS Regulations E.14 and F.25 for further detail. See also Section 3e) of the Guidance for Boards of Examiners.

**QuILT**

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**Contact: Simon Meacher, [simon.meacher@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:simon.meacher@ncl.ac.uk) , Ext.3969**