

Academic Regulations for Short Courses

Introduction

- 1 Short courses ('courses') are units of study with a defined set of learning outcomes, which do not lead to the award¹ of a formal qualification but which may lead to the award of credit, up to a maximum value of 15 ECTS (375 learning hours). Credit-bearing short courses will be assessed in accordance with the university's assessment regulations (see paras 14-21 below).
2. Short courses fall into four categories:
 - a. HE short courses:

Courses leading to award of Higher Education (HE) credit at levels 4-7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) or linked to existing HE courses, including: credit-bearing short courses or micro-credentials², pre-sessional courses required for entry to a degree programme, existing HE modules offered with or without credit, summer schools for undergraduate or postgraduate students.
 - b. Pre-HE short courses:

Courses designed for learners under the age of 18, including: outreach courses, summer schools for under-18s.
 - c. Asynchronous online courses:

Self-paced, short online courses such as massive open online courses (MOOCs) and small private online courses (SPOCs).
 - d. Non-credit bearing courses:

Open or custom courses designed for professional development or personal interest, including: executive education courses, CPD courses and public evening classes.
3. Participants registered on a short course will be classified as learners, and will only have access to the facilities and services described in the associated terms and conditions. Learners will not have access to the university's Student Services unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions for the course. Where a learner or delegate is simultaneously registered as an Imperial student or is employed by Imperial, they will retain full access to the facilities and resources relevant to their student or staff status.

¹ An award of the university is any defined formal qualification as described in the [Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study](#) Part 1, section 2

² Micro-credentials are a subset of credit-bearing HE short courses that are standalone but may also be stacked towards a formal award.

4. A 'Course Leader' should be appointed for each short course, who will have overall responsibility for the organisation, management, delivery and (where relevant) assessment of that course. Course leaders of HE short courses leading to the award of credit, will have the same responsibilities for assessment as those of a module leader outlined in paragraph 176 of the Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study.

Entrance Requirements

5. To register for a short course, learners must;
 - a. Meet the English Language requirements for the course as described in the course specification.
 - b. Satisfy any entrance criteria for the course as described in the course specification.
6. **Safeguarding** The university's *Policy and Procedure for Admitting Students Under 18 Years of Age* applies to applicants, and the Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy applies to learners registered on a course.

Criminal Convictions

7. The university's policy on the Admission, Registration and Enrolment of Ex-Offenders applies to learners with a criminal record. A disclosure and barring service (DBS) check will only be required for the programmes and courses specified in this policy.

Course Approval, Monitoring and Review

8. A course specification for each short course will be derived from the short course approval form and, unless it is a closed course, the details should be made available on department webpages.
9. All short courses and any subsequent changes to short course specifications must be approved by the relevant authorities in accordance with the short course approvals process.
10. All short course approvals, modifications, suspensions and withdrawals will be recorded by the Registry, which will maintain a definitive record of course details. The Programmes Committee will receive notification of all approvals, modifications, suspensions and withdrawals.
11. All short courses are subject to annual monitoring processes, to be managed by the department³ that owns the course, reporting to the relevant Faculty Education Committee or its equivalent.

Attendance & Progression

12. A learner admitted to a short course must participate in the course to the satisfaction of the Course Leader.

³ For the purpose of these regulations, the term 'department' may refer to an academic department within a faculty, or to a division or unit of a central department, such as Lifelong Learning, Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication or Early Career Researcher Institute.

13. The university reserves the right to require any learner whose academic progress, conduct or attendance is unsatisfactory to withdraw from the course. Relevant requirements should be set out in the terms and conditions for learners, along with details of the complaints or appeals process to be followed should a learner wish to dispute their withdrawal.

Credit, Assessment & Examination

14. Where credit is applied, the course specification will outline the number of directed and self-directed learning hours and the number of credits awarded to learners successfully completing the course. Each credit awarded will represent 25 hours of notional learning in line with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Short courses delivered in an intensive format, will normally have a maximum credit volume of 2.5 ECTS per week.t.
15. Micro-credentials will each carry a minimum credit value of 2.5 ECTS up to a maximum of 15 ECTS (in multiples of 2.5 ECTS). Further information about the structure of micro-credentials is outlined in the university's Micro-credential Framework.
16. Short courses which are also modules delivered and assessed as part of a programme of study leading to a formal qualification from the university will have a credit volume determined by Senate according to the regulations for the relevant programme of study.
17. Assessment will be carried out in accordance with the university's [Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study](#) (Part 4: Assessment). Compensation does not apply to short courses. Learners must achieve the published module pass mark, based on aggregated assessment component marks where applicable, and meet any 'must pass' assessment component requirements in order to pass.
18. Boards of Examiners for short courses will be governed according to the [Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study](#) for awards at the relevant [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) (FHEQ) level with the following exception;
 - a. In the case of HE short courses, which are not owned by a faculty the Lifelong Learning Education Committee will fulfil the role of the relevant quality committee.
19. The pass mark for courses at levels 4-6 of the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) (FHEQ) is 40%. The pass mark for courses at level 7 of the FHEQ is 50%.
20. Assessment results for short courses are not classified. Assessed short courses may be pass/fail or numerically graded. Where graded, assessment results will be issued to learners as a percentage mark. In the case of stackable micro-credentials, the percentage marks may be used to determine a classification for the target award as outlined in the programme specification for the target award.
21. Re-sit arrangements for credit-bearing short courses will be outlined in the relevant short course specification.
22. A learner who re-enters for an assessment may be liable for [re-entry fees](#).

Appeals and Complaints

23. Learners on HE short courses wishing to appeal their assessment outcome(s) should do so according to the [Academic Appeals Procedure for Taught Programmes](#).
24. HE short courses will be subject to the university's student complaints procedure. Learners on other types of short courses wishing to make a complaint should contact the lead department or unit for the course, which will direct them to the relevant procedure.

Mitigating Circumstances

25. Assessed short courses may incorporate flexible submission or completion arrangements for assessed work appropriate to the mode and duration of study (e.g. negotiated deadlines or optional examination dates). On HE short courses, where a learner is unable to meet the assessment requirements due to unforeseen circumstances, they may submit a request for mitigation according to the [Mitigating Circumstances Policy & Procedure](#).

Academic Misconduct

26. All learners are expected to adhere to good academic practice in relation to any assessment completed. Learners on HE short courses, are subject to the university's [Academic Misconduct Procedures](#).

Attendance Certificates, Transcripts and Digital Badges

27. Learners will receive a Certificate of Attendance for the relevant short course provided they meet the attendance requirements set out in the course specification.
28. Where a short course has an associated digital badge, this will be issued to learners upon successful completion.
29. Delegates who are registered for a credit-bearing course and who achieve the relevant overall pass mark will receive a transcript stating the course(s) successfully completed, the final percentage mark(s) (where graded) and the value of the course(s) in ECTS credit.
30. For assessed courses, after the Examiners have reached a decision, learners will be notified of the result of their assessment(s), including the marks obtained.
31. Learners can normally expect to receive their percentage marks within 1 month of the end of the course and their certificate(s) and/or transcript within 2 months of the end of the course.
32. The award of credit by the university or the successful completion of any short course does not confer right of entry to any other university course or programme of study.
33. The award of credit by the university or the successful completion of any short course does not provide automatic credit exemption or recognition of prior learning in the event of entry to any other university course or programme of study.

Intellectual Property

34. Learners registering individually on a short course agree to abide by the university's [Intellectual Property Policy](#). Where the university has entered into a contract with a third party to provide a short course for a group of learners, the contract will set out arrangement for the ownership and management of intellectual property.

Fees and finance

35. Lifelong Learning or the host department will, where applicable, set fee levels for each short course.
36. For HE short courses/micro-credentials also taught as a module of a degree programme, the fee charged for the short course will not be less than the equivalent proportion of the tuition fee for the full programme.
37. Any sanctions for non-payment of course fees (for example withdrawal or, where relevant, withholding certification) should be described in the terms and conditions for the course.

Document Control

Document title:	Academic Regulations for Short Courses 2026.2027		
Version:	1.0	Date:	August 2026
Location:	R:\7.Quality Assurance\2. Regulations\01. Academic Regulations\Academic Regulations 2025-26\Short Courses		
Initially approved by and date:	Senate 2014		
Version approved by and date:	Senate June 2026		
Version effective from:	September 2026		
Originator:	Academic Registrar		
Contact for queries:	Assistant Registrar (Extended Learning)		
Cross References:	Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study Tuition Fee Policy Student Disciplinary Procedure Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure Unsatisfactory Engagement Policy and Procedure Fitness to Study Procedure Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure College Ordinances and Regulations Policy and Procedure for Admitting Students Under 18 Years of Age Child Protection And Adults At Risk Safeguarding Policy		
Notes and latest changes:	Updated June 2024 to meet new brand standard Updated June 2024 to cross reference to <i>Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study</i> Updated August 2025 to reflect new short course approval procedure and development of a micro-credential framework Updated May 2026 to confirm that compensation does not apply		