

Policy on the Academic Governance of non-ECTS CPD Provision



University Secretariat

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 UCD is committed to linking the subject knowledge and expertise of faculty to the training and development needs of partners in industry, public service, and in community organisations with customised educational offerings.¹ Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provides a pathway to disseminate the research and scholarship of the University to a range of audiences, enabling UCD to maximise its impact on society and augmenting our student experience and researcher engagement.
- 1.2 The Policy on the Academic Governance of non-ECTS (European Credit Transfer System²) CPD Provision will assist the University in planning and supporting CPD provision as part of its overall educational portfolio.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Policy establishes a definition of CPD and a standard and principles for the academic governance of CPD provision that is not delivered through ECTS credit-bearing modules and programmes and is not placed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- 2.2 CPD that is developed and delivered as ECTS-bearing modules and programmes is not covered by this Policy. Where CPD is delivered through modules and programmes, it should be developed, approved and reviewed like any other module or programme in the University in line with the principles outlined in the Academic Regulations and any other frameworks, policies, procedures or guidelines in place for programmes and modules.
- 2.3 The Policy involves CPD provision that is developed and delivered within UCD by Schools or other units that deliver academic provision which includes CPD, and that normally report to a Board of Studies for their academic provision (from now on referred to as *unit*).
- 2.4 The Policy addresses the academic governance of CPD. Financial arrangements, systems, support structures and marketing of CPD are outside the scope of the Policy.

¹ Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future, Core Objective 3: Continue to build our engagement locally, nationally and internationally.

² The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool of the European Higher Education Area for making studies and courses more transparent. ECTS allows credits taken at one higher education institution to be counted towards a qualification studied for at another. ECTS credits represent learning based on defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

3. Definitions

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD provides UCD with opportunities to discover, steward, and share knowledge by linking the subject knowledge and expertise of faculty to the training and development needs of partners in industry, public service, and in community organisations with customised educational offerings.

For the professional learner CPD is any activity that contributes to their learning and development. With CPD, professionals maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and competence, and develop qualities in line with their life-long professional development needs.

ECTS and non-ECTS

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool of the European Higher Education Area for making studies and courses more transparent. ECTS credits represent learning based on defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

The distinction between 'ECTS' and 'non-ECTS' CPD refers to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits, as referenced in the UCD Academic Regulations.

This Policy covers CPD provision that does not result in ECTS credit. Such CPD may, however, result in credits awarded by a professional, statutory or regulatory body.

Examples of non-ECTS CPD provision

Non-ECTS CPD provision can include, for example:

- A customised course
- Seminar or conference
- Event or workshop
- Other CPD designed and executed in partnership with professional bodies or other partners.

4. Principles for design, approval, delivery and review of CPD

- 4.1 All CPD activities should be aligned to the University's strategic direction and educational priorities.
- 4.2 CPD provision should be designed, developed and delivered by members of faculty of the University, or where CPD is delivered by someone who is not a member of faculty, a named UCD member of faculty will be responsible for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of the CPD offering.
- 4.3 Each School or unit will design and deliver CPD according to their preferred schedules and timelines.
- 4.4 CPD provision must be approved before delivery. The relevant Head of School or Chair of the Board of Studies retains responsibility for the approval of non-ECTS CPD but may delegate approval to another individual (a Head of Unit, Director or Academic Lead) or a committee. To approve new CPD provision the Head of School or equivalent must be satisfied and have sufficient evidence of the quality of the provision.
- 4.5 Non-ECTS CPD provision is not assessed on a UCD grade scale and not directly transferable towards UCD awards.

- 4.6 CPD provision should result in a certificate with learning outcomes and/or attendance hours itemised.
- 4.7 CPD provision should seek to achieve accreditation by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body, where relevant. Such professional accreditation will be separate from the NFQ and the ECTS Framework.

5. Principles for monitoring, oversight and reporting of CPD

- 5.1 Schools and other units delivering CPD should review their non-ECTS CPD provision regularly. Where relevant, review of CPD provision should be part of existing review and student feedback mechanisms. CPD participants must be involved in the process.
- 5.2 The School or unit must maintain a record of all non-ECTS CPD offerings and relevant student information for the purposes of students' access to their record and for the purposes of the University Programmes Board (UPB) review and monitoring of CPD provision. The record will be retained by the School or unit locally.
- 5.3 The School or unit must maintain and make available to relevant faculty, staff and students details of the School/unit specific approval, review, and monitoring process for non-ECTS CPD. This must include details of feedback mechanisms. Any relevant review reports should be retained and made available to the UPB for review and monitoring purposes.
- 5.4 The UPB will review non-ECTS CPD provision periodically. The UPB is responsible for determining the timing, format and details of periodic reviews, and related reporting requirements. For the purposes of the review, schools and units must make available to UPB:
 - A list of approved non-ECTS CPD provision approved and delivered since the last periodic review.
 - Details of the approval, review and monitoring process of non-ECTS CPD and any relevant reports or other outputs of reviews.
 - Details of any non-compliant offerings or process and how the non-compliance has been addressed through change to processes.
- 5.5 Where CPD is delivered by a School the responsibility for reporting to the UPB resides with the Head of School (or delegate as per principle 4.4 above). Where CPD is delivered by a unit that is not a School, the Head of Unit, Director, Academic Lead or equivalent will report to the relevant Board of Studies. The Board of Studies will submit the report to the UPB once they are satisfied and have sufficient evidence of the quality of the provision.
- 5.6 The School or unit can approve and deliver CPD only if the UPB continues to be satisfied with the School/unit review and monitoring process. The UPB can interrogate and request assurance of the quality of offerings.
- 5.7 Where the UPB is not satisfied with the School/unit review report it can request clarification or propose changes to the approval, review or monitoring process. The relevant Head of School or chair of the Board of Studies (or individual with delegated responsibility) is responsible for addressing any issues raised by the UPB and for providing UPB with assurance of resolving the issues. If the necessary assurances are not provided, as a last course of action, UPB can decide to modify or discontinue an offering.
- 5.8 The UPB is responsible for recommending policies – such as this Policy – to the Academic Council. The UPB has responsibility for approving and overseeing procedures and frameworks, as appropriate for the development, approval, review, and delivery of CPD offerings by schools and other units that deliver academic provision, to assure the

effectiveness and quality of such offerings (University Programmes Board Terms of Reference).

6. Related Policies

The regulations and policies listed below are relevant to the Policy on Academic Governance of non-ECTS CPD Provision but not necessarily aligned, reviewed, and updated concurrently.

Academic Regulations	Promote a shared and common understanding of UCD qualifications and consistency in the use of qualifications and credit across the University.
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) Accreditation of UCD Programmes and Units	Demonstrates the University's support for the achievement of accreditation where possible; and ensures that the University can provide current and prospective students with accurate information about the accreditation status of its programmes/schools/institutes. Professional accreditation includes academic programmes, modules and other professionally accredited activities.
Recognition of Prior and Concurrent Learning Policy (RPL)	Establishes the principles for the recognition of prior learning normally as part of the programme admissions process. Enables a process for the recognition of prior and concurrent learning towards a UCD award. Non-ECTS CPD can be recognised through the process for non-formal or experiential learning.

7. Version History

Version	Date	Status/Committee
1	21/04/2022	Academic Council

Appendix 1: Design, approval, delivery, quality assurance of non-ECTS CPD

