

Short Course Learner Policy

Section 1 - Introduction/Background

(1) The University of Wollongong (UOW) is committed to supporting the lifelong learning of learners, students, staff, community members, graduates and industry professionals. The University offers a range of opportunities alongside award and non-award study to enable learners to acquire knowledge and skills in flexible ways and that enable the University's learner community to succeed at all stages of their learning journey.

(2) Lifelong learning activities will be accessible to all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, migration status, socio-economic status or gender, except where restrictions may be imposed to ensure compliance under the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#).

(3) This Policy addresses Short Courses which are shorter-form lifelong learning programs that sit outside the University's award course offerings.

Section 2 - Scope/Purpose

(4) This Policy applies to all learners undertaking offerings approved and promoted as Short Courses offered by the University's onshore campuses, or under third party arrangements, whether these offerings are undertaken by participants in Australia or overseas.

(5) UOW Global Enterprises and their controlled entities will have their own version of this Policy, covering any learners registered for short courses offered by UOW Global Enterprises.

(6) This Policy does not apply to students undertaking award or non-award courses offered by the University, which is managed by a range of student policies, as outlined in the [Course Policy](#).

(7) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic and Student Life) may exempt a Short Course or a suite of Short Courses from the application of the provisions of this Policy either generally or for a specified period of time.

Section 3 - Registration

(8) Learners may register individually for a Short Course or may be registered as a group when a Learning Agreement is in place in accordance with Section 13.

(9) Where the Open Learning platform is used, learners will be required to register, using their full name and email address at a minimum. Learners may be required to provide additional information to confirm their eligibility to complete the program, to tailor delivery of content to the audience or for future marketing and communication purposes.

(10) Learners may be required to establish a password for Short Courses delivered via an online learning platform.

(11) Learners under the age of 18 must:

- a. obtain the written consent of a parent or guardian to participate in a Short Course and provide the written consent to the University on request; and
- b. comply with any age restrictions imposed by the University or as required by law in relation to activities undertaken as part of the Short Course.

(12) Learners are responsible for ensuring that they meet any published minimum assumed knowledge, English language and are otherwise prepared and able to meet the requirements of the Short Course.

(13) A learner will not be a University student as a result of registering or participating in a Short Course. This means the learners will not be charged the Student Amenities Fee and will not be supplied with a University email address for communications with the University and will not be entitled to access any benefits provided to University students (except as the University permits in its absolute discretion from time to time).

(14) Learners will not be eligible for student visas based on their registration in a Short Course.

(15) Based on compliance with the [ESOS Act](#) international onshore students are not eligible to register for microcredentials that may be used for credit towards an AQF award qualification. International onshore students may register for hobby or recreational Short Courses that do not jeopardise the attendance or progress of their main course of study.

(16) The University reserves the right to refuse to provide a Short Course to any potential learner where the provision of the Short Course may be a breach of the [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#), [Charter of the United Nations Act 1945](#) or related regulations and determinations.

Section 4 - Current Students Completing Short Courses

(17) If a learner is already a University student, registration in a Short Course will not impact their award course enrolment, except where a student breaches conduct requirements in accordance with clause 44.

(18) Students partaking in award courses and Short Courses will be required to manage their study load. Participating in Short Courses will not count as reason for academic consideration in any award study.

Section 5 - Fees and Refunds

(19) Where a Short Course has a fee, the learner must make payment in full upon registration for the Short Course.

(20) Where a Short Course is offered for free, a fee may be charged for the issuing of a certification, in consideration of administrative costs to the University. The University will provide notice to learners prior to or at the time of enrolment if any such fee is applicable. The University will issue the certification once payment has been received and cleared and the learner has successfully completed all Short Course requirements.

(21) Until the University has received and cleared payment in full registration is not complete and the learner's position in the Short Course is not secure.

(22) Refunds will be administered as below for any Short Course, unless a variation has been approved and clearly articulated to learners prior to their enrolment in the Short Course.

(23) In accordance with section 13, if a Learning Agreement is applicable to a group of learners, fees will be payable in accordance with that agreement.

(24) A learner may cancel their registration up to 15 working days prior to the commencement of a Short Course and be entitled to a full refund.

(25) Where a learner cancels with less than 15 working days notice, but prior to the commencement day, they will be entitled to an 80% refund. The University will retain 20% of the course fee to account for its pre-estimated losses due to such cancellation.

(26) Where, a course does not have a commencement date (access to Short Course materials are made available upon payment) or the commencement date for the course has passed the University will only grant refunds in exceptional circumstances. This does not affect a learner's rights under the Australian Consumer Law.

(27) Exceptional circumstances are circumstances that must:

- a. be beyond the learner's control;
- b. not make their full impact on the learner until on, or after, the date payment was made; and
- c. make it impracticable for the learner to complete the requirements of the Short Course during the required period.

(28) Example of exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a. medical illness or injury to a learner or a learner's immediate family member that requires hospitalisation and/or impairs a learner's ability to engage with the Short Course. This includes physical injury or serious illness, and episodes of mental illness or cognitive function impairment;
- b. the bereavement of an immediate family member, close friend, or partner;
- c. an adverse experience that has impacted on the learner's physical or mental wellbeing, including but not limited to witnessing a serious accident, or being the victim of a serious crime;
- d. instances where the learner is unexpectedly required to care for a close family member; or
- e. major political upheaval or natural disaster in a learner's home country that has impacted on the learner or the learner's family, and that requires immediate emergency travel or consular support.

(29) Learners who seek a refund of a Short Course fee must submit a refund request in writing to the Short Course Owner.

(30) Where a refund request is on the basis of exceptional circumstances, supporting evidence demonstrating how their request meets one or more of the exceptional circumstances must be submitted with the request.

(31) The Short Course Owner may consult with the Program Manager, Future Education to assess and determine refund requests in consultation with the Short Course Owner and will advise the learner of the outcome within 28 days of receipt of the request.

(32) The Short Course Owner in consultation with the Program Manager, Future Education may determine which of the following outcomes is appropriate. The learner may be:

- a. refunded the Short Course fee;
- b. transferred into the next scheduled Short Course of the same description and at the same fee, provided there are places available and the learner agrees; or
- c. denied a refund, on the basis the learner has failed to demonstrate the existence of exceptional circumstances.;

Section 6 - Short Course Cancellation or Rescheduling

(33) The University may cancel or reschedule a Short Course, where this is reasonably necessary for the University to update or make changes to the learning content or materials or the online learning platform, due to unavailability of teaching staff, limited enrolments, factors impacting delivery (e.g. public health orders or system malfunctions), or due to other changes in the University's business or operations to be notified to the learner. In these circumstances, the University will provide the following notice to any learners who have registered for a Short Course:

- a. subject to the remainder of this clause, as much notice as reasonably possible but no less than 3 days' notice; or
- b. in the event of unavailability of teaching staff, system malfunction or other extenuating circumstances outside the University's control, as much notice as reasonably possible. Due to the unexpected nature of such events, it may not be possible for the University to provide prior notice in these circumstances.

(34) Cancellation or rescheduling of Short Courses must be approved by the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic and Student Life) in the case of non-Faculty Short Courses.

(35) In the event of a cancellation or rescheduling of a paid Short Course, learners may elect to be:

- a. refunded the Short Course fee (if paid); or
- b. transferred into the next scheduled Short Course of the same description and same fee, provided there are places available; or
- c. transferred into a different Short Course, and, if applicable, either receive a refund or pay any additional fees of any difference in the fees between the initial Short Course and the new Short Course, provided there are places available.

(36) To the extent permitted by law, the University will not be liable for any costs, expenses or losses incurred by learners arising out of, or related to, the cancellation or rescheduling of a Short Course.

Section 7 - Learner Engagement and Support

(37) The University will use the email address provided by learners upon registration to communicate with learners. It is the learner's responsibility to regularly check for communications from the University. Learners are required to notify the University of any changes to their email address.

(38) Short Course Owners will provide any necessary support and advice regarding the Short Course content and assessment, where applicable.

(39) The University will provide learners with a specific Short Course contact on Short Course marketing materials. This specific Short Course contact may be the Short Course Owner or another designated team or individual and shall be able to provide advice to prospective learners on the Short Course cost, duration, assumed knowledge requirements and other Short Course requirements.

(40) The University will handle and use the information provided by learners in accordance with the [UOW Learner Privacy Statement](#).

Section 8 - Learner Conduct and Safety

(41) The University is committed to providing a safe, equitable and orderly environment for the University community, and expects each member of that community to behave responsibly and ethically.

(42) Learners must comply with the following University policies and procedures. For the purposes of these policies any references to students, will be taken to include learners.

- a. [Student Conduct Rules](#)
- b. [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- c. [Campus Access and Order Rules](#)
- d. [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- e. [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- f. [Copyright Policy](#)
- g. [IP Disclosure Review Guidelines](#)
- h. [IP Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- i. [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](#)
- j. [Respect for Diversity Policy](#)
- k. [Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy](#)
- l. [Sexual Harm Response Policy](#)
- m. [Inclusive Language Guidelines](#)

(43) Learners who breach any of the obligations imposed on students in the above policies may:

- a. be asked to resubmit an assessment, where the breach related to a specific assessment;
- b. be given a Fail or Unsatisfactory grade, where the breach related to that specific Short Course;
- c. have their registration suspended or cancelled;
- d. be suspended or permanently restricted from registering for other Short Courses; and/or
- e. have certificates for completed Short Courses revoked, where the breach related to that specific Short Course.

(44) Where a learner is also a University student, any breach of University policy by the learner in a Short Course may, at the absolute discretion of the University, be considered alongside any conduct breach that has occurred as a student registered for an award or non-award course.

(45) The Short Course Owner must advise the Future Education Division of any penalties imposed. Future Ed will maintain records of any learner breaches and penalties imposed.

Section 9 - Learner Feedback

(46) Collecting and responding to learner feedback is an important means of enhancing the quality of learning and teaching and the learner experience. An evaluation survey is included in the University's Open Learning template package.

(47) Faculties are responsible for developing an appropriate schedule for the evaluation of Short Courses, ensuring that learner feedback is sought:

- a. at least once a year for Short Courses run more than once a year; or
- b. every time a Short Course is run when Short Courses are run less frequently.

(48) Learner feedback should be incorporated into Short Course evaluations to support review and improvement activities.

Section 10 - Assessment Requirements

(49) In order to successfully complete a Short Course, learners may be required to undertake assessments.

(50) Assessments are required in Microcredentials. Learners must successfully complete all assessments to the required level and within the designated timeframes in order to be awarded a Microcredential certificate of attainment.

(51) General assessment requirements will be outlined in Short Course marketing material prior to registration. More specific information will be provided to learners with sufficient notice to prepare for and complete any assessment task.

(52) Learners must be provided with appropriate and useful feedback on their performance in all assessments and have the right to view their marked assessments and discuss their performance with the Short Course Owner.

(53) Learners who are dissatisfied may follow the academic appeal process outlined in Section 12.

(54) The University must mark and make available assessment tasks, to learners within 15 working days of the submission date unless otherwise advised to the learners.

(55) The University may invigilate assessments, whether conducted in-person or online.

(56) The University will grade Short Courses with assessment components as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, except for Microcredentials which the University may mark and grade using the University's grade descriptors (Appendix 1 of the [Teaching and Assessment: Assessment and Feedback Policy](#)).

(57) Where a learner is unable to meet an assessment deadline they should seek consideration from their Short Course Owner in writing.

Section 11 - Completion Records and Credit Arrangements

(58) The University will make completion records available to learners as soon as possible after they have completed the requirements of the Short Course.

(59) The University may award the following types of validation documents on successful completion of a Short Course:

- a. Microcredential certificate of attainment – upon successful completion of microcredentials, including satisfactory performance on assessments that assure learning outcomes have been achieved.
- b. Short Course completion certificate – upon demonstrated successful completion of all other lifelong learning activities.

(60) In some instances, these certificates may be issued in the format of a digital badge.

(61) Learners who achieve a Microcredential Certificate of Attainment for a credit bearing microcredential may qualify for recognition of prior learning towards a University award course, however, they must apply for the award course and meet all entry requirements to qualify. Credit shall be granted in accordance with the [Credit for Prior Learning](#)

[Policy](#) and will only be awarded in six credit point increments. This means that more than one Short Course may need to be completed before credit can be applied for.

(62) Potential credit will be advised to learners prior to enrolment in microcredentials.

(63) Grades of performance will be recorded on the learner record. The University will retain finalised results for learners following the completion of a Short Course, in line with the [Records Management Policy](#).

(64) Learners will not be considered University graduates of any type and will not be able to infer the successful completion of a University award course.

Section 12 - Academic Appeals

(65) A learner may request a review of their mark or grade or appeal an academic decision of the Short Course Owner.

(66) The learner must first seek to resolve the matter informally with their Short Course Owner.

(67) If the learner is unable to resolve the matter informally they may apply in writing for a review from the Faculty Associate Dean Education or Unit Director, as appropriate.

(68) The University will ensure that learners who formally request a review of a Short Course Owner's decision will have:

- a. their matter acknowledged and handled promptly;
- b. their matter treated confidentially and not discussed with anyone who does not need to know about it;
- c. any relevant circumstances or information they put forward taken into consideration;
- d. their matter handled with regard to procedural fairness and in accordance with principles of natural justice;
- e. the outcome of a review request provided in writing; and
- f. assurance that they will not be treated differently, less favourably, or victimised because they have raised their matter.

Section 13 - Learning Agreements

(69) Learners may be sponsored to undertake or complete Short Courses by government agencies or private organisations.

(70) All sponsorship arrangements must have a Learning Agreement between the University and the sponsoring party.

(71) The Learning Agreement must specify terms and conditions for:

- a. registration process;
- b. fees and charges;
- c. refund conditions and process;
- d. Short Course cancellations; and
- e. access to completion records.

(72) Where the terms and conditions are silent the standard provisions of this Policy apply.

Section 14 - Roles and Responsibilities

(73) Learners are responsible for:

- a. ensuring that they meet any minimum assumed knowledge, English language and are otherwise prepared and able to meet the requirements of the Short Course;
- b. ensuring that their registration information is correct and kept up to date, including their payment details and email address; and
- c. complying with the relevant University policies and procedures.

(74) Short Course Owners are responsible for:

- a. providing any necessary support and advice regarding the Short Course content and assessment, where applicable;
- b. appropriately designing assessments and resources to ensure the integrity of the Short Course;
- c. providing sufficient assessment information and useful feedback on the learners performance in assessments;
- d. maintaining a learner record;
- e. issuing certification to learners on successful completion of a Short Course; and
- f. ensuring learner's refund requests and academic appeals are received and actioned in a timely manner.

(75) The Faculty Associate Dean Education, Unit Director or their nominated delegate is responsible for:

- a. overseeing the Short Course portfolio of the Faculty; and
- b. reviewing and making determinations on academic appeals related to Short Courses within their Faculty.

(76) The Future Education Division is responsible for:

- a. Developing and maintaining the systems, procedures and templates to support the delivery of Short Courses;
- b. administering refunds for payments made by the Open Learning platform; and
- c. supporting the Short Course Owner to assess and determine outcomes of fee refund requests.

Section 15 - Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Learner	A participant in a Short Course offered by the University.
Learning Agreement	A contract between the University and a third party to provide short courses to individuals nominated by the third party.
Short Course Owner	A staff member of the University that is responsible for the delivery of a Short Course.

(77) Additional key terms used in this Policy relating to Short Course types and students are defined in the [Course Policy](#).

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Sue Bennett Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic and Student Life)
Responsible Officer	Alison Freeman Director, Future Education
Enquiries Contact	Future Education Division