Policy and Guidance on the Approval and Review of

Non-Credit Bearing Taught Provision

### 1. Preamble

1.1 The University provides a variety of courses and training opportunities that are not credit-bearing (i.e. they have not been benchmarked against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and do not formally contribute to an award as described within [The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/qef/documents/FQHEIS-June-2014.pdf)).

1.2 This Policy and Guidance applies to all non-credit bearing taught provision where there is certification from the University including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Any exceptions should be approved by the University Quality and Academic Standards Committee (QASC). The Policy and Guidance is in place to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities to formally reflect and report on the strategic importance, sustainability and quality of non-credit bearing taught courses. The Policy and Guidance does not apply to events, training programmes, workshops or seminars where certificates are not provided by the University.

### 2. Definitions and principles

2.1 ‘Certificates’ in this context means certificates of successful academic performance or certificates of attendance for any course provided by the University which has not been credit-rated in accordance with the SCQF and is not included within the University regulations for a specific award as described in [Ordinance 39](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/media/dundeewebsite/pgla/documents/calendar/ordinances.pdf). A ‘Certificate’ may also be an Open (Digital) Badge[[1]](#footnote-2).

2.2 MOOCs are freely available open online courses provided by the University through platforms including FutureLearn[[2]](#footnote-3). Certificates for the successful completion of MOOCs are provided which bear the University crest, and it is important that there is appropriate Institutional oversight of activities in this area. For the purpose of this Policy and Guidance, MOOCs are considered separately from other short courses or activities that offer certificates of successful academic performance.

2.3 Open Badges are considered as certificates of performance for the purpose of this Policy.

2.4 All non-credit bearing taught provision that carries a University certificate of attendance or performance including MOOCs and Open Badges must be formally linked to a lead School or Directorate, which will be responsible for approval, review and reporting of activities for those areas.

2.5 The University will maintain centrally-held registers of certificated courses including MOOCs. Primary responsibility for oversight of quality and sustainability will lie with the relevant Schools or Directorates, reporting to Senate through the Open Learning Sub-Committee for MOOCs or the QASC for all other certificated courses.

### 3. Certificates of attendance

3.1 Courses which attract a certificate of attendance will normally be short courses of a vocational nature and will not include any measure of performance or formal assessment procedures.

3.2 The standard University format for certificates of attendance will include the following information: course title; duration; dates of attendance; the responsible School or Directorate; and date. These certificates should be signed by the Dean of the lead School or Head of the lead Directorate.

3.3 At a minimum, basic details (e.g. the course title, when it is delivered, the duration, and the name of the course leader) should be provided by the course leader to the relevant Dean of School or Head of Directorate annually for inclusion in a list of certificated courses to be approved by the School Board (or relevant subcommittee) or by the Directorate Management Board (or equivalent).

3.4 Whilst responsibility for the oversight of quality, sustainability and associated work-load planning for the delivery of courses that offer a certificate of attendance is entirely devolved to the relevant Schools or Directorates, there is an expectation that a list of such activities will be reported annually to the QASC (see Section 6 below).

### 4. Certificates of performance

4.1 The quality assurance arrangements for courses where certificates of performance are issued are similar to that for credit bearing modules, with Schools having primary oversight of approval and review. Where such assessed short courses are delivered by a Directorate, a School should be appointed to take primary responsibility for quality assurance. Templates for the approval and annual review of short courses that involve a judgement on successful completion are provided in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

4.2 In the case of degree programmes where discrete modules or units within modules are available to candidates on a non-graduating basis or as part of continuing professional development, assessment methods should be equivalent to those used for graduating students. This is important as successful completion of such courses has the potential to be included in claims for recognition of prior learning.

4.3 The standard format for certificates of performance should include the following information: course title; duration; dates of attendance; type of assessment; mode of study; responsible School or Directorate; grade achieved; and date of successful completion. The certificates should be signed by the Dean of the lead School. The format for Open Badges is under development.

### 5. MOOCs

5.1 Schools have primary responsibility for the approval and review of MOOCs. Institutional oversight of the MOOC portfolio and the quality of provision is provided by the Open Learning Sub-Committee to which Schools will report for formal approval and review. Where MOOCs are delivered by a Directorate, a School should be appointed to take responsibility for quality assurance. Templates for the approval and annual review of MOOCs are provided in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 respectively.

### 6. Reporting arrangements

6.1 Schools and Directorates will report to the QASC annually on their certificated short courses by providing a list of courses with certificates of attendance and a list of courses with certificates of performance (including Open Badges). The lists should contain the course title, when it is delivered, the duration and the name of the course leader, and, for those with certificates of performance, be accompanied by a brief commentary on quality.

6.2 School Boards (or relevant subcommittee) will report to the Open Learning Sub-Committee for Institutional approval of new MOOCs. Annual reviews of quality should also be reported from the School Board (or relevant subcommittee) to the Open Learning Sub-Committee. The monitoring and review of MOOCs is separate from School Annual Learning and Teaching Enhancement Reports which are principally concerned with credit-bearing taught provision.

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May 2015

Appendix 1

### Template for the approval of non-credit bearing short courses that offer certificates of performance (including Open Badges[[3]](#footnote-4))

Headings are shown in the left hand column and guidance on the content is provided in the right hand column. All elements should be completed. Where the required information is not applicable to the proposal, this should be stated. The guidance text should be removed in the final approval document. General advice should be sought from the Director of Quality and Academic Standards (e.hensens@dundee.ac.uk). Contacts for specialist advice for individual elements of the template are indicated in the guidance.

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| **Section heading** | **Information to be provided** |
| Course title | Proposed title |
| Responsibilities and contacts | School(s) and/or Directorates involvedMember(s) of staff leading the course and contact details. |
| External organisations associated with delivery of the course | Any external organisations associated with the short course, with a description of their role(s)—for example, joint provision involving another university or organisation. |
| Reason(s) for introduction of the course | A brief description of the rationale and the benefits to the University. A business case should be provided as an appendix where there is significant investment of staff time and/or where there are other costs associated with the delivery of the course. |
| Planned start date | E.g. Semester 1, Session 2015-16. |
| When delivered | When and how often the course is anticipated to be delivered during the academic year. |
| Subject area | E.g. Applied statistics. |
| Aims | Concise statement of the broad purpose of the course. |
| Intended learning outcomes | Concise statements of what students should know, understand and be able to carry out as a result of their learning from the course. |
| Indicative content | Brief listing of topics covered by the course. |
| Teaching, learning and assessment | Concise statement of approach to teaching, learning and assessment. |
| Inclusiveness | What is the approach to equality and diversity, and inclusive learning?Contact for advice: Head of Equality and Diversity (a.trivedi@dundee.ac.uk) and Head of Disability Services (s.hill@dundee.ac.uk). |

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| Resource requirements for delivery | Comment on any specific resource requirements for delivery of the course.E.g. Use of the VLE, on-line assessment requirements. |
| Teaching accommodation | Where applicable, provide an outline of the teaching accommodation required. |
| Staff and staff development | Describe who will be contributing to the course development and delivery and whether there are any staff development requirements.Contact for advice on staff development: Head of Academic Skills Centre (l.l.anderson@dundee.ac.uk). |
| Date of approval | Date of School approval. |

Appendix 2

### Template for the annual review of non-credit bearing short courses that offer certificates of performance (including Open Badges)

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| **Annual review of certificated non-credit bearing short courses** |
| **1. Title of course**Title |
| **2. Academic Year**E.g. 2015/16 |
| **3. School**The School with chief responsibility for the course. Note Directorates and other Schools involved, if applicable. |
| **4. Course Leader/Organiser**E. g. Dr John Smith (lecturer) |
| **5. Participant numbers and achievements**How many participants were there and how many successfully completed the course? Comment on whether the completion rate was in line with expectations. If there was a high level of failure or non-completion, provide a commentary on the reasons and any actions that might be taken to support student success. |
| **6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the course including the approach to learning, teaching and assessment**Provide an evaluation of the operation of the course (including resources such as staffing, equipment, accommodation and budget, as appropriate). Provide an overview of feedback from participants. Describe any changes to be made as a result of the feedback or reflection on approaches to the course delivery. |
| **7. Inclusive nature of the course**Note any examples of good practice in the area of equality and diversity. See <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/equalitydiversity/> and <http://blog.dundee.ac.uk/inclusivepractice/>Confirm whether all staff who deliver the course have undertaken the online training on equality and diversity (<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/equality/training/>). If not, outline plans for ensuring that all staff have undertaken the relevant training. |
| **8. Other comments**Comment on any other issues considered significant this year, including aspects of good practice. This section should cover, for example, approaches, developments or innovations that have proved successful or challenging and may be of interest to other staff. |
| **9.** Name of person completing the form, with date of completion. |

Appendix 3

### Template for the approval of MOOCs.

Headings are shown in the left hand column and guidance on the content is provided in the right hand column. All elements should be completed. Where the required information is not applicable to the proposal, this should be stated. The guidance text should be removed in the final approval document. General advice should be sought from the Head of the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (Natalie Lafferty, n.t.lafferty@dundee.ac.uk). Contacts for specialist advice for individual elements of the template are indicated in the guidance.

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| **Section heading** | **Information to be provided** |
| MOOC title | Proposed title |
| Responsibilities and contacts | School(s) involvedDetails of the team, including the academic lead, the learning technologist, other academic staff, discussion monitors. |
| External organisations[[4]](#footnote-5) associated with delivery of the MOOC | Any external organisations associated with the MOOC, with a description of their role(s)—for example, joint provision involving another university or organisation. Provide a brief description of proposed approaches to joint management of the course where relevant. |
| Reason(s) for introduction of the MOOC | A brief description of the rationale and the benefits to the University. State whether it is linked to an existing University programme, and if so, provide details of the programme and relevant module(s). How does the course align with the University vision and strategy? |
| Resourcing | How is the MOOC being funded? Give an indication of the total staff resource required to provide the course. |
| Planned start date | For example Autumn 2016. |
| Duration and frequency | Number of weeks, hours of study per week and how often the MOOC will run. |
| MOOC category or subject area. | E.g. Health Care. For MOOCs delivered through FutureLearn, choose from their categories. |
| Aims | Concise statement of the broad purpose of the MOOC. What will students achieve by completing the course? |
| Intended learning outcomes | Provide concise statements of what students should know, understand and be able to carry out as a result of their learning from the course. |
| Indicative content | Brief listing of topics covered by the MOOC. |
| Prerequisites | Are there any prerequisites for taking the MOOC? |
| Teaching and learning | Concise statement of approach to learning, including an indication of how students will be provided with academic support. Describe any proposed use of social media (e.g. Google Hangouts). Will you offer a test which can be completed to earn a Statement of Attainment? |
| Inclusiveness | What is the approach to equality and diversity, and inclusive learning?Contact for advice: Head of Equality and Diversity (a.trivedi@dundee.ac.uk) and Head of Disability Services (s.hill@dundee.ac.uk). |
| Technical dependencies | Describe any additional technology required beyond the standard provision.Contact for advice: Head of the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (n.t.lafferty@dundee.ac.uk). |
| Staff and staff development | Describe who will be contributing to the MOOC development and delivery.Provide a brief overview of the qualifications, experience and capability of the staff group who will be providing the MOOC, whether there are any staff development requirements, and how these will be addressed.Contact for advice on staff development: Head of Academic Skills Centre (l.l.anderson@dundee.ac.uk). |
| Market for the MOOC | Why would students be attracted to the course? What is the unique selling point? Are there any similar competitor programmes? How might the course have global appeal? What is the expected number of joiners? What is the target learner demographic? |
| Marketing | How will the MOOC be marketed? Describe whether there are any specific channels for marketing outwith the University. E.g. could it link to a national or international event or conference? |
| Commercial objectives | Describe the commercial objectives where relevant. |
| Opportunities and risks | Consider any significant opportunities, risks or threats related to the start-up and development of this MOOC, and how they could be managed. For example—is the course dependent on one key member of staff, what would happen if she/he left? |
| Research | What are your plans (if any) to undertake educational research on this MOOC? For example looking at learner engagement, more extensive evaluation of learners’ experience on the MOOC and their approaches to learning. |
| Future plans | Do you plan to use the content in the course to develop credit bearing provision on our own platform? Do you plan to develop paid-for CPD on the FutureLearn platform? Do you plan to make the course available as supplementary teaching material for University of Dundee students? Describe any future plans. |
| Date of approval | Date of School approval. |

Appendix 4

### Template for the annual review of MOOCs

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| **Annual review of open online learning provision** |
| **1. Title of course** Title |
| **2. Academic Year** E.g. 2015/16 |
| **3. School**The School with chief responsibility for the course. Note Directorates and other Schools involved, if applicable. |
| **4. Course Leader/Organiser**E.g. Dr John Smith (lecturer). |
| **5. Review of course statistics and student feedback**How many students signed-up to the course? How many participated after signing-up? How many students successfully completed the course? Were there any specific assignments or questions that appeared to be particularly challenging to participants? How many Statements of Participation were issued? How many participants were awarded a Statement of Attainment? What parts of the course did students find most and least interesting? How well did the students engage with forums and discussion boards (where relevant)? Describe any other relevant aspects. |
| **6. Evaluation of the learning experience provided by the course**Based on the course statistics and student feedback, provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of the course in terms of the learning experience provided. Describe any changes to be made in the future as a result of your evaluation. |
| **7. Evaluation of the operation of the course**Where possible, provide a commentary on the effectiveness of marketing and the accuracy of the information provided to students. I.e. did the course meet their expectations and is there anything that needs to be done to address and issues? Describe how effective the platform was for supporting teaching and learning, and any enhancements that you would suggest. Comment on how straightforward it was to evaluate the course through the course statistics and student feedback, and whether there are areas for improvement. |
| **8. Inclusive nature of the course**Note any examples of good practice in the area of equality and diversity. See <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/equalitydiversity/> and <http://blog.dundee.ac.uk/inclusivepractice/>Confirm whether all staff who deliver the course have undertaken the online training on equality and diversity (<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/equality/training/>). If not, outline plans for ensuring that all staff have undertaken the relevant training. |
| **9. Other comments**Comment on any other issues considered significant this year, including aspects of good practice. This section should cover, for example, approaches, developments or innovations that have proved successful or challenging and may be of interest to other staff. Comment on whether there has been any enrolment from MOOC learners onto credit bearing programmes. What are the future plans for the course? Will it run next year, and if so, how often? |
| **10.** Name of person completing the form, with date of completion. |

1. See <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/blog/so-what-are-open-badges-28-aug-2013> for more information on Open Badges. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. FutureLearn is a company owned by The Open University, providing free online courses from universities and other organisations. See <https://www.futurelearn.com/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. ‘Open Badges’ is currently an area for further exploration at the University, and templates and guidance for Open Badges delivered through open online provision will be further developed as the strategy for delivery of such courses emerges. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Other than FutureLearn. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)