UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Institute of Continuing Education

Course Management Handbook 2020-21

Courses for non-matriculated students:

Section 6: Non-award-bearing courses

Bespoke Professional Development Courses

Contents

Non-award-bearing courses: Bespoke Professional Development

1. All courses are normally taught at a minimum of first year (FHEQ Level 4) undergraduate level.

2. Table 1 provides an overview of different academic level descriptors. For full guidance see: www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf

Table 1: Studying at different academic levels: level descriptors

FHEQ Level 4	Undergraduate
Certificate 60 credits at FHEQ level 4 **Certificate of Higher Education** 120 credits at FHEQ level 4	Learning at this level will reflect the ability to: • develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base • employ a range of specialised skills • evaluate information using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems • operate in a range of specific contexts taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.
FHEQ Level 5	**Undergraduate**
Diploma 60 credits at FHEQ level 5 **Diploma of Higher Education** 120 credits at FHEQ level 5	Learning at this level will reflect the ability to: • generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well-defined and abstract problems • analyse and evaluate information • exercise significant judgement across a broad range of functions • accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.
FHEQ Level 6	**Undergraduate**
Advanced Diploma 60 credits at FHEQ level 6	Learning at this level will reflect the ability to: • critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised skills across an area of study • critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources • transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations • accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.
FHEQ Level 7	**Postgraduate**
Postgraduate Certificate 60 credits at FHEQ level 7 **Postgraduate Diploma** 120 credits at FHEQ level 7	Learning at this level will reflect the ability to: • display mastery of a complex and specialised areas of knowledge and skills • employ advanced skills to critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources • conduct independent research • accept accountability for related decision making, including via the use of supervisions • develop appropriate personal qualities and professional attitudes • critically evaluate one's own approach to a subject • develop an awareness of a subject in its wider context

3. Courses are commissioned and planned by the relevant Academic Director or Course Director in collaboration with the Head of Academic Centre Administration and the Director of Academic Centres or Director of International Summer Programmes and Lifelong Learning. External partners may propose a Course Director who is a practitioner in an appropriate profession if required. Such individuals must be accepted onto the ICE Tutor Panel before teaching on the course. Academic Directors or Course Directors identify programmes and courses to be developed, they develop the curriculum, suggest potential Tutors and review publicity material and course guides.

ICE VLE, online classrooms

4. ICE offers Tutors the option to utilise the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to support students in their part-time study. The ICE Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team offer full training and support for all Tutors using the ICE VLE and remote learning. See **Preparing the course space on the ICE VLE** below, for further information.

Preparing a course

Course acceptance and publicity

5. The Tutor and/or Course Director provides a short course description of about 40-60 words, to appear in publicity materials, including the ICE website. The aim of the description is to attract potential students. To maximise the likelihood of the course being picked up by internet search engines, best practice is to write in short sentences and place keywords or phrases at the beginning of the sentence or paragraph. Tutors are also asked to provide details of teaching sessions and other activities in the Course Programme. ICE will source an appropriate copyright image for the website but Tutors are welcome to propose any relevant images for which copyright is acquired.

6. ICE also encourages Tutors to advertise their own courses. Where this is the case Tutors are required to liaise with the ICE Marketing team in advance of the course.

Preparing the Course Guide

7. The purpose of the Course Guide is to give students a clear understanding of the aims of the course, the subject matter covered, the teaching methods likely to be used, the nature of the work and the participation that will be expected from them during and outside class sessions. It explains what the students may reasonably expect to have learned by taking the course. The Course Guide is therefore an essential part of the course's academic validation.

8. The Course Guide is considered by the Academic Director or Course Director and by external professional bodies or the academic advisory group if appropriate. The Academic Director or Course Director may subsequently contact the module leaders to discuss possible modifications. The approved Course Guide is made available to students on the ICE website.

9. In writing the syllabus, Tutors follow the *pro forma* that is provided by the Head of Academic Centre Administration and which includes guidance notes. In addition to any course-specific information the Course Guide includes the following information for students:

   Aims

10. Describe the overall purpose of the course and are usually framed as general statements of intent.

   Content

11. The likely topics to be covered during the course.

   Presentation of the course

12. The broad approach to the course. For example:

   - expected student participation;
   - opportunities for discussion;
   - type of materials used (maps, plans, documentary material);
   - format of the class (seminars, workshops, fieldwork etc.)

- desired outcomes

13. The specification of learning outcomes is a central part of all the Institute's courses. They indicate in the syllabus what the students are expected to learn from the course and are a means of ensuring comparability of content and standards. The learning outcomes encourage students to reflect on, and appreciate, what they have learned both in knowledge and skills.

14. Although specifying outcomes at the start of a course may not take into account the variety of learning achieved by students, some of which may be unarticulated and unexpected, it determines the academic focus of the course and enables the design of teaching sessions with a clear focus.

15. A learning outcome is defined as something that a person could be expected to know or to understand or be able to do as the result of attending the course, and should state how this expectation could be evaluated and appreciated.

16. Learning outcomes may be written in both general and specific terms and focus on the following areas:

    a) the development of knowledge and understanding of the academic and professional content of the course;
    b) the development of academic and professional skills such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation and the application of tools and methods;
    c) the development of transferable (key) skills such as problem-solving, team work, assessing learning resources, self-evaluation, information management and communication skills;
    d) the development of subject-specific practical skills;
    e) personal development. This is often an intangible but keenly felt outcome (for example: self-awareness, personal confidence, learner autonomy etc.).

    A checklist for writing learning outcomes

17. The answer to the following should be 'yes':

    - Are the number and breadth of outcomes contained in the course appropriate and achievable?
    - Do the descriptions of the learning outcomes use verbs which give the students the opportunity to evaluate and appreciate what they have learned or achieved the outcome? E.g. demonstrate, respond to, analyse, report etc.
    - Does the academic level of the outcomes relate to the relevant level descriptors given in Table 1 above?

Preparing the course space on the ICE VLE

18. For non-award-bearing courses using the VLE, the TEL team sets up a course space before the start of the course.

19. Tutors use the VLE as a teaching resource to support their teaching and facilitate the students' study between taught sessions. Login instructions for Tutors and students are supplied by the TEL team.

20. Tutors are encouraged to provide hyperlinks in their VLE course space to relevant publications, for example books, journals and websites. Copyright guidance for Tutors is given within the VLE.

21. All course spaces contain the Course Guide, links to the Student Handbook, and sources of help and guidance. In addition, each course space offers a Course Announcements facility where Tutors and administrators can place announcements that are emailed to all course participants and also remain visible within the VLE.

22. Tutors using the VLE can contact the TEL team for advice, guidance and training in the use of their course space. Online support is also available within the VLE.

23. As with all courses taught at undergraduate or postgraduate level within the University, elements of preparation, personal study and self-assessment are built into the courses offered by ICE. In making a commitment to study with ICE, students need to set aside sufficient time for the demands of the course. Students are asked to ensure that they are able to prepare for their course sessions. Active participation in class and/or in the VLE,

as appropriate, is expected. In addition, students are expected to undertake any course work that the Tutor may incorporate to promote learning and understanding.

Practical activities and Fieldtrips/Excursions

24. Risk assessments must be carried out for all practical activities and field trips undertaken as part of the course. For the purposes of health and safety considerations, fieldwork **includes any off-site work** carried out by staff and students for the purposes of teaching, research or other activities while representing ICE.

25. In planning a course, Tutors may incorporate excursions, field visits or gallery tours, laboratory work etc. ICE recognises the value of fieldwork which is an integral part of a course and adds to the academic experience. However, plans for fieldwork **must be discussed with the Head of Academic Centre Administration** when the course is initially proposed. For full guidance on field trips and the forms to be completed please see section 2 of the Course Management Handbook.

At the end of the course

26. Students are encouraged to complete a feedback form at the end of their course. The information provided is used to help ICE improve and develop course provision.

27. Course Directors, module leaders and Tutors are asked to complete the appropriate end of course paperwork before applying to claim payment for teaching and expense(s). Tutors are asked to attach original receipts for travel and incidental expenses (where agreed in advance). Guidance on payment information can be found at www.finance.admin.cam.ac.uk/payroll/payroll-deadline-dates

Certificate of Attendance

28. Upon completion of a non-award-bearing course students may be issued with a Certificate of Attendance.

29. For information on certificates and letters of attendances please see section 1 of the Course Management Handbook.

Quality control procedures

30. Students are encouraged to provide their thoughts on their course and time at ICE by completing an anonymous questionnaire at the end of their course. The information provided is used to help ICE improve and develop course provision. Feedback is reviewed by the Head of Academic Centre Administration, who produces a report and disseminates to the Tutor, Academic Director, Course Director, Hall Manager, Head of Marketing, Director of ISP & LL, and Director of Academic Centres, as required.

31. Non-award-bearing courses are scrutinised and reviewed by a Programme Review Panel composed of:

   • A Cambridge University representative external to ICE
   • A representative external to the University
   • A representative from ICE's academic staff
   • Two representatives from the Tutor Panel
   • A student representative
   • A representative from Cambridge University Student Union (CUSU)

32. The purpose of the Panel is to review and advise on all issues to do with the quality of ICE non-award-bearing course provision. The Panel submits an annual report to be considered by the Director of Continuing Education and the ICE Academic Policy and Operations Committee.

33. Many courses are also closely scrutinised and monitored by external professional partners who report their conclusions to ICE via the Head of Academic Centre Administration.