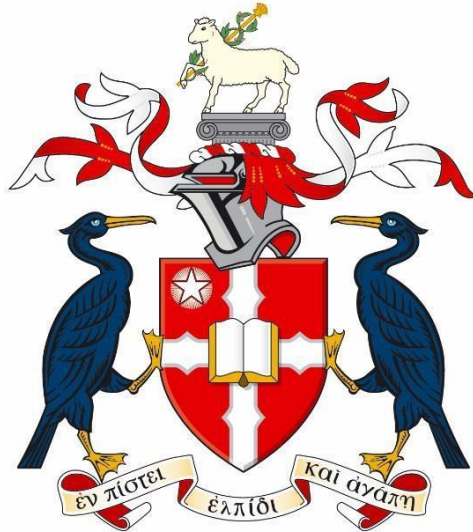


# Liverpool Hope University



## **Academic Quality Handbook 7 (QH7b):** Professional Learning Development Handbook (Approval of non-credit bearing courses)

## A. Introduction

This Handbook forms a part of Liverpool Hope University's overall academic quality framework and is to be seen in that wider context. All the University's Academic Quality Handbooks are approved by Senate upon recommendation by the University's Academic Committee (AC).

Academic teams may wish to offer Professional Learning Development (PLD) courses for a variety of reasons, often following a request by an external body such as an employer or in response to wider local, regional, national, international, or professional initiatives. A successful offering of PLD can enhance the University's reputation and profile and constitute an important building block in terms of promoting the University to external communities.

Two kinds of PLD are recognised, credit bearing and non-credit bearing. This Handbook addresses the approval of **non-credit bearing provision only**. Please refer to Academic Quality Handbook 7a (QH7a) for the approval of credit bearing provision.

## B. Definition

Liverpool Hope University defines PLD as: "a range of short and long courses, that may be credit bearing or non-credit bearing, designed, developed and delivered to enhance the skills, knowledge, understanding and capabilities of professionals throughout their careers".

These include courses that are:

- designed to develop employment-related skills and/or knowledge, where employment-related includes, but is wider than, professional or vocational training;
- designed to meet the needs of employers and their workforce and/or individuals who share a work-related interest. This may be profession-specific or develop generic professional skills, which may be credit or non-credit bearing;
- are designed, developed, and delivered<sup>1</sup> by University staff and/or a partner<sup>2</sup>;
- may flexible in timing or mode of delivery and
- which should normally generate a profit<sup>3</sup>.

Examples of PLD courses may include:

- Students taking a credit bearing module from a formal course of a University (at whatever level of study) without the intention of completing the related qualification;

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<sup>1</sup> This does not preclude the occasional use of guest speakers

<sup>2</sup> PLD courses that are offered under the terms of a partnership agreement are subject to the quality assurance procedures of the University

<sup>3</sup> Each School/Department will have its own approach to and targets for income generation and enterprise, which may in turn link to PLD activity

- A short course developed for a specific client or group of clients;
- An academic course based in or around work-place practice, designed for a specific employer/sector/external body;
- Post-qualification PLD;
- Career development courses designed to allow employees to attain a new professional status.

The requirements of this Handbook **do not** apply to such research-focused activities as conferences, symposia, or colloquia.

It is recognised that the University may, on occasion, wish to enter into an agreement with an external partner to deliver courses. In such cases, the provision will be subject to a separate approvals process and legal arrangements, considering the requirements of the external partner. Please refer to the Academic Quality Handbook 8 (QH8): Partnerships Guide.

It is also recognised that the University may, on occasion, wish to accredit non-credit bearing PLD courses. In such cases, the provision will be subject to a separate process considering the requirements of the Professional Body. Please refer to the Academic Quality Handbook 10 (QH10): Seeking and Maintaining Professional Accreditations.

## C. Principles of Non-Credit bearing PLD

Any non-credit bearing PLD must still reflect the University's expectations for standards and quality as any credit bearing course would. PLD provision that does not carry University credit needs to be designed and delivered in accordance with all appropriate principles of good practice.

There are two types of non-credit bearing PLD:

- Non-assessed: Certificate of Attendance
- Assessed: Certificate of Completion

Any programme which requires effort on the part of the participant over a sustained period and which has assessment tasks included as part of the wider requirements of the course should *normally* carry credit. However, where there are cases that no credit is needed or required, but assessment is still needed, a Certificate of Completion will be issued. Where non-assessment is required within a course i.e. a series of one-off PLD or where a student cannot complete the assessed component of the course, a Certificate of Attendance will be issued. A typology is provided in Appendix 1.

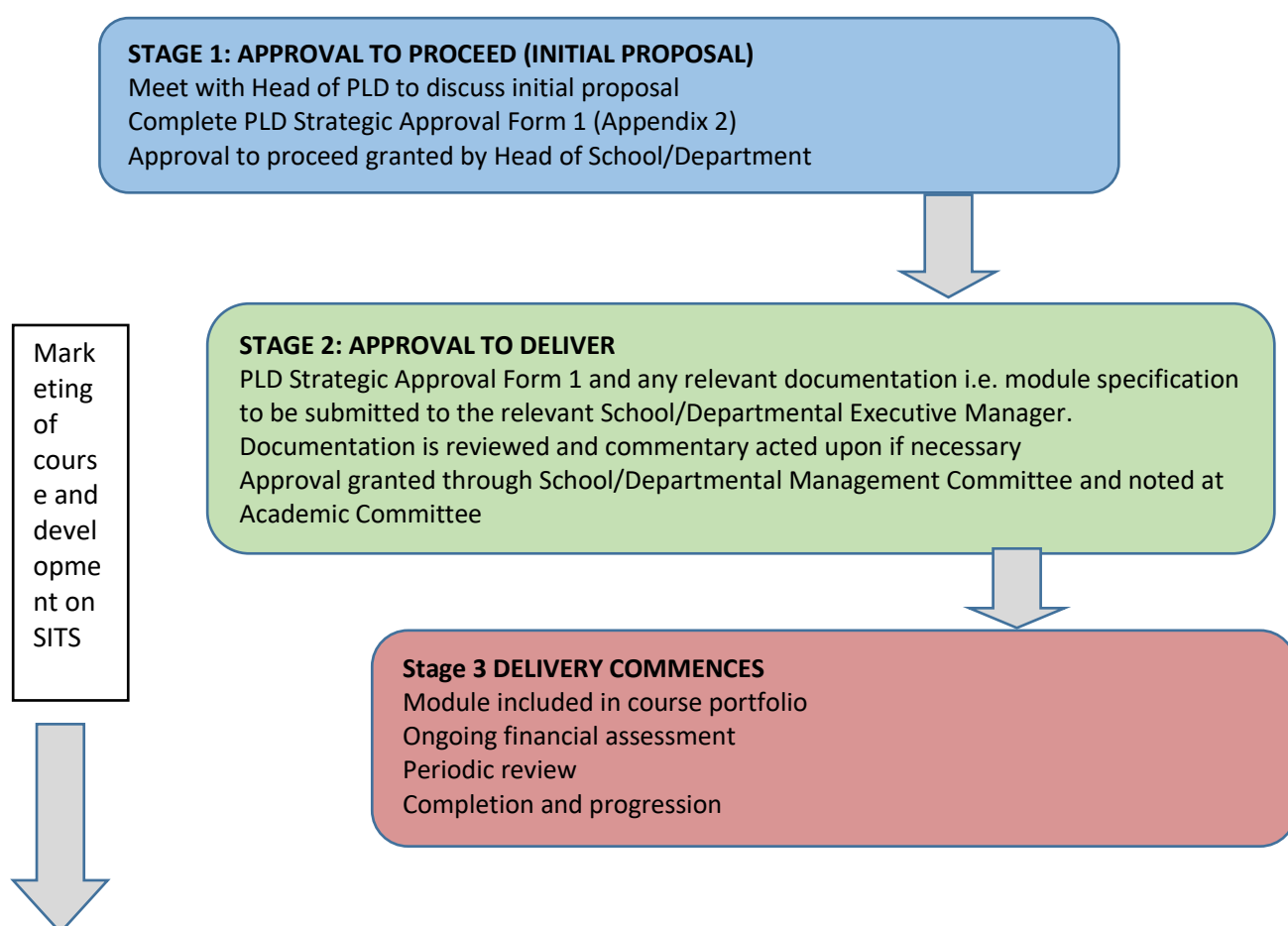
For assessed, non-credit bearing PLD the Registrar must be asked to confirm at the point of

approval the processes by which marks will be endorsed and any wider requirements and regulations (such as resubmission opportunities) that would apply.

## D. Approval of Non-Credit bearing PLD

School/Departmental Management Committee has the authority to approve any non-credit bearing PLD provision and report actions taken to Academic Committee. All non-credit bearing PLD must be approved before delivery begins.

### Non-Credit bearing PLD Approval Process:



### Stage 1: Approval to Proceed (Initial Proposal)

#### STAGE 1: APPROVAL TO PROCEED (INITIAL PROPOSAL)

Meet with Head of PLD to discuss initial proposal  
Complete PLD Strategic Approval Form 1 (Appendix 2)  
Approval to proceed granted by Head of School/Department

- (a) **Identification of new PLD:** Potential new PLD courses, both credit bearing and non-credit bearing may be identified through reflective meetings, by individuals (Heads, academic tutors), through cross -School/Departmental collaborations, or as a result of identifiable gaps in the market. Once a potential new course has been identified the named lead/proposer of the identified PLD should meet with the Head of PLD. The Head of PLD will support the named lead throughout the process.

Subject teams are asked to ensure that an appropriate/reasonable timeline is used for the approval of each individual PLD course. Teams should bear in mind the timeline for applications and for appropriate promotional material to be prepared. Subject teams are also asked to take particular care that their documentation meets CMA Guidelines (see Hope QA website for more details).

- (b) **Initial Proposal:** The Head of PLD and named lead complete applicable sections of the PLD Strategic Approval Form 1 (Appendix 2) and submit to the Head of School/Department for review. A meeting may take place to discuss further. The Head of School/Department will sign the PLD Strategic Approval Form 1 to confirm approval to proceed. If approval is not given a follow up meeting should be arranged to discuss these reasons.

**Please note:** Where PLD is offered in conjunction with a partner organisation or Professional Statutory Body, the Academic Quality Handbook 8 (QH8): Partnerships Guide and QH10 Seeking and Maintaining Professional Accreditations must be followed in conjunction with this Handbook.

## Stage 2: APPROVAL TO DELIVER

### STAGE 2: APPROVAL TO DELIVER

PLD Strategic Approval Form 1 and any relevant documentation i.e. module specification to be submitted to the relevant School/Departmental Executive Manager.

Documentation is reviewed and commentary acted upon if necessary

Approval granted through School/Departmental Management Committee and noted at Academic Committee

Non-credit bearing PLD where there is no assessment should be approved by the Head of School/Department (or equivalent). Approval documentation (Appendix 2) consisting of a brief description of what is to be offered should be presented and approved before the provision is delivered. (This can be combined with the Head of School/Department's initial approval as described above if wished.)

Where non-credit bearing PLD includes assessment, the approval documentation (Appendix 2) is closely aligned to that of credit bearing PLD to ensure a clear articulation of the programme

aims, learning outcomes, content, teaching and learning strategy and assessment strategy.

Any non-credit bearing PLD should be presented to the relevant School/Departmental Management Committee for approval following any necessary discussion and revisions.

Significant pedagogical issues can arise where students taking a Level 7 module or modules as non-credit bearing PLD are integrated into delivery with students taking the module(s) as part of an assessed full Award. If the subject team wishes to pursue this approach the Head of School/Department must explicitly approve it, and the issues and impact on student experience for both constituents must be fully set out in the approval documentation, together with a clear articulation of how such issues will be managed.

Where non-credit bearing PLD is offered in conjunction with a partner organisation a set of bespoke QA Guidelines are devised and operated. This is monitored by the Partnerships and Accreditations Committee. Please refer to the Partnerships Guide (QH8) for further information.

If non-credit bearing provision includes assessment academic teams will need to provide assurance to the University that the assessment system is fair and operated equitably. Thus, the appointment of an External Moderator (PLD)<sup>4</sup> to undertake an independent review of assessment practices is recommended so that participants and the School/Department can be confident in the integrity of the provision and the outcomes of the assessment process, thereby safeguarding the good standing of the University.

Upon completion of the requirements for non-credit bearing PLD, participants will be entitled to a certificate of attendance (or where assessment is undertaken and passed a Certificate of Completion). For the avoidance of doubt, this will state that the PLD undertaken was non-credit bearing.

At the point at which non-credit bearing PLD is approved, the wording for the associated Certificate must be provided to the Design Team who will use it within a standard template<sup>5</sup>. This will be coordinated by the PLD Team.

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<sup>4</sup> External Moderators should be appointed by School/Departmental Management Committee at the point at which the provision is approved and should reflect the broad principles associated with the appointment of External Examiners. Guidance on the appointment of External Moderators and suggested fees is provided separately.

<sup>5</sup> Following completion, the School/Department should provide details of those who have completed the course to enable production of the certificates, which are then issued by the School/Department.

#### Stage 4: Delivery Commences

##### **Stage 4 DELIVERY COMMENCES**

Module included in course portfolio

Ongoing financial assessment

Periodic review

Completion and progression

All approved PLD will be included within the course portfolio and marketed by the PLD Team and associated School/Department. The PLD Team manages all aspects of the student life cycle from recruitment to completion and a dedicated administrator will be allocated once the PLD course is approved. The PLD Team will:

- Set and monitor recruitment targets
- Set and deliver marketing plans
- Set and monitor all financial aspects
- Deal with all student admissions from course enquiry through to registration on course
- Report on course related data
- Provide on course student and academic support
- Monitor student progress and completion
- Evaluations
- Coordinate assessment (if applicable)
- Liaise with academic staff, External Moderators, process HPL claim forms, set up HPL staff and limited companies/sole traders
- Liaise with student administration over issuing of certificates
- Advise students on progression opportunities

Upon successful completion of PLD, the University will issue a Certificate of Attendance or Certificate of Completion.

## **E. Monitoring of Academic Standards, Student Experience and Enhancement**

- A quarterly report is written by the Head of PLD for School/Departmental Management Committee purposes to update on any PLD developments.
- For assessed, non-credit bearing PLD, External Moderators should complete an annual report on the provision and associated assessment processes.
- Whilst the nature and duration of PLD may not allow for student/participant feedback to be elicited in line with the University's Student Voice/Course Representation framework, all PLD, whether credit bearing or non-credit bearing, should be subject to

formal evaluation by participants. The data so gathered should be used by the course team within wider reflective and development activities.

- The Head of PLD and/or or named academic lead or equivalent, should report on key metrics associated with PLD activity within the School/Department. This may include data such as PLD course opportunities identified, number of new courses developed and approved, number of PLD delegates, student feedback, income, and surplus from PLD activity. The nature of such reports shall be determined by the Head of School/Department.

## **F. Admission and Registration**

Admission to non-credit bearing PLD is based on the admission requirements set out by the subject teams and approved by School/Departmental Management Committee.

## **G. Costs**

Financial matters will be considered as part of the process of giving initial approval, with due consideration given to the staff costs associated with the development, delivery, and management of the course together with projected income.

## Appendix 1 Typology of (Bespoke) PLD Provision

	Type A	Type B	Type C
Credit	Yes	No	No
Assessed	Yes	Yes	No
Approval	Where the PLD leads to a Qualification of the University, approval is as per Course Design and Approvals process (for any course over 30 Credits)	School / Departmental Management Committee	Head of School / Department's Approval
	OR School / Departmental Management Committee (for any course up to a maximum of 30 Credits)		

## Appendix 2

### QF7a: School/Departmental Level PLD Strategic Approval



#### SCHOOL/DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL PLD STRATEGIC APPROVAL

<b>PROPOSED PLD COURSE TITLE</b>	
<b>NAME OF SCHOOL /DEPARTMENT</b>	
<b>PROPOSED START DATE</b>	

#### **CHECKLIST** - The proposed PLD course as listed above:

			Yes/No
Supports achievement of the School/Department's Strategic Plan			
Can be funded either via School/Department Resources or via fees			
Has been endorsed by the relevant Head of School/Department			
Will be delivered by Hope staff* <sup>6</sup>			
Will be approved in line with the table below (extract from PLD Handbook v.4)			
PLD Course	Type A	Type B	Type C
Credit	Yes	No	No
Assessed	Yes	Yes	No
Approval	Where the PLD leads to a Qualification of the University, approval is as per Course Design and Approvals process (for any course over 30 Credits)	School/ Departmental Management Committee	Head of School/ Department
	OR School/Departmental Management Committee (for any course up to a maximum of 30 Credits)		

<sup>6</sup> With the exception of occasional guest speakers

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PLD COURSE	
<b>Title of Proposed Course:</b>	
<b>School/Department/Other:</b>	
<b>PLD Lead/Project Management:</b> <b>Academic/Quality Assurance Lead:</b>	
<b>Proposed start date</b> (year and month):	
<b>Length and status and mode of study</b> ( <i>e.g. 10 weeks part time, at 2 hours a week</i> ):	
<b>Details of proposed student numbers and the number of times that the course will be run. Please also indicate where the majority of participants will originate</b> ( <i>e.g. public sector/private sector/specified other</i> ).	
<b>A brief outline of the course including credit value, FHEQ Level and details of any assessment, as applicable.</b>	
<b>Entry requirements</b>	
<b>The rationale for the course</b> <i>You may wish to consider whether: (i) the course has been</i>	

<i>developed in response to external prompting or pressure e.g. from professional bodies or industrial organisations, and (ii) whether the course will lead to increased registrations on other courses offered by the University</i>	
<b>Relationship to other courses / PLD courses offered.</b>	
<b>Course development and marketing.</b>	
<b>Staff involved In Managing/Delivering the Course:</b>	
<b>Library Resources</b>	
<b>Quality Assurance Arrangements</b>	
<b>Proposed Funding Arrangements Full Business Case required including financials</b>	
<b>Head of School/Department Endorsement</b>	

<b>Head of School/Department Approval</b>
<p><b>As Head of School/Department, I can confirm that the following details have been considered and the provision as listed above (and as per the attached Overview Form) is approved for development</b></p> <p><b>Signed:</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b></p>