



**Policy Number:**

Policy Title: **Short Course, Microcredential and Micro-qualification Policy**

Policy Owner: **PVC Academic**

Policy Contact Officer: **Registrar**

Keywords: **Short Course, microcredential, micro-qualification, credit pathway**

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**1. PURPOSE**

The Solomon Islands National University is committed to supporting the lifelong learning of learners, students, staff, community members, graduates and industry professionals through high quality Short Courses including microcredentials and micro-qualifications.

**2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Short Course offerings including microcredentials and micro-qualifications approved and promoted by SINU, including those offered with external partners.

**3. DEFINITIONS**

For this Policy the following definitions will apply:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Credit	Credit refers to the value assigned to a course or equivalent learning that counts towards a programme or credential completion. Credit can be <b>Specified credit</b> or <b>unspecified credit</b> . Specified credit is given where there is direct equivalence between a unit in a programme and the 'Formal learning' undertaken either within SINU or at any other tertiary institution prior to admission to a programme. Unspecified credit is given where the formal prior learning is deemed to be relevant and at an equivalent level to a part or parts of a programme. Unspecified credit may be in a general subject area and granted towards the programme.
Credit transfer	Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications. The credit granted will normally be for specified units in the designated programme.

Credit pathway microcredential	Microcredentials that provide admission or credit towards specified award programme/s. Credit pathway microcredentials reflect the academic standards of the specified programme/s; are aligned to an SIQF level; and the volume of learning is consistent with the amount of credit earned in the intended programme.
Digital badge	A secure digital representation that an individual has successfully completed a short course.
Microcredential	A microcredential is a certification of assessed learning that verifies a learner's knowledge, skills or competencies in a specific subject or capability. It is awarded by a trusted provider based on clearly defined standards and quality assurance requirements. A microcredential holds standalone value and may also complement or contribute to other microcredentials, macro-credentials, or formal courses, including recognition of prior learning.
Micro-qualification	Micro-qualifications are industry-relevant and accredited short courses tailored to meet the evolving skill demands of the workforce.
Non- award Programme	A programme of study not recognized under the Solomon Island Qualification Framework.
Programme	A Programme is an approved set of academic requirements that lead to a qualification or award that is registered by the University.
Short Course	A course of study not recognised under the Solomon Islands Qualification Framework (SIQF).
Volume of Learning	Refers to the total time (in notional hours) allocated for teaching, learning, and assessment activities to achieve a specific qualification or certificate of achievement/digital badge.

#### 4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

##### 4.1. Each Short Course will:

- a. Align with the strategic directions of the University, the Faculty or the academic unit.
- b. Be relevant to participant, graduate, tailored to industry and/or community needs, including continuing education, continuing professional development research or a pathway program.
- c. Clearly indicate whether there is credit recognition to a SINU award programme.

## 5. POLICY INFORMATION

### 5.1. Short Course types

Short Courses will have the following features:

Types of Short Course	Assessment	Align to SIQF	Leads to credit into award programme	Certification
Continuing education/professional development/executive education	Optional	Potentially, if related to SIQF award.	Only if assessment is completed.	Certificate of Attendance if no assessment completed. Digital badge or certificate of achievement if assessment is completed.
Credit pathway microcredential	Yes, must be assessed if credit is awarded.	Yes	Yes	Digital badge or certificate of achievement
Skill based or subsets of skills micro-qualification	Yes	Potentially, if related to National Training Package,	Potentially, if related to National Training Package.	Digital badge or certificate of achievement
Non-credit bearing microcredential	No	No	No	Certificate of Attendance

### 5.2. Minimum Short Course Requirements

- 5.2.1. Learning Outcomes must be specified for each Short Course.
- 5.2.2. Any minimum entry requirements or assumed knowledge must be communicated to prospective participants.
- 5.2.3. Participation requirements and anticipated workload should be clearly outlined to prospective participants, including volume of learning and duration.
- 5.2.4. Short Course designers should ensure that resources required for the offering are accessible to learners (e.g. online, publicly available).

### 5.3. Promotion

- 5.3.1. When advertising a Short Course potential participants must have access to the following information:

- a. Course summary description.
- b. Language of course delivery (if not delivered in English).
- c. Participation requirements and anticipated workload (volume or learning in hours).
- d. Start date and end date / total course duration and application timeline.
- e. Short Course fees and payment options.
- f. Delivery mode, location and delays and times for any classes.
- g. Short Course learning outcomes.
- h. Entry requirements or assumed knowledge.
- i. Any support available, including for participants with disabilities.
- j. General assessment requirements, if any.
- k. The volume of credit available where a participant has successfully completed the assessment, the potential award pathways where the microcredential or micro-qualification can be used for credit.
- l. The SIQF level of the course, where applicable.
- m. Certification (where applicable).
- n. Contact details for prospective learners to seek further information about the course.

#### **5.4. Fee structure**

- 5.4.1. Principles for the setting and/or amending of fees for Short Courses including the following:
  - a. Business case: To establish fees, a Business Case must be developed to include evidence of need, projected participant numbers, resource requirements (including facilities and staffing costs), any contributions from third parties, any differential pricing proposed, and the breakeven point.
  - b. Cost Recovery and Sustainability: Fees should be set based on cost recovery principles which ensuring financial sustainability. This includes direct costs (teaching, materials and assessments) and indirect costs (administration, facility use).
  - c. Market Competitiveness: Fees should be benchmarked against similar courses offered by other institutions to ensure affordability and market competitiveness.
  - d. Periodic Review: Short course fees should be reviewed periodically (e.g., annually or biennially) to reflect inflation, operational costs and market demand.

- 5.4.2 The process of setting fees as part of the Business Case includes:
- a. Approval Process: All fees must be approved by the relevant approval authority as outlined in Section 6.3 of this Policy.
  - b. Differential Pricing: Consideration should be given to offering different fee structures including financial aid or relevant discounts, industry-sponsored participants or group enrolment discounts. Any differential pricing must be clearly advertised.

## 5.5. Application process

- 5.5.1. Applications for Short Courses will be as follows:
- a. Application Process: All applications for Short Courses should be submitted directly through the University's official **application portal**, designated office or an authorized partner.
  - b. Eligibility Criteria: Applicants must meet the specified entry requirements, if any, for the chosen short course.
  - c. Application Deadlines: The University will publish clear deadlines for enrolment to ensure sufficient time for processing.
  - d. Payment of Fees: Applicants must pay the prescribed fees upon acceptance to secure their place in the short course.
  - e. Communication and Confirmation: The University should provide applicants with timely confirmation of enrolment and relevant short course details upon successful registration.
  - f. Withdrawal and Refund Policy: The University will state clearly information on course withdrawal, deferrals and refunds and communicate a deadline for payment and refund process if short course is cancelled.

## 5.6. Credit and recognition arrangements

- 5.6.1. Microcredentials and micro-qualifications can be credit bearing or non-credit bearing.
- 5.6.2. Credit pathway microcredentials and micro-qualifications are designed to operate under the principle of equivalence when considering volume of learning, assessment and delivery.
- 5.6.3. The volume of learning for credit bearing microcredentials and micro-qualifications should support achievement of the learning outcomes and accommodate robust assessment. A credit pathway microcredential should be between 3-5 credit points or 30-50 hours of learning – that is 10 hours per credit point awarded. A micro-qualification should be between 3- 10 credit

points as relevant to the National Skills Package requirements. In some instances, up to 15 credit points may be considered a Short Course.

- 5.6.4. Applicants seeking entry to an award programme and applying for credit associated with the credit bearing microcredential or micro-qualification will need to meet the entry requirements of the award programme and provide evidence of their completion.

## **5.7. Certification**

- 5.7.1. The University may award the following types of validation certification on successful completion of a Short Course:
- a. Microcredential certificate of achievement or digital badge– upon successful completion of a microcredential, including satisfactory performance on assessments that assure learning outcomes have been achieved.
  - b. Micro-qualification certificate of achievement –or digital badge upon successful completion of a micro-qualification, including satisfactory performance on assessments and listing of relevant skill or skill subsets that assure learning outcomes have been achieved.
  - c. Short Course completion certificate – upon demonstrated successful completion of all other lifelong learning activities.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 6.1. All Short Courses are subject to regular review through participation surveys and peer review. Feedback must be used to inform the ongoing development of the short course. An annual year review cycle is required within the relevant Faculty overseen by the Faculty Dean.
- 6.2. Compliance with the requirements of this Policy is monitored by the Chief Quality Assurance Officer.

## **7. ACCOUNTABILITIES – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.1. Credit – pathway microcredentials can be proposed by a Faculty or may be commissioned by a third party.
- 7.2. Credit-pathway micro-qualifications can be proposed by SINU TAFE or may be commissioned by a third party.

7.3. The final approval authority for credit pathway microcredential or micro-qualification proposals is:

- a. The relevant Faculty Executive Dean or Director SINU TAFE..
- b. The PVC Academic for Short Courses proposed by a non-faculty unit.

7.4. The following table outlines the key delegations for Short Courses offered.

<b>Key activity</b>	<b>Delegation</b>
Approval of Short Course business cases	Faculty Dean/Director SINU TAFE
Approval of Short Course content	Head of School/Director SINU TAFE
Issue of Short Course certification	Registrar
Annual quality assurances of Short Courses within Faculty	Faculty Dean/Director SINU TAFE
Quality assurance of Short Courses offered by University in compliance of this Policy	Chief Quality Assurance Officer

## 8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 8.1. Short Course participants must ensure they follow all the requirement for academic honesty in any assessed work and the requirement for them to abide by the provisions in relevant SINU policies.
- 8.2. Short Courses credit arrangements must align with Solomon Islands Qualification Framework, and SINU policies in relation to the awarding of Credit. This includes the Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

## 9. APPROVAL AND AMENDED HISTORY

<b>Policy Approved by:</b>	<b>Executive Governance Committee acting in the full authority of the SINU Council</b>
<b>Date policy first approved:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b>
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<b>Responsible Officer for Review</b>	<b>Registrar</b>