

# External (Concurrent) Credit Recommendations- Checklist for Schools



*This document is designed to assist faculty/staff when considering External (Concurrent) Learning for graduate research students, from identifying the relevant training through to a submission to the Graduate Research Board (GRB).*

*Recommendations should be made to GRB within 3 months of student's completing the External Course/Activity, allowing time for student to make alternative arrangements if application not approved.*

*The GRB will not normally consider recommendations for the award of External Credit made in the final two trimesters of the maximum registration period for the student's programme (\*see [Academic Regulations](#) 7.10, 7.11, 8.12 and 9.10).*

## For Supervisors/RSP Members

### Before student completes External course/activity

Refer to the list of examples of suitable and unsuitable Courses/Activities for the award of External Credit (see p.2).

Check with Graduate Research Board (GRB) Support Team if any queries about the suitability of the External Course/Activity.

*Note: In most cases, 20 credits is the maximum number of credits that a PhD student may be awarded in their programme from Prior Learning and/or Concurrent External Learning. \*See Section 4.3 of [Recognition of Prior and Concurrent Learning Policy](#).*

*However, for programmes with a special agreement already in place (e.g., CRTs/Co-Tutelles), please contact the GRB Support Team colleague for your College for further advice.*

Confirm the number of credits to apply for (Minimum 2.5 credits).

*Recommendations must have been reviewed by School Committee before being submitted to the GRB.*

### Supporting Documentation

Contact Course Provider if queries about what supporting documentation will be available.

*Refer to the list of suitable and unsuitable Supporting Documentation (see p.2).*

## For School Managers/Administrators

### Submitting a Recommendation to the GRB

Confirm the number of credits to apply for (minimum 2.5 credits)

Use Award of Credit for External Learning Task on InfoHub.

*Note: This Task is only for credits for External (Concurrent) Learning that students complete during their research programme.*

*This Task is **not** for the award of credits for Prior Learning that students completed before beginning their research programme (e.g., credits from a previous Taught Master's programme).*

Select the Term Code that reflects when the student actually completed the Course/Activity (and aligns with student's Start Date).

### Supporting Documentation

Upload Supporting Documentation to the Google Drive folder for the School.

*Refer to the list of suitable and unsuitable Supporting Documentation (see p.2).*

### Following GRB Decision

Inform the student of the GRB Decision.

## Suitable and Unsuitable Courses/Activities for the Award of External Credit

### Suitable Courses/Activities

External activities/courses/modules that students take **during** their research programme and that would be equivalent to the standard of UCD modules in terms of learning outcomes, effort hours, curriculum and assessment. \*See [Academic Regulation](#) 3.18 for the standard information required in UCD Module Descriptors for reference.

\*See also [Academic Regulation](#) 7.32 in relation to the 30 taught credit requirement for PhD students: "The PhD programme must include educational and training elements, which develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful original research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills".

### Examples of Unsuitable Courses/Activities

- Conference attendance/presentations, except if part of a credit-bearing course/module that includes an element of assessment
- Research visits/lab work at another institution which forms part of the student's research for their thesis
- Short-term work experience in another institution
- Short training courses in standard computer/software skills that would be a basic requirement for student to conduct their research, are worth less than 2.5 credits and/or do not carry any element of assessment.

## Suitable and Unsuitable Supporting Documentation

### Suitable Supporting Documentation

Document(s) from Course Provider stating the ECTS value of the course and confirming student's completion of the course

OR

Documents from Course Provider confirming effort hours and confirming completion of assessments/or that student has passed the course.

### Examples of Unsuitable Supporting Documentation

- Outline course schedule on its own
- Description of course activities and reading lists
- Letters/emails from supervisor/RSP containing informal assessments of credit value of course/activity
- Documents written by the student giving details of the activities they completed.

### Resources:

[UCD Academic Regulations](#)

[Recognition of Prior and Concurrent Learning Policy](#)

UCD Graduate Studies External Credit Form (available on [Document Repository](#))

### Version History:

| Version | Date      | Summary of Changes                 | Updated by  |
|---------|-----------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1       | June 2021 | Original Version                   | J. Sullivan |
| 2       | Sep 2021  | Minor changes re. RPL Policy       | J. Sullivan |
| 3       | Nov 2023  | Updated links                      | J. Sullivan |
| 4       | Mar 2025  | Minor updates to Reg. numbers etc. | J. Sullivan |