

The Benefits of Credit Rating for Third Parties

University of the West of Scotland (UWS) is one of Scotland's largest modern universities with campuses reaching across the south and west of Scotland, together with our London Campus. UWS is proud of its tradition of career-focused teaching with an international outlook and a far-sighted approach to technology and innovation. As a leading provider of undergraduate, postgraduate and research degree education, UWS provides a transformational experience for its some 18,000-plus full and part time students.



UWS Third Party Credit Rating

UWS has offered third party credit rating services for over a decade and the provision has recently been refreshed. In the relatively short time since the relaunch, UWS has approved nine programmes for multiple organisations from a variety of sectors which will be supported for the next five years. It is hoped this relationship will continue to blossom in the coming years with a view to continued credit rating provision.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) has been very accommodating by offering a range of one to one support and guidance (and patience!) for the development of UWS's Credit Rating provision to ensure the integrity of the Framework is maintained and that the service we provide to third parties is of the standard expected of a Credit Rating Body (CRB) as specified in the SCQF Handbook. The SCQFP has developed a comprehensive suite of [Information Notes](#) to assist any other Credit Rating Body looking to move into third party credit rating.

Why Choose to be Credit Rated?

Organisations and employers choose to have their programmes credit rated for many reasons, including offering employees formal recognition for in-house training programmes, creating

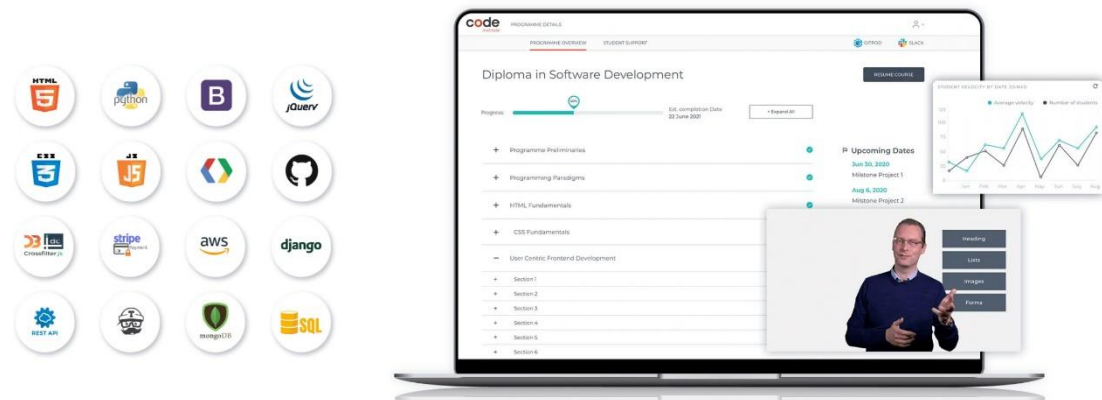
access pathways to further learning and creating smaller chunks of learning or micro-credentials that can be used as building blocks for different further learning. Due to the flexible nature of the SCQF this means that credit may be transferrable from one learning programme to another (where appropriate) with Recognition of Prior Learning principles also applied.

Organisations and employers can be reassured that by offering a credit rating provision to their clients they are supported by a rigorous and thorough process of quality assurance, which is overseen by UWS and underpinned by the SCQF principles.

UWS appreciates having a programme credit rated may not only be a unique selling point for an organisation, but can also be a lifeline for the business. It shows that the organisation is serious about its product and committed to its customers, and UWS is proud to be able to support the business community in this way.

CASE STUDY – THE CODE INSTITUTE

The Code Institute approached UWS to explore the possibility of Credit Rating approval, and over a few conversations the shape of that Credit Rating approval was understood, and UWS QuEST colleagues were able to work with the Code Institute to support its application. Edinburgh Napier University had previously provided Credit Rating approval for the Code Institute which was up for renewal following a period of 5 years.



Europe's only University credit rated coding boot-camp was established in 2015 to address the increasing global skills coding gap. The boot-camp type approach of the Code Institute's Diploma in Software Development was designed to directly address the skills gap by providing entry level software developers with an appropriate course of credit bearing learning, following a structured programme of immersive and accelerated tuition. Delivered fully online, the Code Institute Diploma gives participants hands-on experience in creating employer-ready web technologies for both front and back-end. Content is industry-validated by the Industry Advisory Council and is suitable for beginners or those with an existing skill-set who wish to enhance their career prospects. Participants are job-ready with their own portfolio of projects on completion. The programme has evolved since it was first introduced and this latest version gives students the opportunity to specialise in areas as part of their diploma, including E-commerce Applications and Dev Ops Practitioner with further specialisms in development.

Following the application process, the Code Institute was able to map its learning outcomes to the SCQF framework. This, and other supporting information was reviewed by a UWS Internal Expert (a member of the academic staff who had a relevant background and knowledge of the IT sector), and following consideration by the UWS Credit Rating Group the application was approved.

"The Credit-Rating by UWS of our Diploma provides academic validation of the programme along with the levelling on the SCQF, and, in addition to being mapped to the EQF, provides context for our global student population, distinguishing us from our competitors. We are delighted to partner with UWS on this Credit-Rating provision and it is a pleasure to work with the QUEST team."

Bairbre Murphy, Academic Validation and Compliance Manager, the Code Institute, Dublin.

Quality Assurance

Credit rating is quality assured by the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST) within UWS and the small team from QuEST creates a single point of contact for applicants. UWS will undertake due diligence on applications received and has three Credit Rating review dates throughout the year where applications are considered. It is common for UWS to contact applicants for further information or clarification on an aspect of their application. After due diligence has been completed and the application has been considered by its Quality process UWS then begins credit rating the programme of learning. Normally credit rating approval will last for 5 years, with annual monitoring taking place to consider any changes that may have been made to the learning outcomes that may impact upon the original decision of SCQF level and credit points. If this has happened the programme would be re credit rated to take this into consideration.

Beyond Credit Rating

Where possible, organisations who gain UWS Credit Rating approval will be invited to explore additional ways to utilise their connection with the institution. This could be through guest lectures, student placements or the creation of a more formalised partnership. UWS is keen to ensure the Credit Rating connection works for both parties.

UWS Centre for Continuing Professional Development

The [UWS Centre for Continuing Professional Development](#) offers flexible and innovative Career Progression and Development (CPD) opportunities for organisations and individuals and works with the QuEST team to identify potential opportunities for a CPD/Credit Rating approach. Whether you're looking to build on your existing skills, looking to change career or provide training opportunities for your staff, UWS is committed to providing courses and an excellent student experience.

The UWS CPD team assists in the delivery of a range of accredited and non-accredited CPD courses that draw on diverse areas of expertise across the university and prides itself on working with industry partners to ensure that its students receive practical, industry focused training.

UWS works closely with both domestic and international organisations to design bespoke training for staff which can be delivered in a number of formats including: workshops and seminars, masterclasses, short courses, group coaching and part time degree programmes. Thanks to the UWS Upskilling Fund (a fund delivered by the Scottish Funding Council to address skills gaps across Scotland), the institution can also offer fully funded and part-funded places on many of its CPD courses.

The latest news and events from the UWS Centre for Continuing Professional Development is available on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Sounds Interesting?

If this sounds like something you or your business would be interested in exploring, UWS would love to hear from you! More information on Credit Rating is available on [its webpage](#) or you can contact the QuEST Credit Rating team at quest@uws.ac.uk for an informal chat.