



### *Section 3*

### *Special Report*

At its June 2009 Council Sessions, the World Customs Organization adopted the following *Guidelines on WCO Recognition of University Customs Curricula* for assessment of university curricula against the PICARD Professional Standards.

# GUIDELINES ON WCO RECOGNITION OF UNIVERSITY CUSTOMS CURRICULA

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## 1 Introduction

The PICARD programme, developed in partnership with the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU), has provided an opportunity to establish common development standards designed to maintain and raise the professional standing of Customs, particularly Customs senior and middle management. The principal objectives in developing the standards are to establish benchmarks:

- which can be developed into job profiles for the purposes of customs recruitment;
- against which the in-house training of member administrations may be measured; and
- against which academic development can be designed or procured.

The standards, which are contained in the WCO publication *Professional Standards* can and are being used by the academic world to develop educational programmes which provide professional qualifications for Customs staff, and others, to Bachelors and Masters levels.

These guidelines establish a process by which universities may apply for and attain WCO recognition of such academic programmes and those who graduate from the programmes.

## 2 Eligibility Criteria

The WCO does not intend to formally recognize a curriculum that meets only individual elements of the Professional Standards. Consequently, it will only entertain applications from universities that are able to demonstrate that their curricula substantially address the identified Standards at the Bachelors degree level or higher.

## 3 Form of Recognition

Where a university's curriculum is considered to meet the eligibility criteria, the WCO will:

- agree the university's Customs-specific programme(s); and
- agree that the subjects have been aligned to such programme(s).

When there is agreement of the WCO, the university may identify the programme as follows:

*“This academic programme has been developed in conjunction with the World Customs Organization as meeting the requirements of its international standards for the Customs profession.”*

Similarly, individual subjects or groups of subjects delivered as part of such programmes may be identified as follows:

*“This subject [or unit or syllabus] forms a component of an academic programme that has been developed in conjunction with the World Customs Organization as meeting the requirements of its international standards for the Customs profession.”*

To ensure appropriate WCO recognition of students who successfully complete such programmes and subjects, the above wording may be included on relevant certificates and testamurs.

## 4 Overview of the Application Process

A university wishing to receive WCO recognition of Customs-specific courses must lodge an application in accordance with Section 9 of these Guidelines. The completed application, together with all supporting documentation, must be submitted to:

PICARD Coordinator  
Capacity Building Directorate  
World Customs Organization  
Rue du Marché 30  
B-1210 Brussels  
Belgium

Upon receipt of a properly completed application, the WCO will refer the application to the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) Management Group which will establish an Academic Assessment Group composed exclusively of members of the PICARD Advisory Group to examine the application and recommend that the WCO:

- seek additional information;
- refuse the application;
- approve the application in part; or
- approve the application in full.

To ensure the veracity of claims, the INCU Management Group may determine that an on-site audit is required, in which case representatives of the INCU and WCO will jointly undertake the audit. In such cases the applicant will be notified of the area of focus prior to audit commencement.

The INCU advice to the WCO will include:

- certification that the WCO-approved Guidelines have been used in reaching the relevant recommendation;
- the names of the Academic Assessment Committee (made up of exclusively selected members of the PICARD Advisory Group) that was established to consider the particular application;
- a clear recommendation in relation to the application and, in the event that the recommendation is not unanimously supported by members of the Assessment Committee, details of any dissenting opinions of Committee members will be provided; and
- if appropriate, a recommended wording that should appear on the official WCO Certificate of Recognition.

Upon receipt of a recommendation from the INCU Management Group, the WCO will refer the application and the associated INCU recommendation to a group of WCO Member representatives who will provide the WCO with their independent view as to whether the curriculum meets the WCO criteria.

The WCO will then examine the application and accompanying recommendations, and make its decision.

## 5 Application Fee

A non-refundable processing fee of EUR 5,000 will apply to each application that is submitted under these guidelines. The fee is designed to deter frivolous applications, as well as to help offset costs associated with the assessment process, and is payable at the time of submission of the application.

## 6 Duration and Renewal of the WCO Certificate of Recognition

WCO Certificates of Recognition will be valid for a period of five years. To ensure ongoing compliance with the WCO Professional Standards, reviews of WCO approved university programmes will be conducted before the end of the five year period.

Should the university wish to apply for renewal of the Certificate of Recognition, it must do so at least six months prior to the expiry of the current Certificate. When applying for renewal, the university should provide the WCO with the same information as is required of any first-time application. A non-refundable processing fee of EUR 1,000 will apply to each application for renewal. In the event that an application for renewal is not received, the WCO Certificate of Recognition will lapse.

Any variations to the WCO Professional Standards will not affect the validity of Certificates of Recognition that are current at the time of the variation. However, renewal of the Certificate will be dependent upon the university amending its programme to take account of the revised Standards.

## 7 Review Procedures

In situations where the WCO decides:

- to refuse an application for WCO recognition of a particular programme;
- to refuse an amended application for WCO recognition of a particular programme;
- to revoke a WCO Certificate of Recognition; or
- not to renew a WCO Certificate of Recognition,

the WCO will advise the university of the reasons for the decision. If the university disagrees with the WCO's decision, it may seek to have the decision reviewed. In such cases, the WCO will appoint an independent committee to review the decision. Upon receipt of the committee's advice, the WCO will reassess its decision and advise the university of the outcome.

## 8 Provision for Programmes to be Recognized Prior to their Implementation

There will be situations where universities may seek recognition of their programmes prior to their implementation (e.g. where a university seeks recognition of a programme that is scheduled to commence in the following academic year).

In such situations the university may submit an application in the normal manner and, where the application meets all required criteria, the WCO will issue the university with a Certificate of pending commencement of the programme, provided that the university can demonstrate that the programme has received formal recognition from the relevant educational authorities within the university's jurisdiction.

Following commencement of the programme, the application may be subject to review to ensure that the criteria are met.

## 9 Application Requirements

Applications are to be submitted in the following format:

- A. Overview
- B. Relationship of Curriculum to WCO Standards
- C. Knowledge and Skill Transfer
- D. Annexes
  1. Key to University Programmes and Subjects
  2. Correlation between WCO Standards and University Subjects
  3. Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

## 10 Liability

In no event shall the WCO be liable for any consequential, collateral, special or indirect damages (such as, without limitation, loss of revenue, loss of profit, loss of data, loss of goodwill, loss of savings, interruption of business or claims by third parties), even if the WCO has been advised of the possibility of such losses or damages. The Universities agree to indemnify and hold the WCO harmless against any damages or claims from customers/students or from third parties.

### A. Overview

In this Section, the applicant should provide a broad overview of the Customs-specific academic programme(s) for which recognition is being sought, including the relevant academic award and the educational jurisdiction under which the award is granted.

### B. Relationship of Curriculum to WCO Standards

In this Section, the applicant should address the correlation between the WCO Professional Standards and the university programme(s) for which recognition is being sought. Where the curriculum does not cover all elements of the Professional Standards, this should be identified and addressed.

### C. Knowledge and Skill Transfer

In this Section, the applicant should outline the university's philosophy, educational practice and methods of determining knowledge and skill transfer to the student's workplace.

### D. Annexes

The following annexes form an integral part of the application. An example of how to complete the annexes is shown at Subsection E.

- Annex 1: Key to University Programmes and Subjects
- Annex 2: Correlation between WCO Knowledge Requirements and University Subjects
- Annex 3: Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

## E. Example of Annex Completion

### Annex 1: Key to University Programmes and Subjects

In this Annex, the applicant university must list all programmes for which it is seeking recognition, together with a list of all relevant subjects, for example:

<b>Annex 1: Key to University Programmes and Subjects</b>	
<b>Qualification:</b>	Master of International Customs Law  Graduate Diploma in Customs Management  Bachelor of Customs Studies  ...etc.

<u>Subject No.</u>	<u>Subject Name</u>
00012	Customs Management 1
00013	Customs Management 2
00014	Customs Reform and Modernization
00015	Economics for Public Sector Managers
00016	GATT/WTO Law
	...etc.

**Annex 2: Correlation between WCO Standards and University Subjects**

In this Annex, the applicant university must list those subjects that are relevant to particular knowledge requirements of the WCO Standards, for example:

<b>Annex 2: Correlation between WCO Knowledge Requirements and University Subjects</b>		
<b><u>A. Strategic Managers/Leaders</u></b>		
<b><u>Category</u></b>	<b><u>Knowledge Requirements</u></b>	<b><u>Relevant Subject Nos.</u></b>
1. National and international policy/politics	Ability to demonstrate a critical understanding of the government's overall economic policies and social direction, its international and regional obligations and priorities.	<i>List all subjects that are relevant to this knowledge requirement, e.g.</i>
	Identification of the key players at governmental and international level with influence on Customs policy and resources.	00034
	Creation of a proactive system of information gathering to enable constructive engagement with government/regional and international organizations.	00035
	Ability to identify and provide advice to government of international and regional developments.	00036
	International Customs Law.	
2. The role of Customs in government and interaction with other government departments	Understanding of the role of Customs in applying government policy to people and trade at the frontier and its basic management control and collection requirements.	00037
	Identification of the key government departments with frontiers, trade and taxation requirements either working through Customs or working alongside customs.	00038
	Establishment of effective consultancy networks and co-operative approaches to border management.	00039
	Knowledge of all the missions of Customs for itself and other administrations (public health, safety, etc.).	
...etc.		

**Annex 2: Correlation between WCO Knowledge Requirements and University Subjects**

**B. Operational Managers/Leaders**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Knowledge Requirements</u>	<u>Relevant Subject Nos.</u>
1. Interaction with other government departments	Knowledge of the government policies and priorities which define the role of Customs in the area of command and the roles of other government departments within the command.	00056
		00057
	Ability to evolve in its economic environment.	00058
	Collaboration and co-ordination with other government departments.	
2. Know the role of Customs and its usual partners	Understanding of the powers of other government departments and their relationship to Customs.	
	Knowledge of the customs economic environment.	00059
	Ability to relay the policy defined at strategic level.	00060
...		00061
...etc.		

**Annex 3: Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards**

In this Annex, an applicant university must provide a comprehensive description of subject outlines and outcomes, and identify for each subject the correlating WCO knowledge, skill and behavioural/attitudinal attributes, for example:

<b>Annex 3: Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Outline</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<p>Customs Management 1 (00012)</p>	<p>This unit introduces students to the policy and principles of customs administration and to international trends with an impact on Customs. These include social expectations, emerging technologies, and the global economy. The curriculum covers a detailed analysis of the role and responsibilities of customs authorities, including an historical perspective of the customs function, its evolving role in international trade and commerce, and the various international conventions and agreements which impact on customs policy. The unit also includes comparisons of a range of legislative and administrative procedures adopted by the customs authorities of leading economies.</p>	<p>At the completion of the unit students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the policy objectives of customs administrations</li> <li>▪ Identify international influences that shape the customs policy agenda</li> <li>▪ Compare the regulatory framework of a selected customs administration (potentially of the student's own administration) against established international standards</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate an understanding of the evolution of the customs role in the present context</li> <li>▪ Apply the knowledge gathered to assess the standing of the student's own administration</li> <li>▪ Contribute to the national customs policy development and implementation</li> </ul>
		<p><b>WCO Attributes</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Managers/Leaders</b></p> <p>National and international policy/politics            Customs role in government and interaction with other government departments            The Customs business            Economic and fiscal            Trade management            Social protection            International/regional            Compliance management            Aspects of judicial and legal systems relevant to Customs            Strategic planning            Policy development and implementation            Financial management            Human Resource/Capital management            Risk management            Information /Knowledge management</p> <p>The international supply chain            Trade practices            Principles of ethics, good governance &amp; integrity</p> <p><b>Operational Managers/Leaders</b></p> <p>Interaction with other government departments            Know the role of customs and its usual partners            Knowledge of the administration            Role and responsibilities of managers within Customs organization</p>
...etc.		

