

WCO Guidelines for the recognition of
University Customs Curricula
(2019)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	2
OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS	2
FORM OF RECOGNITION	4
DURATION AND RENEWAL OF THE WCO CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION	4
REVIEW PROCEDURES	5
PROVISION FOR PROGRAMMES TO BE RECOGNISED PRIOR TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION	5
LIABILITY	5
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	6

INTRODUCTION

1. 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.

2. 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.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3. 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 its curriculum substantially addresses the identified Standards at the **Bachelors level** or **higher** and that the programme has received formal recognition from the relevant educational authorities within the university's jurisdiction.

OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

4. The Application process includes 4 phases:

Phase 1: Formal application addressed to the Picard Coordinator within the WCO Secretariat

5. Any university wishing to receive WCO recognition of Customs-specific courses must lodge an application in accordance with these Guidelines. The completed application, together with all supporting documentation, must be submitted both in hard and electronic version to:

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



6. 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 it has to be paid within 40 working days by the acknowledge of reception of the application from the Secretariat.

Phase 2: Setting Academic Assessment Group (AAG)

7. Upon receipt of the application fee, the WCO Secretariat will establish an Academic Assessment Group (AAG) composed at least of three academic partners whose curricula are being recognized as meeting the PICARD Professional Standards or who have in the past already been involved in the review process of university applications.
8. The Academic Assessment Group (AAG) will 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.
9. To ensure the veracity of claims, the Academic Assessment Group (AAG) together with the WCO may determine that an audit is required, in which case representatives of the Academic Assessment Group and the WCO will jointly undertake the audit. In such cases the applicant will be notified of the area of focus prior to audit commencement.
10. The advice by the Academic Assessment Group to the WCO will include :
- certification that the WCO-approved Guidelines have been used in reaching the relevant recommendation;
 - a clear recommendation in relation to the application and, in the event that the recommendation is not unanimously supported by members of the Assessment Group, details of any dissenting opinions of Group members will be provided; and
 - if appropriate, a recommended wording that should appear on the official WCO Certificate of Recognition.

Phase 3: Setting Member Assessment Group (MAG)

11. Upon receipt of the recommendations from the AAG, the WCO Secretariat will establish a Member Assessment Group (MAG) composed at least of three WCO Member representatives who will provide the WCO with their independent view as to whether the curriculum meets the WCO criteria.

Phase 4: Final Decision from WCO Secretariat

12. The WCO Secretariat will then examine the application and accompanying recommendations from AAG and MAG, and make its final decision. In its evaluation, the WCO Secretariat will pay specific attention to other international recognitions already successfully achieved by the academic study programme, when the recognition is based on standards aligned with WCO's PICARD Professional Standards.



FORM OF RECOGNITION

13. 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).
14. 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".
15. 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".
16. In both cases, the university may use the WCO logo in conjunction with such recognition on relevant programme materials. The WCO Logo technical details will be provided only at the successful conclusion of the recognition process.
17. To ensure appropriate WCO recognition of students who successfully complete such programmes and subjects, the above wording, together with the WCO logo, may be included on relevant certificates and testamurs.

DURATION AND RENEWAL OF THE WCO CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

18. WCO Certificates of Recognition will be valid as long as the WCO Professional Standards rest unchanged. Anyway, a formal renewal process is necessary in case a recognized programme undergoes substantial changes or the professional standards have been changed.
19. For awareness of the renewal conditions all Universities with recognized programmes must inform WCO Secretariat PICARD Coordinator (see point 5 above) every year about the status of their programme (no change, minor/formal changes, substantial changes), providing detailed explanations on the changes if any. The yearly communication must include major figures on graduated students, professors involved and publications produced. The yearly communication form is attached to the Guidelines as Annex 4.
20. A non-refundable processing fee of EUR 1,500 will apply to each application for renewal.
21. In case of Professional Standards are changed, Universities will have two academic years to update their Programme and prepare a new application for the WCO Secretariat renewal. Universities will need to prepare a new application only if the WCO Professional Standards undergo substantial changes.



REVIEW PROCEDURES

22. 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.

23. 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.

PROVISION FOR PROGRAMMES TO BE RECOGNISED PRIOR TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

24. 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).

25. 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.

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

LIABILITY

27. 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.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

28. Applications are to be submitted in the following format:

- A. Overview: in this Section, applicants 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, applicants 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 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:
 1. Key to University Programmes and Subjects.
 2. Correlation between WCO Standards and University Subjects.
 3. Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards.

The annexes 1, 2 and 3 form an integral part of the application. An example of how to complete the annexes is provided in the next page.

CERTIFICATE

29. Once officially recognized by the WCO Secretariat, each University, in addition to the national certificate, could add a WCO certificate, using exclusively the model attached to the Guidelines as Annex 5.



EXAMPLE OF ANNEX 1, 2 AND 3 COMPLETION

Annex 1: Key to University Programmes and Subjects

In this Annex applicant universities must list all programmes for which they are seeking recognition, together with a list of all relevant subjects, for example:

Annex 1 : Key to University Programmes and Subjects	
Qualification :	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 applicant universities must list those subjects that are relevant to particular knowledge requirements of the WCO standards, for example:

Annex 2 : Correlation between WCO Knowledge Requirements and University Subjects		
<u>A. Strategic Managers/Leaders</u>		
<u>Category</u>	<u>Knowledge Requirements</u>	<u>Relevant Subject Nos.</u>
1. National and international policy/politics	<p>The individual will demonstrate a critical understanding of the governments overall economic policies and social direction, its international and regional obligations and priorities.</p> <p>The identification of the key players at governmental and international level with influence on Customs policy and resources.</p> <p>Creation of a proactive system of information gathering to enable constructive engagement with government/regional and international organizations.</p> <p>The ability to identify and provide advice to government of international and regional developments.</p> <p>International Customs Law.</p>	<p>List all subjects that are relevant to this knowledge requirement, e.g.</p> <p>00034</p> <p>00035</p> <p>00036</p>
2. Customs role in government and interaction with other government departments	<p>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.</p> <p>Identification of the key Government departments with frontiers, trade and taxation requirements either working through Customs or working alongside customs.</p> <p>Establishment of effective consultancy networks and co-operative approaches to border management.</p> <p>Knowledge of all the missions of customs for itself and other administrations (public health, safety, etc.).</p>	<p>00037</p> <p>00038</p> <p>00039</p>
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	<p>Knowing the government policies and priorities which define the role of customs in the area of command and the roles of OGDS within the command.</p> <p>Ability to evolve in its economic environment.</p> <p>Collaboration and co-ordination with other government departments.</p> <p>Understanding the powers of other government departments and their relation to customs.</p>	<p>00056</p> <p>00057</p> <p>00058</p>
2. Know the role of customs and its usual partners	<p>Knowledge of the customs economic environment.</p> <p>Be able to relay the policy defined at strategic level.</p>	<p>00059</p> <p>00060</p> <p>00061</p>
etc.		

Annex 3: Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

In this Annex applicant universities must provide a comprehensive description of subject outlines and outcomes, and identify for each subject the correlating WCO knowledge, skill and behavioural/attitudinal attributes. In the “WCO Attributes” column, the applicant must indicate the exact knowledge, skill and behavioural/attitudinal requirements as well as the specific example or essentials listed in each requirement that is applicable to the corresponding course. The examples or essential are listed with a blue arrow (→) below each the knowledge, skill and behavioural/attitudinal and requirements of the PICARD Professionals Standards. For example:

Annex 3 : Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards			
<u>Subject</u>	<u>Outline</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>WCO Attributes</u>
Customs Management 1 (00012)	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.	At the completion of the unit students will be able to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the policy objectives of Customs administrations ▪ Identify international influences that shape the Customs policy agenda ▪ Compare the regulatory framework of a selected Customs administration (potentially of the student's own administration) against established international standards ▪ Demonstrate an understanding of the evolution of the Customs role in the present context ▪ Apply the knowledge gathered to assess the standing of the student's own administration 	<p><u>Strategic Managers/Leaders</u></p> <p>National and international policy/politics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of effective consultancy networks and co-operative approaches to border management • Knowledge of all the missions of customs for itself and other administrations (public health, safety, etc.) <p>Customs role in government and interaction with other government departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>The Customs Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential



Annex 3 : Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Outline</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>WCO Attributes</u>
			<p>Economic and Fiscal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Trade management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Social Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>International/regional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Compliance Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Aspects of judicial and legal systems relevant to Customs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Strategic Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Policy development and implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Financial management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential

Annex 3 : Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Outline</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>WCO Attributes</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to the national Customs policy development and implementation 	<p>Human Resource/Capital management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Risk management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Information/Knowledge management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>The international supply chain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Trade practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Principles of ethics, good governance & integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential



Annex 3 : Correlation between University Subjects and WCO Standards

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Outline</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>WCO Attributes</u>
			<p><u>Operational Managers/Leaders</u></p> <p>Interaction with other government departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Know the role of Customs and its usual partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Knowledge of the administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential <p>Role and responsibilities of managers within Customs organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable examples or essential
etc.			



Annex 4:

Yearly communication form

This form, filled with relevant information for each recognized Curriculum (Changes in the Curriculum and General Figures) has to be sent each year by Universities/Institutions to:

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

Capacity.Building@wcoomd.org

Name of the University/Institution:

Name of the recognized Curriculum:

4.A. Is there any change in the Curricula as it was recognized by WCO Secretariat ?

YES ___

NO ___

if yes, please provide details:

YES, formal changes.

YES, substantial changes.



4.B. Figures:

Academic Year	20__/20__
Overall number of graduated students	
Males	
Females	
Full time	
Part time	
On-line attendance	
Number of Lecturers	
Number of Publications	

Date _____

Contact Person _____



Annex 5: PICARD Common Certificate

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

*The Academic Programme offered by the
University/Institution _____*

*has been developed in conjunction with the
World Customs Organization
as meeting the requirements of its International Standards
for the Customs profession:*

Bachelor/Master _____