

QUALITY MANUAL: THE SUSPENSION / WITHDRAWAL / CLOSURE OF A COURSE

Recruitment to courses may be suspended or withdrawn or courses closed for business or academic reasons, or a lack of market interest.

When the potential need to suspend, withdraw or close a course is identified, whatever the reason and at whatever level within the University, there are essential procedures which must be followed to ensure the change can be processed smoothly and most importantly students are protected.

Students affected by suspension, withdrawal or closure must have an opportunity to complete their studies.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Recruitment to courses may be suspended or withdrawn or courses closed for a number of reasons:

- **Suspension** is defined as ceasing recruitment to the course for a fixed period of time (maximum of 2 years).
- **Withdrawal** is defined as permanently ceasing recruitment to a course that currently has registered students.
- **Closure** is defined as formally removing the course from the academic portfolio as no students remain on it.

1.2 At the point the University formally decides to suspend, withdraw or close a course, implications of the change will have been carefully considered including:

- The strategic consequences for the University.
- The impact on the staff and the students.
- The University obligations under the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) and the Student Protection Plan
- How the quality and standards of the student experience will be maintained until the completion of the course.
- The process of consultation with or notification to students where the delivery of the course will materially change.
- The strategy for on-going delivery and support (including areas such as External Examiner arrangements, revalidation requirements, etc.) during the phasing-out period.
- The implications regarding professional body registration (where applicable).
- The timescale and sequencing of any intended replacement courses

1.3 In the case of a course delivered in collaboration with a partner and terminated as the result of that partnership ending, particular consideration should be given to the need of the students to complete their award.

The decision to suspend/withdraw recruitment to a course and/or close a course

The decision to suspend/withdraw recruitment to a course and/or close a course is made by the University Academic Strategy Committee on the recommendation of the Faculty.

1.4 In order to propose the suspension, withdrawal or closure of a course, the Course Suspension/Withdrawal/Closure Form available on the QSO website at <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/management-of-the-academic-portfolio/course-suspension-withdrawal-closure.aspx> must be completed.

- Suspension: The form must clearly indicate the period of suspension which should not be more than two years. In the event that it is subsequently determined to withdraw or close the previously suspended course the form must be updated using track changes.
- Withdrawal: Courses with existing students may only be withdrawn. Once the final student has completed, the form must be updated using track changes to request to close the course.
- Closure: A course that does not have existing students may be closed.

1.5 The form should be signed by the relevant Head(s) of School and submitted to the relevant Faculty Quality Office which will ensure that the form is considered by the following Faculty committees:

- Faculty Portfolio Planning Executive, or equivalent body – for consideration of any portfolio implications;
- Faculty Quality Committee – for consideration of any quality assurance / student experience implications.

1.6 The Faculty Committees may request changes to the forms.

1.7 Following Faculty-level approval, the form will be signed by the Dean and submitted to the Academic Strategy Committee for institutional-level approval.

1.8 The Secretary to the Academic Strategy Committee will notify the Heads of all relevant Professional Service areas of course suspension/withdrawal/closure approved by the Academic Strategy Committee.

1.9 The Faculty Quality Office is responsible for notifying the professional body (where relevant).

1.10 This procedure must also be followed where a course delivered at multiple University sites is suspended/withdrawn and/or closed from one or more but not all.

2.0 The decision to terminate a collaborative partnership.

2.1 The procedures to terminate a collaborative partnership are different. Please see Quality Manual: Collaborative Partnership