



Shaping futures, changing lives

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POLICY FOR PROGRAMME CLOSURES, SUSPENSIONS AND CHANGES

Policy and Procedures for Closure, Suspension and Changes to programmes

These processes articulate the College's procedures for applicants and students.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the College's procedures for closing, suspending or changing any programme of study. It is designed to reflect the Statement of Good Practice adopted by HEFCE, UUK, Guild HE, NUS in October 2015. It is also designed to meet the requirements for the CMA Student Protection Plan.

2. Closure and Suspension

- 2.1. The College may wish to close and remove a programme of study from its portfolio. Closure of a programme means that the College will cease to recognise the programme as one for which a student may be registered.
- 2.2. Suspension of a programme of study is defined by a fixed timeframe in which the programme will not be delivered.
- 2.3. Programmes may not be closed or suspended without approval from the Academic Board because of the implications for the contractual relationship between current and prospective students and the College.
- 2.4. A request to close or suspend a programme must be made by the relevant Head of Academy with the support of the Director of Higher Education.
- 2.5. A request to suspend or remove a programme should be submitted for discussion at the next academic board.
- 2.6. On submission of the request to close a programme then the Academic Board may take three possible decisions:-
 - a. Decline the request
 - b. Approve the request without condition(s)
 - c. Approve the request with condition(s)

3. Programme Changes Prior to Student Registration

- 3.1. The College may be required to make changes to programmes at the following times:-
 - a. Between publication of the prospectus and enrolment
 - b. After enrolment
- 3.2. Where material changes (such as a number of changes to the structure of the programme, or the removal or addition of a number of modules) are made between the publication of the prospectus and enrolment, the College will draw these changes to the attention of applicants as soon as possible and advise them of their right to seek entry to another College programme for which they may be qualified or to withdraw their application and seek entry to another institution.

- 3.3. Where the applicant has already accepted an offer they shall be furnished with all necessary information, advice and guidance by the College Help Hub to help them make an informed decision on their future course of action.
- 3.4. In normal circumstances, material changes to programmes should not be made after enrolment, but where this is unavoidable, students and their representatives shall be consulted at the earliest opportunity on the changes and, where practicable, their views shall be taken into account. If opposing or conflicting views emerge the student group will be consulted.
- 3.5. If a student reasonably believes that a material change to their programme adversely affects them, they may cancel their contract with the College. In such circumstances the College's Help Hub will offer suitable information, advice and guidance to a student and, where possible, facilitate their transfer to another institution which offers an appropriate programme for which they are qualified.
- 3.6. Further to commencement of the programme and during the course of a student's studies, the College may make minor amendments to programmes in order to improve the quality; to meet the latest requirements of an accrediting body; or in response to student feedback. Where such minor amendments to the delivery of a programme are necessary, the College will consult with or inform students and their representatives of these changes, as appropriate.

4. Student Protection

4.1. Current students

- 4.1.1. Current students should normally be allowed to complete the programme of study in its entirety for which they are registered unless each gives their explicit written consent to the contrary. Such consent must not be sought until a closure or suspension recommendation has been agreed.
- 4.1.2. Where a programme is being closed to new entrants only, the College's proposed arrangements for students currently enrolled on the programme must comply with the following:
- a. Current students should be informed of their option. The College will provide all necessary information, advice, guidance and support to facilitate students in deciding which option to follow.
 - b. The standard of academic provision and the student experience must, as far as is reasonably practicable, be maintained throughout their period of enrolment. In particular, the conditions must be maintained to enable the stated learning outcomes in the relevant Programme Specification to be achievable by students who are being 'taught out'.
 - c. To ensure the student experience and to support the students, the Director of Higher Education and Head of Standards and compliance will monitor the programme until completion.

4.2. Applicants

- 4.2.1. In the event of a programme closure, suspension or material changes to programme content, all communications with applicants must be undertaken via Admissions. (Student Services)
- 4.2.2. Applicants who have accepted offers should not be contacted until the closure or suspension process has been fully completed.
- 4.2.3. Applicants thus affected should then be informed student services of their options to transfer their applications to another programme within the College or to another institution.
- 4.2.4. Applicants who have been made offers, but have not yet accepted them, may however be advised that a closure or suspension request has been made. Such applicants should be advised that the offer of a place is suspended until a final decision has been made and will be withdrawn if the request is accepted. They should also be advised that they may choose another programme or institution.
- 4.2.5. UCAS should be notified when the closure or suspension request has been finalised by the Academic Board.

5. Timing

- 5.1. Wherever possible, requests to delete, suspend or make material changes to the content of programmes should be made in a timely manner.
- 5.2. Since preparation for the production of the printed prospectus takes place sometime ahead of publication, the process of strategic planning should identify those programmes which are likely to be closed prior to the commencement of the prospectus production process.
- 5.3 As a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. loss of specialist staff) it may be necessary to close or suspend a programme within a foreshortened timescale. In such circumstances, the student interest is paramount and full consultation should be undertaken with all affected students and their nominated representatives.
- 5.4. In order to ensure full compliance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and related regulations, students should be given the fullest information, advice and guidance to enable them to make well-informed decisions in the event by the relevant department