Suspension or withdrawal of a programme of study

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Classification | Code of Practice |
| Version number: | 5 07 |
| Status | Approved |
| Approved by: | Education Committee - Housekeeping |
| Approval date: | 29 April 2025 |
| Effective from: | Immediate |
| Next review date: | 2028-29 |
| Document author: | Quality Manager |
| Document owner: | Quality Support Service |
| Contact:  Report exemptions to: | Quality Support Service  Education Committee |
| Collaborative provision: | Mandatory |
| *State whether this document is applicable to the University’s collaborative partners* | |
| Related documents: | OfS Regulatory Framework |
| University document: | Yes |
| *A University document applies across the institution, is approved by a committee of Council or Senate and is held in the University Policy Directory on SharePoint.* | |
| Published location: | https://www.hull.ac.uk/policies-and-information/quality-and-standards-framework |

* The University has adopted the principles of Designing for Diverse Learners, and all policy documents should be written with reference to these principles. Further information is available at the [Designing for diverse learners website](https://designingfordiverselearners.info/).
* An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) must be considered for all new and amended policies. Further information is available from the [EIA section of SharePoint](https://hullacuk.sharepoint.com/Services/EDI/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments-(EIAs).aspx).
* This document is available in alternative formats from [**policy@hull.ac.uk**](mailto:policy@hull.ac.uk).
* All printed or downloaded versions of this document are classified as uncontrolled

Suspension or withdrawal of a programme of study

Table of Contents

[1 Introduction 3](#_Toc205907432)

[2 Definitions 3](#_Toc205907433)

[3 Authority 3](#_Toc205907434)

[4 Delegation 3](#_Toc205907435)

[5 Scope of the Code 3](#_Toc205907436)

[On Campus Provision 3](#_Toc205907437)

[Collaborative Provision 4](#_Toc205907438)

[6 Suspension of Recruitment 4](#_Toc205907439)

[Informing Students 5](#_Toc205907440)

[Resumption of recruitment 5](#_Toc205907441)

[7 Withdrawal of a Programme 5](#_Toc205907442)

[Resumption of delivery 6](#_Toc205907443)

[Action following approval 6](#_Toc205907444)

[8 Legal Agreement and Collaborative Provision Register 7](#_Toc205907445)

[9 Version control 8](#_Toc205907446)

Suspension or withdrawal of a programme of study

# Introduction

* 1. The purpose of this code is to ensure that the University’s procedures for the withdrawal and suspension of programmes are robust, transparent and streamlined.
  2. Academic units **must** ensure that where a programme is withdrawn or suspended, assurances are in place for the continuation and quality of study for current students and where relevant, consideration is given to applicants and offer holders.

# Definitions

* 1. **Suspension of Recruitment** refers to the temporary suspension of recruitment to a programme for up to two years with the expectation that the programme will resume recruitment in the future.
  2. **Withdrawal** refers to the permanent withdrawal of a programme from the University’s portfolio.
  3. **Suspension pending withdrawal** refers to the phasing out of a programme through suspension of all future recruitment, until all cohorts complete and the programme can be permanently withdrawn.
  4. **University of Hull Student Protection Plan** sets out how continuation and quality of study will be preserved for current and potential students if a risk to their continued study crystallises (see University of Hull website for details).

# Authority

* 1. The University Education Committee (EC) is the final arbiter of the application and interpretation of this code of practice.
  2. The University Strategic Portfolio Board (SPB) **should** receive all on campus and non-Federation of Colleges applications prior to consideration by EC. This is to inform strategic planning and provide any comment to EC where applicable. The Quality Support Service is responsible for providing applications to SPB.
  3. The University Collaboration Provision Committee (CPC) **should** receive all applications from the Federation of Colleges (FEC) prior to consideration by EC.

# Delegation

* 1. Any action or power designated to a Dean under this code of practice may be undertaken by an Associate Dean of the same faculty.

# Scope of the Code

## On Campus Provision

* 1. The term ‘on campus’ within this code of practice is understood to mean programmes and modules which are delivered and supported entirely by University of Hull staff, irrespective of the location of delivery and also includes non-credit-bearing provision delivered by university staff.

## Collaborative Provision

* 1. The term ‘collaborative provision’ in this code means: programmes and modules which are delivered in whole or in part by the staff of a university partner (whether FE institution or other, whether publicly funded or not) irrespective of the location or mode of delivery and leading to credit or an award of the University of Hull.
  2. Applications for either suspension or withdrawal **must** be submitted to the Quality Support Service and **should** have been identified at a preceding Joint Development Board.

# Suspension of Recruitment

* 1. Suspension of a programme requires the approval of EC. Where appropriate, applications for suspension will be progressed by EC chair’s action.
  2. Applications to suspend a programme **mus**t be approved at least five months in advance of the date the programme is due to begin, in conformance with the timeframe for suspension agreed by the Education Committee.
  3. Suspension of recruitment to a programme for up to a maximum of two consecutive academic years is permitted. Where it is proposed to suspend recruitment to an existing programme of study, a student intake during the academic year or to modules which do not form part of a programme, application for suspension **must** be made to the faculty using the relevant form. Recruitment onto a programme cannot be suspended for more than two years; during the first year of suspension, arrangements **must** be made to either re-commence recruitment or withdraw the programme. Applications **must** include details of the following:
     1. clarification of precisely when it is intended the suspension will take effect
     2. arrangements to resume delivery of the programme
     3. evidence that the Student Protection Plan has been considered
     4. evidence that the external examiner has been notified
     5. evidence that alternative arrangements are in place for prospective students, including those already made an offer, to ensure that applicants are not negatively impacted.
  4. Applications from partner colleges **must** be submitted by the partner institution Higher Education manager (or equivalent) following consultation with the relevant University academic contact and endorsement by the Head of Academic Unit.
  5. Other current students **must** be informed of the reasons that recruitment to the programme on which they are studying is being suspended, for example through the staff/student committee.
  6. The external **examiner** **must** be informed of the decision.
  7. NOTE: Decisions about suspending or withdrawing programmes **should** generally be the result of consideration of the academic unit’s portfolio as part of the planning round. Where a programme is no longer being delivered to students due to withdrawal it will not be live on the Student Information System.
  8. NOTE: An application for suspension **should** also be made where one or more approved student intakes in the academic year is no longer being recruited to.

## Informing Students

* 1. The Admissions Service is responsible for contacting any applicants to the programme and informing them of the decision to suspend.

## Resumption of recruitment

* 1. Where suspension has been granted in accordance with the above paragraphs, an application to resume recruitment **must** be supported by evidence that:
     1. the quality of the learning opportunities and academic standards of the programme remain appropriate, taking into account changes (e.g. to learning resources, currency of the curricula) since recruitment was suspended
     2. the former external examiner remains willing to act for the programme, or that another external examiner is willing to undertake the role.
  2. The faculty **must** inform the Secretary of EC (ec@hull.ac.uk) of the decision to resume recruitment so that EC notification of resumption can be circulated.
  3. If approval to suspend a programme is given by EC or faculty notification is given of the **intention to resume recruitment following a period of suspension, the secretary of EC must** inform the following of the decision:
     1. The relevant Dean and/or Associate Dean Education.
     2. The Head of Academic Unit (who **must** in turn inform the admissions tutor(s)).
     3. Quality Support Service
     4. Teaching Excellence Academy.
     5. Faculty Curriculum Manager(s).
     6. The partner institution HE manager (where applicable).
     7. Academic Services (Admissions) (on campus only).
     8. Academic Services (Academic Model).
     9. Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment.
     10. Global.
     11. The relevant PSRB(s) (where applicable).

# Withdrawal of a Programme

* 1. The withdrawal of a programme, including suspension pending withdrawal requires the approval of EC. Where appropriate applications for withdrawal will be progressed by EC chair’s action.
  2. Applications to withdraw a programme **must** be approved at least five months in advance of the date that the programme is due to begin, in conformance with the timeframe for withdrawal agreed by the Education Committee.
  3. Applications to withdraw a programme being delivered to students currently registered or having accepted an offer of a place on the programme **must** be made by the Dean/Associate Dean of the faculty to the relevant EC. Applications for withdrawal **must** be made using the relevant form.
  4. Applications to withdraw programmes delivered by partner colleges **must** be made by the partner institution HE manager through the relevant Joint Board of Studies prior to being considered by the EC.
  5. Programmes involving two (or more) academic units **must** be supported by the heads of both (or all) academic units (signified in writing).
  6. Where the programme is tied to another programme (for example by providing the articulation route for a Foundation Degree) evidence of the impact on the other programme, and consultation with the programme provider, **must** be provided.
  7. Applications **must** include details of the following:
     1. Details of the number of students currently registered by stage/year and mode including students currently suspending their studies.
     2. Details of offers accepted.
     3. If applicable, an exit strategy, which explains how the students will be affected, including how they will be supported to complete the programme (in relation to teaching, resources, academic and pastoral supervision) indicating whether there are any differences in impact for students on different stages of the programme.
     4. Evidence that the Student Protection Plan has been considered.
     5. Clarification of precisely when it is intended the withdrawal will take effect.
     6. Evidence of consultation with (the) external examiner(s).
     7. Evidence of consultation with current students.
     8. Any other risks of which the University **should** be aware.
  8. Applications **should** be developed in consultation with the Admissions, International Office and Quality Support Service as appropriate.
  9. Where the programme is accredited by a professional/statutory body, evidence of consultation with the relevant body **must** be provided.
  10. In considering the application, EC **must** determine whether any further evidence is required after a specified period of time, for example evidence of how the exit strategy has been implemented one or more years after granting approval.
  11. NOTE: **The importance of the decision to withdraw a programme with current students on it must not be underestimated.** The University owes a clear legally enforceable obligation to such students; therefore, the exit strategy is central to ensure that the obligation is addressed. The external examiner will provide a valuable independent view of whether the proposed exit strategy is appropriate.

## Resumption of delivery

* 1. The withdrawal of a programme in accordance with the above paragraphs is deemed to be a permanent withdrawal. Any proposal to resurrect such a programme **must** be addressed as a new programme.

## Action following approval

*Informing Students*

* 1. Academic Services (Admissions) is responsible for contacting any applicants to the programme and informing them of the decision to withdraw.

*Internal communications*

* 1. If approval to withdraw a programme is given by EC or faculty notification is given of the intention to withdraw following a period of suspension pending withdrawal, the secretary of EC **must** inform the following of the decision:
     1. The relevant Dean and/or Associate Dean Education.
     2. The Head of Academic Unit (who **must** in turn inform the admissions tutor(s)).
     3. Quality Support Service
     4. Teaching Excellence Academy.
     5. Faculty Curriculum Manager(s).
     6. The partner institution HE manager (where applicable).
     7. Academic Services (Admissions) (on campus only).
     8. Academic Services (Academic Model).
     9. Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment.
     10. Global.
     11. The relevant PSRB(s) (where applicable).
  2. Academic Services (Admissions), or partner institution HE manager (where applicable), **must** ensure that relevant internal and external bodies (other than any professional accrediting body) are informed of the decision, including UCAS (if applicable), applicants (in consultation with the academic unit).
  3. The faculty Dean/Associate Dean or partner institution HE manager (where applicable), **must** ensure that University/partner web sites, external course listings and other publicity information are updated.

# Legal Agreement and Collaborative Provision Register

* 1. Following the withdrawal of a programme by EC, the secretary of EC is responsible for ensuring that the relevant legal agreement between the University and partner institution is updated as required, and that the University Collaborative Provision Register is revised.

# Version control

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Author** | **Date approved** | **Relevant sections** |
| 5 07 | Quality Manager | Housekeeping, May 2025 | Updated to reflect changes to UCoP New Programmes and new committee and governance structures. |
| 5 06 | Quality Manager | Jan 2022 | Migrated to new template |
| 5 05 | Quality Manager | Housekeeping, Oct 2019 | * Replaces University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) and University Quality and Standards Committee (UQSC) with Education Committee. * Replaces Programme Management Committee with Education Planning Committee. * Replaces Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) with Quality Governance. |
| 5 04 | Quality Manager | Feb 2019 | * Replaces School with Academic Unit. * Makes clear that where a programme is withdrawn or suspended, assurances are in place for the continuation and quality of study (para 2). |
| 5 03 |  | Sept 2018 | Clarification that applications for suspension or withdrawal should be completed where one or more approved intakes of students is no longer being recruited to during an academic year. |
| 5 02 |  | Sept 2018 | * Moves responsibility for approval of suspension from faculty to PMC (para 7). * Moves responsibility for informing applicants from faculty to the Admissions Service (para 14 and 31). * Removes the requirement for the appending of a separate exit strategy or programme management plan to the Suspension, Withdrawal or Major Amendment Form. * Introduces terminology definition. * Introduces timeframes for approval of suspension and withdrawal (para 8 and 19). * Updates to internal communication lists (para 17 and 31). * Inclusion of reference to partner web sites and external course listings (para 33). * Other minor housekeeping updates. |
| 5 01 |  | Housekeeping, Sept 2016 | * Replaces Programme Approvals Committee with Programme Management Committee. * Replaces Head of Department and department with Head of School and school. * Replaces Student Administrative Services with Registry Services. |
| 5 00 |  | Oct 2015 | * Permits suspension of recruitment to a programme for up to a maximum of two consecutive years (para. 6). * Introduces the requirement for an application to suspend or withdraw a programme to be supported by a Programme Management Plan (para. 6 and para. 18). * Moves responsibility for making an application to withdraw a programme (para. 14), and for ensuring that published information is updated (para. 27), from the department to the faculty. |
| 4 01 |  | Aug 2015 | Replaces Full Approval Panel with University Validation Panel. |
| 4 00 |  | Nov 2013 | * Reflects changes concomitant with QH:G1 version 4 02. * Removes distinction between on campus and collaborative provision amendments. * Clarifies circumstances in which suspension of recruitment should be used (para 14) |
| 3 03 |  | June 2011 | refects the requirement to include the secretary of PAC in internal communications |
| 3 02 |  | Feb 2011 | Reflects the following changes made to Section G1 upon decision by RCPC and ULTAC:   * Succession of PAMEC by PAC and QSC by ULTAC. * FAPs now recommend their decision to PAC rather than approve new programmes. * Broadens the pool of staff who may Chair FAPs. * Acknowledges the replacement of Academic Board with Senate Executive Board. * That programmes needing to meet conditions do so within three weeks of the PPC and/or FAP or approval may lapse. * Programmes delivered outwith the UK (other than online) are subject to the UCoP on International Educational Partnerships (QH: Section N). |
| 3 01 |  | Housekeeping, Aug 2008 | * Reflect change to Committees such as the removal of Academic Board and those duties being referred to the PVC (L&T). |
| 3 00 |  | Oct 2007 | Introduces the devolution of approvals (including withdrawals) to faculty level and also introduces a fast-track procedure for approving the suspension of recruitment where students are not affected by the suspension. Applications to withdraw a programme on which there are current students require the approval of a Full Approval Panel established in accordance with Chapter I of the code (QH:G1). |