Academic Handbook

Section 4D

Procedure for the Withdrawal of a Course or to Suspend Course Delivery

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

1. The University's course portfolio changes over time, existing courses may be closed and no longer offered, or course delivery may be suspended, usually for new applicants.

2. Any queries should be referred initially to the Quality Operations Team for advice. mailto: qa@solent.ac.uk

PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWING A COURSE

Submitting a withdrawal request

3. When a school/service wishes to propose the withdrawal of a course the Head of Subject (or equivalent) should discuss this with the Quality Operations team who can provide advice and guidance on the policy and process. The Course Withdrawal Proposal Form (annex 1) must be completed and approved by the Director of School/Service (DOS). The completed form should be submitted to the Clerk to APRC for processing. The form must include how the student position is to be protected (both existing students and any applicants).

4. If the withdrawal request is being presented in a school APRC paper then a summary of the withdrawal arrangements to be implemented should be included within the paper, including confirmation about how the student position is to be protected.

5. If the approval for the withdrawal is being requested by Chair's Action then the DOS should request this via the Clerk to APRC, who will seek approval from the Chair. A summary of the withdrawal arrangements to be implemented should be included in the request to the Chair, including how the student position is to be protected.

Things to consider

6. The impact that the withdrawal will have on each existing student must be considered very carefully. Normally a course should be run out so that existing students can complete the course that they registered on and get their intended award.

7. Even when a course is being run out special consideration should be made for any potential repeat level students and/or students who have suspended their studies. It is important to consider all possibilities to avoid disadvantaging any students. Schools/services should discuss this with Academic Services (Quality Management, Student Records or Assessment teams), who will be able to advise accordingly and highlight whether any exemptions to the regulations or policies would need to be requested.

8. The impact the withdrawal may have on timetabling and other courses should be assessed and therefore Timetabling and Room Bookings should be informed as early as possible.

Executing an approved withdrawal

9. Once a request for withdrawal has been approved by APRC the Clerk to APRC will inform all relevant stakeholders of the withdrawal, the completed Course Withdrawal Proposal Form will be provided to confirm how the closure is to be administered.

10. Stakeholders include: Compliance, Student Records, Assessments, Business Intelligence, Student Loans [SSU mailbox], Admissions, Planning, Timetabling and Room Bookings, External Relations, Quercus Project, International Development, Relevant Directors of School/Services, School Executive Officers, Student Hub.

11. Students must be informed of the withdrawal as soon as possible and the impact the withdrawal has on them clearly explained.

12. External Relations will be responsible for informing prospective students, including those with confirmed offers of a place.

13. The relevant DOS is responsible for informing current students impacted by a closure. The school/service must liaise with Academic Services (Quality Management, Student Records or Assessment teams) to ensure that the information given and any alternative options provided are in line with University policy and assessment regulations.

14. Any students who have already been given a Repeat Level or suspended studies for the first year the withdrawal comes into effect should be written to separately. These students must be provided with specific information relating to their individual situation.

15. Student Hub and/or schools/services should refer to the Course Withdrawal Proposal Form and the letter sent to the student when advising students, and where required refer queries to the appropriate Academic Services teams.

Change of Circumstance

16. Departments will administer course closures in line with the approval given by APRC and the details contained in the Course Withdrawal Proposal Form. There may be occasions where circumstances subsequently change after implementation is in progress and it is no longer possible to complete the original closure plan. In such cases, the school/service should advise the Head of Quality Management, who will work with them to protect the student interest and agree a revised plan. Schools/services should continuously monitor the progress of students and the course closure plan.

PROCESS FOR SUSPENDING DELIVERY OF A COURSE (e.g. DUE TO LOW APPLICANT/ENROLMENT NUMBERS)

17. To suspend a course delivery the DOS, Academic Registrar or Pro Vice-Chancellor (External Relations) will request permission from the Chair of APRC. The request should be submitted via the Clerk to APRC; the request should clearly identify the course or delivery (all of the course or a specified delivery mode) and academic session to which the suspension is to apply. The Clerk to APRC will process the request and seek approval from the Chair and thereafter inform all relevant stakeholders that the course has been suspended.

> NOTE: *Requests to suspend course delivery for the next academic year should be made by 1ˢᵗ July at the latest.*
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> *Academic Services will work with External Relations/Admissions later in the academic year to identify any active courses with no enrolments, and a paper will be put to APRC to approve the suspension of course delivery for new applicants for those courses, following which systems and records will be updated to reflect the portfolio position. Schools will have an opportunity to review the list prior to APRC action, for example, to request removal of a course that has a start date later in the academic year.*

18. Typically a course suspended will not have any applicants or students holding offers or will have very low numbers of applicants. External Relations/Admissions will inform any prospective students who have accepted an offer onto the course. Students should be advised accordingly and provided with alternative options where possible.

19. If a course has current students then special consideration must be given to any students currently that are enrolled at level 3 or 4 or suspended, or have been given a Repeat Level for level 3 or 4. These two categories of students will be returning to studies when the suspension of delivery takes effect and therefore those levels will not have any students. If the request is to suspend delivery for a second year then level 5 students repeating or suspended may also be impacted and would also need to be considered. The relevant DOS is responsible for informing current students impacted by the suspension. The school/service must liaise with Academic Services (Quality Management, Student Records or Assessment teams) to ensure that the information given and any alternative options provided are in line with University policy and assessment regulations.

20. Academic Services will be responsible for informing current students who may be adversely impacted by the suspension and the DOS for all students on the course.

21. Courses can only be suspended for a maximum of two years, after that courses will be withdrawn and the above withdrawal process should be followed.

ANNEX 1 - Withdrawing a course – process map

Withdrawing a Course from the University Portfolio

School/Service decides course has come to end of life and should close and stop recruitment permanently

School/Service must consider impact on offered applicants and on each existing student, including suspended/refer/defer students and plan the course closure to protect student interests

Quality Operations Team can advise and offer guidance. Student Records and Assessments can assist in determining student position and impact.

School/Service completes Course Withdrawal Proposal Form setting out withdrawal arrangements

Director approves Course Withdrawal Proposal Form

Course withdrawal Proposal Form submitted to APRC Clerk

For urgent cases, APRC Clerk drafts and sends Chair's action request to APRC Chair, including summary of withdrawal arrangements (provided by School/Service). Chair's action process completed & reported to next APRC meeting

APRC Clerk submits request to APRC

School/Service covering Committee Paper sent to APRC Clerk, containing request to approve closure and summary of withdrawal arrangements

Course closure approved

Course closure not approved

APRC Clerk confirms decision and issues Course Withdrawal Proposal Form to:
Assessments
Business Intelligence
Compliance
Student Records
Admissions/Enrolment
International Development
External Relations
Planning
Quercus Project
SLC
Student Hub
Timetabling
Quality Operations Team
*School/Service confirmation via minutes/APRC attendance

Decision confirmed to School/Service

Systems & records updated. Course withdrawal plan implemented by all teams in line with the Course Withdrawal Proposal Form and the guidance in this section of the Academic Handbook.

ANNEX 2 - Suspending a course delivery – process map

Suspend Course Delivery for New Applicants for an Academic Year

Request to cease further recruitment (e.g. due to oversubscription) ie recruitment has taken place and course will run - ER/Admissions process- refer to those departments.

Director of School/Service, Pro Vice Chancellor (ER), Academic Registrar emails request to APRC Clerk

Request should include: course title, all/specific delivery, academic session

Suspension is for a year at a time, and can be applied for no more than 2 years max.

Unless otherwise specified, all modes/ deliveries will be suspended for the stated year.

APRC Clerk drafts and sends Chair's action request to APRC Chair

APRC Chair considers request

Approved

Not approved

Decision confirmed to requestor

APRC Clerk completes Chair's action records

APRC Clerk confirms decision to:
Assessments
Business Intelligence
Compliance
School/Service/Requestor
Student Records
Admissions/Enrolment
International Development
External Relations
Planning
Quercus Project
SLC
Student Hub
Timetabling
Quality Operations Team

Systems & records updated for the academic year (subsequent years remain active, unless subsequently closed or suspended)

Chair's action reported to next APRC meeting