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		Policy Database Document Reference Number 114006D

COURSE SUSPENSION AND CLOSURE PROCEDURES

Parent Policy Title	Course Lifecycle Policy																			
Associated Documents	Course Approval Procedures Course Revision Procedures Course Review Procedures Course Design Principles and Guidelines																			
Preamble	These procedures outline an orderly approach to the temporary suspension or permanent closure of courses. They set principles and standards to inform internal and external stakeholders (including enrolled, admitted or applicant students) and to protect their interests.																			
General	<p>The University may suspend courses for up to three years or close them permanently, normally on the advice of the Faculty Board of the faculty or faculties responsible for the course.</p> <p>Where the University decides to suspend or close a course, appropriate measures must be taken to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notify applicants for the course; • notify students who have been offered a place in the course; and • protect the interests of students who have active enrolments in the course. For purposes of these procedures, 'active enrolments' includes students who are on any form of leave of absence approved by the University. <p>In general, once the University has enrolled a student in a course, the University has a contractual obligation to enable the student to complete that course so long as the student is maintaining an active enrolment. The University must either 'teach out' the enrolled students or, where the students give voluntary informed consent, transfer them into a satisfactory alternative course.</p>																			
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<p>1. Timing of course suspension or closure</p>	<p>In general, a proposal to suspend or close a course should be processed by the Faculty Board of the faculty responsible for the course no later than 31 July of the year prior to the year in which new admissions are to cease. Applications for course suspension or closure after 31 July will be approved only in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>The timing of course suspensions or closures should also take account of publication schedules. All courses are subject to the publication deadlines for Study at La Trobe (SaLT) and for the University Handbook. Courses handled through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and/or the Universities Admission Centre (UAC) are subject to the dates advertised by VTAC and UAC each year as the last date for cancellation of courses. Some of the relevant deadlines* follow:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>December</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the SaLT undergraduate publication for the following year plus one </td> </tr> <tr> <td>March</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the SaLT postgraduate publication for the following year plus one deadline for inclusion in the VTAC/UAC Guide for the following year (changes reported later than March are communicated through separate periodic VTAC/UAC bulletins) </td> </tr> <tr> <td>August</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the hard copy University Handbook (changes reported later than August are included in the on-line Handbook) </td> </tr> <tr> <td>November</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for registering the changes on the VTAC system without incurring a substantial fine. </td> </tr> </table> <p>*These are approximate and subject to annual adjustment.</p>	December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the SaLT undergraduate publication for the following year plus one 	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the SaLT postgraduate publication for the following year plus one deadline for inclusion in the VTAC/UAC Guide for the following year (changes reported later than March are communicated through separate periodic VTAC/UAC bulletins) 	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for inclusion in the hard copy University Handbook (changes reported later than August are included in the on-line Handbook) 	November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deadline for registering the changes on the VTAC system without incurring a substantial fine. 																
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2. Fees associated with course suspension or closure	If a course handled through a Tertiary Admissions Centre (TAC) is suspended or cancelled before the deadlines fixed by the TAC (normally the end of November), no fee applies. Where a faculty or faculties causes the University to incur a late cancellation fee imposed by a TAC, the fee will be charged to that faculty or faculties.
3. Suspensions or closures affecting multiple awards	Where the course to be suspended or closed is offered not only as a single award but also jointly with one or more other awards, the requirements set out in this policy apply to each of the award combinations.
4. Authority for course suspension	A Faculty Board may <i>suspend</i> a course (that is, cease to admit new students) for up to three years on advice to the University's Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee (CTLC). The Faculty Board must certify that students already in the program will continue to be taught and that no student enrolled in the course will be disadvantaged by the suspension.
5. Process for course suspension	When a Faculty Board resolves to suspend a course, it is responsible for taking all necessary measures for the notification and protection of students and other significant stakeholders. In particular, it must notify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Director, Academic Services • the Director, Future Students Centre • the Chief Officer, International (if the course to be suspended or closed is available to international students).
5.1. Responsibilities of Director, Academic Services	The Director, Academic Services is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving notice to the VTAC and UAC where applicable • updating the Student Information System • updating relevant information publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which the Academic Services Division is responsible • taking any other required actions.
5.2. Responsibilities of Director, Future Students Centre	The Director, Future Students Centre is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updating the Course Finder database • updating relevant information and promotional publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which the Future Students Centre is responsible • ensuring that information officers are properly briefed.
5.3. Responsibilities of Chief Officer, International	The Chief Officer, International is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updating relevant databases • updating relevant information and promotional publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which La Trobe International is responsible • ensuring that information officers are properly briefed.

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<p>6. Conditions for course closure</p>	<p>Subject to section 7 below, a proposal to <i>close</i> a course may be approved under any of the following conditions, or under other conditions that the Council may determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The course no longer accords with the University’s strategic plan or operational priorities. (b) The course has been identified for closure as part of a structural review. (c) The course has been identified for closure as an emergency financial measure. (d) The specialist knowledge and/or facilities or other resources required to run the course are no longer available. (e) The course can no longer meet external accreditation criteria. (f) Market conditions make the course unviable. (g) A review of the course under the Course Review Procedures has recommended that it be closed.
<p>7. Special requirements for courses of national significance</p>	<p>Annual funding agreements require universities to seek permission from the Australian Government through DEEWR before closing a course that meets certain criteria of specialisation or national significance. The requirement relates to courses that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) prepare students for entry to any occupation that is experiencing a national skill shortage; or (b) would likely create a national skill shortage if closed, because the provider is a sole or dominant provider of the national skill base for that occupation; or (c) are directed at the regional economy and would, if closed, create a serious detriment to the skills base of that economy; or (d) teach a nationally strategic language.
<p>8. Industrial implications</p>	<p>Where a course is to be closed because of major structural change or financial emergency, additional considerations apply. Refer to the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, Part 5 (‘Consultation, Change and Planning’).</p>
<p>9. Authority for course closure</p>	<p>The Council has authority to close most courses, subject to section 7 above, on receipt of a recommendation from the Academic Board. The recommendation will normally be based on advice from the Faculty responsible for the course, through the University’s CTLC.</p>
<p>10. Process for course closure</p>	<p>Applications to close a course must be made to the University’s CTLC by way of the University’s approved pro forma [to be developed]. The pro forma prescribes and documents interactions with a minimum set of key stakeholders but may be supplemented as appropriate.</p> <p>If satisfied that the course closure is in the best interests of the University and its students, the CTLC will forward its recommendation to the Academic Board. The Academic Board will notify its decision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposing Faculty

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10.1. Responsibilities of Proposing Faculty	<p>The proposing Faculty is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> taking all necessary measures for the notification and protection of students and other significant stakeholders.
10.2. Responsibilities of Director, Academic Services	<p>The Director, Academic Services is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving notice to the VTAC and UAC where applicable updating the Student Information System updating relevant information publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which the Academic Services Division is responsible taking any other action required.
10.3. Responsibilities of Director, Future Students Centre	<p>The Director, Future Students Centre is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> updating the Course Finder database updating relevant information and promotional publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which the Future Students Centre is responsible ensuring that information officers are properly briefed.
10.4. Responsibilities of Chief Officer International	<p>The Chief Officer, La Trobe International is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> updating relevant databases updating relevant information and promotional publications, including on-line documents and websites, for which La Trobe International is responsible ensuring that information officers are properly briefed.
11. Teach-out provisions	<p>The University will allow students to complete the qualification or course in which they originally enrolled. Every attempt will be made to provide the original program; however, where that is not possible, course requirements will be adjusted so that students are not disadvantaged.</p> <p>If a student's program is adjusted, a statement of the agreed program must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> given to the student filed with the Registrar of the relevant Faculty used as the basis for determining the student's academic progress and completion of course requirements. <p>The teach-out period is determined by identifying the students remaining in the course, considering the mix of full-time and part-time enrolments, and developing a reasonable timeline. The teach-out period will be no less than</p>

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	<p>the normal full-time duration of the course less one year. This provision will apply pro rata in the case of courses offered only on a part-time basis.</p> <p>If a student who is enrolled in a course that has been approved for closure does not complete the course within the approved teach-out period, the relevant faculty will provide advice to the student on alternative arrangements that the student may wish to pursue at the University or elsewhere.</p> <p>The University may confer the discontinued award on students who are taught out, provided that the relevant registration is maintained (section 13).</p>
12. Transfer provisions	Where appropriate, students who remain enrolled in a course that is to be closed may be offered the opportunity to transfer into another course. Any such transfer may only be by voluntary informed consent. Students who take up the transfer option will, on graduation, receive the qualification into which they have transferred.
13. De-registration of closed course	A course closed by the Council will remain on the University's books, and on relevant registers such as the CRICOS, until the last of the students enrolled in the course has been taught out, transferred to another course or discontinued studies at the University. At that point the course will be de-registered.
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