

## COURSE DISCONTINUATION, TERMINATION AND TEACH OUT POLICY

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <b>Approving authority</b>   | Academic Board                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Purpose</b>               | This policy outlines the processes to be followed for discontinuation and teach out of a course or subject                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>   | Academic Leadership team                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Next scheduled review</b> | August 2031                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Document Location</b>     | <a href="http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/">http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/</a>                                                                            |
| <b>Associated documents</b>  | Business Continuity Policy<br>Changes to Registered Provider Policy<br>Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure<br>Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling a Student's Enrolment Policy and Procedure |

### 1. PRINCIPLES

A strategic objective of Ozford Institute of Higher Education's (hereafter referred to as "the Institute") is to support excellence in learning and teaching which delivers practical graduate outcomes. The Institute will achieve this in part by offering relevant courses. In offering relevant courses, the Institute is committed to ensuring that all students are provided with every opportunity to complete the course of study in which they are enrolled. However, there may be circumstances where it is required or considered necessary to suspend/discontinue/terminate a course.

Where it is considered necessary to suspend/discontinue/terminate a course the Institute will implement a transparent and equitable plan to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by such an action.

A fundamental principle of the Institute is that students will not be disadvantaged as a result of the discontinuation/termination of a Course.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff involved in instances of discontinuation/termination of a Course.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

#### *Course*

For the purposes of this policy a course is an accredited course provided by the Institute that is listed on the National Register.

#### *Discontinued Course*

A course in which it has been formally decided that there will be no new students enrolled, but existing students will be taught out.

### ***Individual Student Statement (ISS)***

A written document prepared for a student that provides an identification of units that a student needs to complete to graduate from a discontinued course. This ISS also includes possible options for the student to complete the course.

### ***Suspended Course***

A course that the Institute decides to suspend. The period of suspension may be for one or more trimesters.

### ***Terminated Course***

When there is no further “transition and teach-out” to a discontinued course

### ***Transition and Teach-out Mode***

This is a status, following the decision to discontinue a course, where no new students can be enrolled in a course and arrangements are in place to ensure that all existing enrolled students can either complete the course or transition to an alternative mutually agreed course at no disadvantage to the student.

### ***Transition and Teach-out Plan***

A written plan that documents the process by which the discontinued course will proceed. The plan also documents the academic support provided for students enrolled in a course that has been discontinued. The plan will provide for equitable treatment for all students affected by the discontinuation of the course, by enabling them to have reasonable time to complete the course, or by providing them with reasonable alternative course and unit options.

### ***Unit of Study***

A Unit of study is an individual subject that is studied as part of a course. It is the smallest stand-alone component of a course that can be recorded on an academic transcript. A unit can also be viewed as the study of a particular topic within a wider field and is a unit of the basic building block of a qualification.

## **4. POLICY**

### **Decision to Suspend a course**

- 4.1 The Institute may decide to suspend delivery of a course or a Unit(s) for one or more trimesters. This decision may be due to lack of student demand, a staffing or other business issue that prevents delivery of the course or unit of study for a trimester or a further period.
- 4.2 The Academic Leadership Team will approve the suspension of a course or unit of study.
- 4.3 The ***Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling a Student’s Enrolment Policy and Procedure*** sets out the processes for a suspension.
- 4.4 Courses that are suspended will not accept new enrolments.
- 4.5 Where a student is studying in a course that is suspended, the student will be taught without interruption until they complete the course or are transitioned out.

## Decision to Discontinue a course

### *Institute initiated decision*

- 4.6 The Institute may decide to discontinue a course for several reasons including changes in student demand, a change to strategic positioning in a particular market, or a major course revision following a formal course review process.
- 4.7 The decision to discontinue of a course must comply with:
- all external regulatory requirements, including the TEQSA Compliance frameworks and HESA, as appropriate;
  - the requirements of relevant professional accrediting and disciplinary bodies;
  - internal requirements such as availability of specialist staff and resources;
  - institutional strategic directions and curriculum requirements at the time;
  - quality assurance arrangements
- 4.8 Decisions of this nature must be made by the Academic Board in consideration of
- reason/s (academic, strategic and financial) for the discontinuation;
  - whether there is a replacement course proposed;
  - the number of students currently enrolled and their level of progression;
  - an explanation of how students enrolled in the course will be helped to either complete the course or transition to another course of study;
  - any other impact for the Institute; and
  - how stakeholders have been or will be consulted about the discontinuation.
- 4.9 This is a material change and the decisions must be notified to TEQSA within 14 days of the decision. The process for notifying TEQSA is set out in the ***Changes to Registered Provider Policy***.

### *Regulatory decision*

- 4.10 A course may also be discontinued because of a TEQSA decision to:
- not renew accreditation of a course, and students are currently enrolled in this course;
  - cancel the accreditation of a course, and students are currently enrolled in this course; or
  - not accredit a course intended to supersede an existing course that a provider has not sought to reaccredit.
- 4.11 The Institute will immediately cease enrolments and put in place a transition and teach out plan.

### **Time frame for teach out**

- 4.12 Irrespective of the reason/s for the decision to discontinue a course, and place students into transition and teach-out mode, the students must not be disadvantaged. This will be achieved by

providing all students in the discontinued course with a reasonable time to complete the course. Typically, this will be the full-time duration plus one further year or part-time equivalent.

- 4.13 For a period not extending beyond full-time duration plus two years or part time equivalent, the students who have not completed the discontinued course within the period of the transition and teach-out plan will be further assisted to transition into an alternative course, to complete their course by taking outstanding units at another institution or another mode of learning, or to complete their course through a special course of study.
- 4.14 Accreditation of the course will be maintained for the duration of the teach out period.
- 4.15 Formal cessation of a course will be once there are no students remaining currently enrolled.

### **Individual student statement**

- 4.16 All students affected by the decision to discontinue a course will be provided with a written statement that provides identification of units that the student needs to complete to graduate from a discontinued course and options for the student to complete the course.

### **Transition and Teach out plan**

- 4.17 The Institute will prepare a transition and teach out plan that documents the process by which the discontinued course will proceed. The plan will also set out the academic support provided for students enrolled in the course that has been discontinued. The plan will provide for equitable treatment for all students affected by the discontinuation of the course, by enabling them to have reasonable time to complete the course, or by providing them with reasonable alternative course and unit options.
- 4.18 The transition and teach out plan will:
- ensure that students have a reasonable opportunity to complete the discontinued course within a reasonable period of time;
  - where there is a replacement course, identify the students that may be transitioned into a replacement course.
  - identify all students for whom transition arrangements are required, including future students who have been made offers of admission via pathway or package arrangements.
  - specify the anticipated timeline of activities, including the effective date of the termination of the course;
  - include a communication plan that includes the proposed timeline and methods for notifying students of the Transition and Teach-out Plan, including any students who may be on leave of absence, as well as academic and professional staff and other stakeholders;
  - list the students affected and anticipated decisions regarding teach-out (graduation dates, transfer, remain at institution, participate in teach-out and at what institution, etc.)
- 4.19 The transition and teach out plan will be monitored and reviewed each trimester by the Academic Leadership team to ensure that students can either complete the course and/or transition to another course to complete their studies within the expected duration.

## **Tuition Protection Scheme**

- 4.20 The Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS) protects students at private education providers when their provider defaults, whether the students pay their tuition fees up front or use a FEEHELP loan. A provider defaults when they close, stop offering a course or unit of study, or fail to start a course or unit of study with enrolled students.
- 4.21 The TPS will help higher education students to:
- continue their studies with a replacement provider in an equivalent or similar course; or
  - receive a refund of their tuition fees paid up-front and/or receive a loan re-credit for parts of the course that the student commenced but could not complete due to a provider default.
- 4.22 The Institute will fulfil its provider reporting requirements, which include maintaining and updating:
- student contact details including:
    - the student's current residential address
    - the student's mobile phone number (if any)
    - the student's email address (if any)
  - records of unit and course completions
  - students' unique student identifiers (USI)
  - data reported in the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI)
  - responding to information requests from the TPS Director.

## **TPS Levy**

- 4.23 The Institute will provide all information required for the annual International TPS Levy collection and pay the TPC levies invoiced to the Institute.
- 4.24 The Institute will declare their overseas student tuition fee income on an accrual basis making the appropriate adjustments, which is consistent year to year and consistent with the Institute's financial reporting practices.

## **Provider Default**

- 4.25 A default occurs when a provider closes, fails to start, or stops offering a course or unit of study.
- 4.26 Under section 46A of the ESOS Act, a registered provider defaults, in relation to an overseas student or intending overseas student and a course at a location, if:
- the provider fails to start providing the course to the student at the location on the agreed starting day and the student has not withdrawn; or
  - the course ceases to be provided to the student at the location at any time after it starts but before it is completed and the student the student has not withdrawn.
- 4.27 The Institute will contact the TPS if it is at risk of defaulting.

## Provider Default - Overseas Students

4.28 Following a provider default, the Institute must fulfil its obligations under sections 46A-46F of the ESOS Act. The obligations include but are not limited to:

- giving written notice of the default to the relevant ESOS agency and the TPS Director within 3 business days of the default occurring;
- giving written notice of the default to the students in relation to whom the Institute has defaulted;
- discharging its obligations to students within the provider obligation period of 14 days after the default day by either:
  - arranging for students to be offered a place in an alternative course (and the student accepting that offer in writing); or
  - providing a refund of unspent tuition fees; and
- notifying the relevant ESOS agency and the TPS Director of the outcome of discharge of obligations within 7 days after the end of the provider obligation period.

4.29 The Institute will contact the TPS immediately if they are unable to meet these obligations.

## Provider Default - Domestic Students

4.30 The Institute will notify their students and the TPS Director in writing within 24 hours of the default occurring.

4.31 If the Institute has defaulted, within 14 days the Institute must:

- arrange for the student to be offered a place in a suitable replacement unit or course and the student accepts the offer in writing; or
- pay the student a refund of any up-front payments for the affected unit(s) or re-credit the student's HELP balance for any FEE-HELP assistance used to pay for the affected unit(s) to the Commonwealth.

4.32 The students can choose between continuing their studies at the replacement course or receiving a refund and/or FEEHELP loan re-credit.

4.33 If there are no suitable replacement units or courses, the Institute is required to refund up-front fee paying students or re-credit students' HELP balances with an amount equal to the amount of FEE-HELP assistance the student received for the affected unit(s) of study.

4.34 In fulfilling these obligations, students must be satisfied with their refund, HELP loan re-credit or replacement unit or course option and accept the offer in writing.

4.35 The Institute will contact the TPS immediately at [support@tps.gov.au](mailto:support@tps.gov.au) if unable to meet these obligations.

## Replacement Provider

4.36 The TPS may contact the Institute with an opportunity to enrol additional students. This will happen when there has been a default and there are students who wish to continue their studies.

4.37 The tuition protection arrangements impose obligations on replacement providers. The Institute will:

- notify the TPS Director in writing of a student's acceptance of an offer of a place in a replacement unit or course within 14 days of the acceptance
- grant course credits for units of study of the original course successfully completed by the student
- not charge students tuition fees or student contribution amounts for replacement components of the affected part of the original course for which tuition fees were already paid
- enrol a student in the replacement unit or course as soon as practicable.

## **Contingency Arrangements**

4.38 The Institute will establish teach-out or transition contingency arrangements in the event that any course provided by the Institute is discontinued, particularly identifying the availability and accessibility of similar courses.

## **Academic Governance**

4.39 An annual report of discontinuations will be provided to the Academic Board.

## **5. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks the policy will be;

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every five years from the date of approval (if not earlier);
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requirement(s) and/or other legislation/regulation.

## **6. FEEDBACK**

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed Responsible officer of the Institute.

## **7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Charles Sturt University, Course and Subject Policy, 2024 ([Course and Subject Policy / Document / CSU Policy Library](#))
- Charles Sturt University, Course And Subject Procedure - Life Cycle Approvals, 2024 ([Course and Subject Life Cycle Procedure / Document / CSU Policy Library](#))
- Charles Sturt University, Course And Subject Procedure - Delivery Management, 2024 ([Course and Subject Delivery and Management Procedure / Document / CSU Policy Library](#))
- Macquarie University, Course of Study Suspension and Discontinuation Policy, 2026 ([Course of Study Suspension and Discontinuation Policy / Document / Policy Central \(mq.edu.au\)](#))
- Swinburne University, Courses and Awards Policy, 2026 ([Courses and Awards Policy | Policies | Swinburne](#))
- University of Southern Queensland, Program Change, Suspension and Discontinuation Procedure, 2026 ([Program Change, Suspension and Discontinuation Procedure - University of Southern Queensland \(usq.edu.au\)](#))
- Victoria University, Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation And Student Transition (HE) Procedure, 2026 ([Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition \(HE\) Procedure / Document / Victoria University Policy Library \(vu.edu.au\)](#))
- TEQSA, Withdrawing a course/teach out, 2022 ([Withdrawing a course/teachout | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(teqsa.gov.au\)](#))

## 8. VERSION CONTROL

| Version                                     | Date approved                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Description     | Approved by |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1.0                                         | December 2013                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Initial Issue   | AB          |
| 2.0                                         | August 2018                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Internal Review | AB          |
| 3.0                                         | September 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Internal Review | AB          |
| 4.0                                         | August 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Internal Review | AB          |
| Related legislation/<br>regulation/standard | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 (Cth)<br>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)<br>Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 (Cth)<br>Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 (Cth)<br>The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth)<br>Higher Education Support Act 2003 Clth |                 |             |

Note:

AB = Academic Board