Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition (HE) Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure:

a. Specifies key steps and responsibilities involved in ceasing to offer a Higher Education (HE) Award or Non-Award:
   i. Course
   ii. Major
   iii. Delivery location
   iv. Course delivered with a partner

   to commencing and prospective students onshore and/or offshore; and
b. Specifies the approval steps and responsibilities for student transition and/or teach out arrangements.

(2) This Procedure ensures Victoria University's (VU) compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) (HESF), Standard 5 - Institutional Quality Assurance. In particular, this Procedure ensures compliance with:

a. Standard 5.1.3b: Course Approval and Accreditation - Re-approval and Re-accreditation
b. Standard 5.3.7: Monitoring, Review and Improvement - Mitigating Future Risks
c. Standard 7.2.4: Information for Prospective and Current Students

(3) This Procedure addresses VU's responsibilities under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS), Part 5, Division 2, Subdivision A - Provider Default. The processes and actions mandated in this Procedure mitigate the risk of VU entering provider default when ceasing to offer HE courses of study.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This Procedure applies to:

a. HE Award courses (coursework only)
b. Majors
c. HE Non-Award courses

(5) This Procedure does not apply to :

a. Higher Degree by Research courses
b. Vocational Education and Training (VET) Award and Non-Award courses.

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Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(6) Courses Lifecycle Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer	Approves the Course Cessation Proposals.
Executive Deans of Colleges	Endorses Course Cessation Proposal, Course Transition Plans and Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans.
Academic Board Courses Committee	Approves Course Transition Plans. Approves Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans. Monitors Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans on a bi-annual basis.
Academic Board	Via Courses Committee, monitors the teach-out process.
Executive Dean's Advisory Group (or equivalent)	Provides advice to the Executive Dean if required.
Director, Admissions, Enrolments, and Graduations	Manages enrolment-related aspects of the process.
Academic Quality and Standards (AQS)	Develops the Approval for Course Cessation Proposal on behalf of Colleges for presentation to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer. Develops Course Transition Plans on behalf of Colleges to present to Academic Board Courses Committee. Assists in preparing Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans. Deactivates courses and majors as required. Assists in the preparation of Teach-Out Monitoring Reports to be presented to the Courses Committee.

Part B - General

(7) The cessation of a HE course at VU must comply with:

a. All external regulatory requirements, including the HESF and ESOS, as appropriate;
b. The requirements of relevant professional accrediting and disciplinary bodies;
c. Internal requirements such as availability of specialist staff and resources;
d. Institutional strategic directions and curriculum requirements at the time;
e. Approved quality assurance arrangements with external partners, and
f. Sign-off by senior management.

(8) The general rules for student transition planning, when a course will be ceased because it is has been replaced by a new course, are:

a. Students who have completed 96 credit points or less of their course will be transitioned to the replacement course;
b. Students who have 96 credit points or less remaining to complete their course remain within the replaced course; and

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c. Students who fit into neither of these two categories will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the College to determine the most appropriate transition approach.

(9) The exceptions to the general rules for student transition are:

a. If the AQF level of the replacement course is different from that of the course being ceased;
b. If the replacement course is not equivalent in terms of content, outcomes and duration;
c. If the transition to the new course would impose a longer study duration for the student; or
d. If no replacement course has been approved.

Part C - Suspension of a Course or Major

(10) Colleges may request to suspend a course or major.

(11) Courses or majors that are suspended do not accept new enrolments and are not listed on Course Finder, but continue to be taught to existing students (if any) without interruption.

(12) Colleges that wish to suspend a course or major must complete a Course Cessation Proposal, indicating that they are requesting suspension, and provide it to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer for approval.

(13) Courses and majors that are approved for suspension will be suspended for a period of a maximum of 12 months.

(14) Course and major suspensions are not renewable.

(15) During the 12-month period of suspension of a course or major, the College will determine, before 31 July in the year of suspension, whether:

a. The course will be made active for the following academic year; or
b. The cessation process will be commenced to permanently deactivate the course.

Part D - Deciding to Commence the Course Cessation Process

(16) HE Award and Non-Award courses and majors may commence cessation via three processes:

a. As part of a Course Concept and Business Case for the proposed accreditation of a new HE Award or approval of a new Non-Award course, which will result in the replacement of an existing course.
b. As part of regular monitoring review and improvement processes, specifically Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) or Comprehensive Course Review (CCR).
c. As a result of university or college-wide curriculum renewal or strategic management directions.

Course Concept and Business Case

(17) When a new HE Award course or major, or Non-Award course, is proposed, a Concept Proposal and Business Case must be prepared (Refer Courses Lifecycle - Concept Proposal and Business Case (HE) Procedure). The Concept Proposal and Business Case seeks senior management approval to commence the development and:

a. Accreditation of a new Award course or major;
b. Approval of a new Non-Award course.

(18) As part of the Concept Proposal and Business Case process, an existing course or major may be identified which will be replaced by the proposed new course or major.

(19) Approval of the Concept Proposal and Business Case therefore constitutes in-principle approval of the deactivation of the existing course or major.

As part of ACM or CCR

(20) As part of the ACM and CCR processes, Colleges are provided with detailed course data to assist in decision-making.

(21) Based on data and any other relevant considerations, Colleges may decide:

a. To continue offering the course or major, in which case they will proceed with the ACM or CCR process as appropriate.
b. To not continue offering the course or major.

(22) If a College decides to not continue to offer a course or major, and not to proceed with ACM or CCR, they must complete the Approval for Course Cessation Proposal and submit it to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer to obtain approval to commence the cessation process. Academic Quality and Standards (AQS) provides assistance with this process.

University or College-wide Curriculum Renewal or Strategic Management

(23) From time-to-time, the University may engage in curriculum or strategic renewal of the course profile.

(24) Colleges may also decide to change strategic direction as part of their strategic planning processes.

(25) These processes may trigger a need to reconsider existing course offerings. Detailed course data is provided to senior management to assist in decision-making.

(26) This process may result in:

a. The need for new courses to be developed.
b. Replacement courses causing other courses to commence the deactivation process.
c. Immediate deactivation.
d. Amendments to existing courses.

(27) If a decision is made to not continue to offer a course or major, AQS, in conjunction with the College, will complete the Course Cessation Proposal and provide it to the College to submit to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer to obtain approval to commence the cessation process.

Part E - Course Cessation Proposals

(28) The Course Cessation Proposal is developed by Academic Quality and Standards (AQS) in conjunction with the College.

(29) This Proposal is provided to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer for approval.

(30) Generally, Course Cessation Proposals must be provided before 31 July of each year, to assist with establishing an accurate course profile for the following year.

Part F - Status Change

(31) Once a course or major has been approved for cessation by the Senior DVC, the course or major's status is changed in CAMS to:

a. Teach-out
b. No longer offered on Course Finder.

Part G - Course Transition Plans

(32) Once the Course Cessation Proposal has been approved, AQS will prepare a Course Transition Plan for the College to present to the Courses Committee of Academic Board.

(33) The Course Transition plan will:

a. Identify all students currently enrolled in the course or major, their completed credit points, and their credit point levels.
b. Recommend groups of students that may be transitioned into a replacement course or major using the general rules established at clause (10) above.
c. Identify all cohorts for whom individual transition arrangements are required, including international students and pending students who have been made offers of admission via pathway or package arrangements.

(34) The Course Transition Plan is presented to Courses Committee concurrently with the Course Proposal for the new course (where the ceased course is being replaced by a new course).

(35) Where a course or major is not being replaced, the Course Transition Plan should be presented to the next available Courses Committee meeting following the status change of the course or major.

(36) Once the Course Transition Plan has been endorsed by Courses Committee, the College will prepare the Student Cohort Teach-Out Plan.

Part H - Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans

(37) The College will develop a detailed teach-out or transition plan for all students admitted to the course or major, based on the Course Transition Plan developed by AQS, to ensure students are not disadvantaged.

(38) Teach-out periods, where no replacement course exists, will be no less than the normal course duration + 50%. They may be longer than this if required to meet the needs of particular cohorts.

(39) No new admissions will be accepted during the teaching-out period.

(40) The length of the teaching out period that each individual has to complete the course or major approved for cessation will be determined by the College/Course Team, and will take into account:

a. the remaining units required to complete the course,
b. whether the student is enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis, and
c. the overall teaching-out period.

(41) Student Cohort Teach-out Plans must be forwarded to the Courses Committee of Academic Board by the next meeting after status changes have occurred.

Part I - Communications with Students

(42) Students will be advised of the University's intention to cease the course or major as soon as possible after the approval by the DVC of the Approval of Course Cessation Proposal.

(43) The University will also advise any students who have been offered a place in a course or major approved for

cessation that the course or major will no longer be on offer.

(44) Once Student Transition and Student Cohort Teach-Out planning is complete, each student will be advised of their individual plan including:

a. the length of time that they have to complete the course or major;
b. any transition arrangements that will be applied; and
c. where they can seek further advice and information about their course status.

(45) Details of a course or major that has been approved for cessation will be removed from future editions of all publications.

a. An exception is provided for Course listings where these are used to provide existing students with information regarding their course structure. In this case, courses will be identified as no longer taking admissions.

Part J - Monitoring Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans

(46) The Courses Committee of Academic Board will monitor the progress of all Student Cohort Teach-Out Plans on a bi-annual basis.

(47) Colleges will, with the assistance of AQS, report the:

a. numbers and status of students enrolled in the course or major being taught out; and
b. expected timeframes for completion;

to enable Courses Committee to ensure that teaching out is progressing appropriately.

Part K - Deactivation

(48) After census date, AQS reviews all teach-out courses and majors.

(49) If the course or major has no enrolments, AQS checks other parameters to ensure:

a. There are no enrolled students on leave.
b. There are no pending international students including those on a packaged or pathway arrangement.

(50) If the course or major is clear of all student obligations, the course is deactivated in CAMS.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(51) HESF: Standard 5 - Institutional Quality Assurance (specifically, 5.1.3b: Course Approval and Accreditation - Re-approval and Re-accreditation; 5.3.7: Monitoring, Review and Improvement - Mitigating Future Risks; 6.2.1 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability; 7.2.4: Information for Prospective and Current Students).

(52) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS): Part 5, Division 2, Subdivision A - Provider Default. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth): Standard 3 Formalisation of enrolment and written agreements.

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Section 6 - Definitions

(53) Course Cessation

(54) Course Suspension

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Status and Details

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Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
Enquiries Contact	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Course Cessation" - The process undertaken to discontinue offering an Award or Non-Award course, major (HE) or specialisation (VET).

"Course Suspension" - The process undertaken to temporarily suspend a Higher Education (HE) course or major or a Vocational Education (VET) course or specialisation.

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