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

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure:

a. Specifies key steps and responsibilities involved in ceasing to offer a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, specialisation or unit to commencing and prospective students onshore and/or offshore;
b. Specifies the approval steps and responsibilities for student transition and/or teach out arrangements.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

a. VET Award courses and units;
b. VET Non-Award courses and units;
c. VET Specialisations.

(3) This Procedure does not apply to:

a. Higher Degrees by Research courses and units;
b. Higher Education (HE) award and non-award courses and units.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(4) Courses Lifecycle Policy.

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Academic Quality and Standards	Initiates course/specialisation suspensions/cessations based on advice from Training.Gov.au and with TAFE Managers. Works collaboratively with TAFE Managers in the preparation of Course Cessation Plans, Course Comparative Analysis' and Individual Transition/Teach-out Plans and communication to students. Reviews courses and specialisations identified as teaching-out as well as active/non-active units and deactivates courses, specialisations and units as required. Inform ASQA (National Regulator) to meet regulatory requirements.

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Roles	Responsibilities
TAFE Managers	Initiates course/specialisation suspensions/cessations with Governance. Works collaboratively with Administration and Governance and Academic Quality and Standards in the preparation of Course Cessation Plans, Course Comparative Analysis' and Individual Transition/Teach-out Plans. Using TAFE Communication templates provided, prepares and sends communications to students and employers regarding cessation, transition and teach-out arrangements. Ensures that students' Training Plans are amended to reflect changes in enrolment arising from cessation, transition and teach-out.
Manager, VET Delivered to Secondary Students (VETDSS)	Communicate regarding cessation, transition and teach-out with schools for all VETDSS students.
Executive Directors, TAFE	Approves course/specialisation cessation requests via the Teach Out Plan.
Course Advisory Committee	Monitors the progress of all transitioning courses, specialisations and units via the maintenance of a risk register, which is reviewed at the Course Advisory Committee.
Chief TAFE Officer	Reviews and endorses Course/specialisation suspension/and or cessations requests via minor amendments at Courses Advisory Committee held within the TAFE. Reviews and approves: - Scope of Registration submissions; - Course, specialisation and/or unit cessations to be noted at the University Courses Committee; - VET Declaration.
Director, Academic Quality and Standards	Reviews and endorses for approval the VET Declaration.
Academic Quality and Standards	Work collaboratively with Administration and Governance to meet internal regulatory requirements.

Part B - General

(5) The cessation of a course, specialisation or unit at VUP must comply with the following principles:

a. External and internal academic standards, policy and regulations (including, but not limited to, the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth) and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework).
b. National Training Package or National/State accredited course requirements (for externally accredited courses and/or units only).
c. The requirements of relevant professional accrediting and disciplinary bodies.
d. Institutional strategic directions at the time.
e. Approved quality assurance arrangements with external partners.
f. Internal capacity (including availability of specialist staff and resources as needed).

(6) The cessation and transition planning of a course must comply as outlined for each course category:

a. VET Award Course
    i. The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products.
b. VET Non-Award Course - Category 2
    i. As per advice received by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) at time of course replacement.

c. VET Non-Award Course – Category 1, 3, 4
    i. The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products.
d. VET Non-Award Course - Category 5, 6 and 7
    i. Students who have commenced a course will remain within the replaced course.
e. VET Units (within both VET Award Courses and VET Non-Award Courses – Category 1, 3, 4, 5)
    i. The Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products.
f. VET Units (within VET Non-Award Courses – Category 2)
    i. As per advice received by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) at time of unit replacement.
g. VET Non-Award Units (within VET Non-Award Courses – Category 6 and 7)
    i. Students who have commenced a unit will remain within the replaced unit.

Part C - Suspension of a VET Course or Specialisation

(7) Administration and Governance or the TAFE Manager may request to suspend a course or specialisation.

(8) Courses or specialisations that are suspended will no longer accept new enrolments and will not be listed on Course Finder, but will continue to be taught to existing students (if any) without interruption.

(9) If a suspension to a course or specialisation is requested, a Course Suspension Request must be completed and approved by the Chief TAFE Officer.

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

(11) Course and specialisation suspensions are only permitted on one occasion in a course lifecycle.

(12) During the 12-month suspension period, (but no later than 3 months prior to the suspension period ending) TAFE will determine, whether:

a. The course will be made active for the next teaching period; or
b. The cessation process will continue towards permanently deactivating the course.

Part D - Deciding to Commence the VET Cessation Process

(13) Courses, specialisations or units may commence cessation via two processes:

a. As part of a change made to the National Register of VET as advised by the current Government authoritative source;
b. As a result of TAFE strategic management directions.

As part of a change made to the National Register of VET

(14) Changes to the National Register of VET that could trigger the cessation process include when a course, specialisation and/or unit status changes to:

a. Superseded (in the case where a Training Package component (course, unit or skill set) is replaced by another);
b. Deleted (in the case where a Training Package component (course, unit, skill set) is removed from the National

Register of VET without being replaced);

c. Expired (in the case where a VET accredited course/short course expires).

(15) Administration and Governance is advised of changes made to the National Register of VET via the current Government authoritative source and in turn, advise relevant TAFE Managers of these changes.

(16) Administration and Governance, in conjunction with the TAFE Manager will complete the relevant Course Cessation Plan.

VU TAFE Strategic Management

(17) Through the TAFE Executive Team the TAFE will engage in a strategic review of the course profile:

a. Annually;
b. As needed, based on changes made in the sector and by both the State and Commonwealth Governments.

(18) As part of the strategic review of the course profile, the TAFE Executive Team are provided with detailed course data to assist in decision-making.

(19) Based on the data and any other relevant considerations, the process may result in:

a. The decision to continue to offer a course, specialisation and/or unit;
b. The need to commence the cessation/transition process for a course, specialisation and/or unit;
c. The need for a new course, specialisation and/or unit to be offered;
d. Immediate deactivation of a course or specialisation;
e. Amendments to existing courses.

(20) The VET Teaching Area may also decide to change strategic direction as part of their strategic planning processes.

(21) If a decision is made, to discontinue offering a course, specialisation and/or unit, Administation and Governance in conjunction with the TAFE Manager, will complete the relevant Course Cessation Plan and seek approval of the applicable Executive Director.

Part E - VET Cessation Plan

(22) The VET Cessation Plan is developed by Administration and Governance in conjunction with the TAFE Manager.

(23) This Plan is provided to the relevant Executive Director for approval.

(24) A VET Cessation Plan is submitted to Academic Quality and Standards at any time of the year and is tabled at the TAFE Courses Advisory Committee for endorsement.

(25) Transition and Teach-out periods for VET Award courses, specialisations or units will align with those stipulated in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products.

Part F - Course Comparative Planning

(26) The Course Comparative Planning is only completed for courses or specialisations that are being replaced and/or will have students transitioning from one course or specialisation into another.

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(27) Once the VET Cessation Plan has been approved, the TAFE Manager will prepare the Course Comparative Analysis (if required).

(28) The Course Comparative Plan will:

a. Compare the number of units (core and elective) required for both the replaced qualification and the replacement qualification;
b. Compare the maximum payable hours the State Government will subsidise;
c. Identify whether units within the two qualifications are equivalent, not equivalent, new or have no replacement, and;
d. Where the units within the two qualifications are not equivalent, a summary of changes will be provided.

(29) The Course Comparative Analysis is presented to the relevant VET Quality Partner for checking.

(30) Once the Course Comparative Analysis has been checked by the relevant VET Quality Partner, the TAFE Manager will prepare the Individual Transition/Teach-out Plans.

Part G - Individual Transition/Teach-out Plan

(31) Once the Course Comparative Plan has been approved by the Executive Director (if required), the TAFE Manager will develop a detailed Individual Transition/Teach-out Plan for each student enrolled in the course or specialisation to ensure students are informed and not disadvantaged.

(32) The Individual Transition/Teach-out Plan will detail:

a. Students completing course or specialisation
    i. Current unit enrolments/results completed as part of the course or specialisation;
    ii. Future unit enrolments to be completed and an indication of when those units should be completed.
b. Students transitioning to replacement course or specialisation
    i. Current unit enrolments/results completed as part of the course or specialisation;
    ii. All units the student will need to complete in full as part of the replacement VET Course or specialisation;
    iii. All units that will be eligible for credit transfer within the replacement course or specialisation;
    iv. All units that may be eligible for recognition of prior learning within the replacement course or specialisation, provided stated gap training is completed; and
    v. The indicative cost to the student to transition to the replacement course or specialisation.

(33) Transition and/or Teach-out periods will align with those stated in the Course Cessation Plan.

Part H - Unit Transition Plan

(34) The Unit Transition Plan is developed by Administration and Governance in conjunction with the TAFE Manager.

(35) This Plan is provided to the relevant Executive Director for approval.

(36) Unit Transition Plans can be submitted at any time of the year.

(37) Transition and Teach-out periods for accredited units will align with those stipulated in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth), Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products or advice received by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) at time of unit replacement.

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Part I - Status Change

(38) Once a course or specialisation has been approved for cessation by the relevant Executive Director the course or specialisation's status can be changed in CAMS after endorsement by the Chief TAFE Officer or delegate to:

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

(39) Courses or specialisations approved for cessation as a result of a TAFE Strategic Management decision will have their status changed immediately following approval of the VET Cessation Plan.

(40) Courses or specialisations approved for cessation as a result of a change made to the National Register of VET will have their status changed as per the date provided on the VET Cessation Plan, which will align with the requirements stipulated in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Standard 1, Clause 1.26-1.27 – Managing transition from superseded training products.

(41) Courses approved for cessation as a result of a change made on the State Register will have their status changed as per the date provided on the VET Cessation Plan which will align with the transition and teach-out directive received from the VRQA.

(42) Once a unit has been approved for cessation by the relevant Executive Director the VET Unit is tagged as superseded and provided a transition end date.

(43) Once the unit has passed its transition end date, it is removed from the course or specialisation structure.

Part J - Communications with Students

(44) Students will receive two formal letters of communication from the TAFE upon a course, specialisation or unit being approved by the Chief TAFE Officer (or delegate) for cessation:

Communication 1 - Notification of cessation

(45) Students will be advised of the TAFE's intention to cease the VET Course, specialisation or unit within two (2) weeks after the approval by the Executive Director/Director of the VET Cessation Plan.

(46) Administration and Governance will provide the letter to be issued to the TAFE Manager, who will ensure the letter is provided to enrolled students.

(47) Each student will be advised the following:

a. whether the change has occurred on the National VET Register or been initiated by the TAFE;
b. the length of time that they have to complete the course or specialisation;
c. confirmation of whether their Individual Training Plan aligns with the specified length of time;
d. where the length of time is not sufficient to complete the course, specialisation or unit, details of next steps and timelines of future communication;
e. where they can seek further advice and information about their course status.

Communication 2 - Notification of teach-out/transition

(48) Once the Course Comparative Analysis (if required) and Individual Transition/Teach-out Plans have been completed, each student will be advised of their individual plan including:

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a. teach-out timeframes;
b. any transition arrangements that will be applied;
c. where they can seek further advice and information about their course status.

(49) Employers will be informed in writing of teach-out and transition arrangements.

(50) Schools of VETDSS students will be informed in writing of teach-out and transition arrangements by the Manager of VETDSS programs.

(51) TAFE Manager will provide the letter to enrolled student advising them of their individual teach-out/transition plan.

(52) Where a course, specialisation or unit has been replaced with another, details of transition arrangements to the replacement course, specialisation or unit can only be released once the replacement course, specialisation or unit has been added to the TAFE's Scope of Registration maintained by ASQA or the VRQA.

(53) Students will be informed at the application stage if their course, specialisation or unit is approved for cessation.

(54) Where a course or specialisation ceases to accept enrolments, the TAFE will advise any students who have been offered a place that the course or specialisation will no longer be on offer and offer the replacement course (where applicable) as an alternative option.

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

Part K - Monitoring Course Transition

(56) The TAFE Course Advisory Committee will monitor the progress of all transitioning courses, specialisations and units via the maintenance of a risk register, which is reviewed at each sitting of the Committee.

(57) Details of student numbers and outstanding results will be gathered by Administration and Governance to be tabled for discussion at the TAFE Course Advisory Committee.

(58) TAFE Manager to ensure that students' Training Plans are amended to reflect changes in enrolment arising from cessation, transition and teach-out.

Part L - Devactivation of Courses and Specialisations

(59) Administration and Governance review all teach-out courses and specialisations.

(60) If the course or specialisation has no enrolments and there are no pending international students including those on a packaged or pathway arrangement, the course or specialisation is deactivated in CAMS.

Part M - Deactivation of Units

(61) Administration and Governance review all active and non-active units.

(62) Once a state/nationally accredited unit has been approved for cessation within a course or specialisation by the relevant Executive Director, Administration and Governance will:

a. Maintain the unit as active if it is linked to another course or specialisation;
b. Change the units' status to inactive in CAMS if it is no longer linked to another course or specialisation, however is still current on the National Register of VET;

c. Deactivate the unit if it is not linked to another course or specialisation and is not current on the National Register of VET.

(63) Once a local unit has been approved for cessation within a course or specialisation by the relevant Executive Director, Administration and Governance will deactivate the unit in CAMS.

Part N - Approval of Teach-out/Deactivation

(64) The VET Course Advisory Committee meets and reviews items presented and makes recommendations in the minutes.

(65) If relevant, Senior Coordinator, Governance prepares the ASQA Scope of Registration submission, which is approved by the Chief TAFE Officer.

(66) Chief TAFE Officer approves course, specialisation and/or unit to be placed into teach-out or deactivated and noted at the University Courses Committee.

(67) Administration and Governance prepares the report and supporting evidence to the University Courses Committee.

(68) Administration and Governance deactivates courses, specialisations and/or units as necessary.

(69) Administration and Governance prepares the VET Declaration for approval.

(70) VET Declaration is checked by the Senior Coordinator, Governance to ensure the course, specialisation and/or unit aligns with the Scope of Registration.

(71) VET Declaration is endorsed for approval by the Director, Academic Quality and Standards and Chief TAFE Officer.

(72) Senior Coordinator, Governance forwards approved VET Declaration to Academic Quality and Standards (AQS) requesting course and/or specialisation be final versioned in CAMS (for those items moving to teach-out).

(73) AQS obtains Chief TAFE Officer or delegate approval and moves course and/or specialisation to final version in CAMS (for those items moving to teach-out).

(74) Course, specialisation and/or unit is noted at the University Courses Committee.

(75) Administration and Governance sends communication to relevant internal stakeholders (Business Support and Reporting, Marketing, Future Students, Data Management Services, VU Global, Pathways) on change of course status.

Section 5 - TEQSA/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(76) Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and FPP Requirements 2025: Standard 14 Transition of training products.

(77) 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 VUP entering provider default when ceasing to offer VET courses of study.

Section 6 - Definitions

(78) ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority)

(79) Award Course

(80) Course Cessation

(81) Course Suspension

(82) Non-Award Course

(83) Scope of Registration

(84) Specialisation (VET)

(85) Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Award Course" - A structured combination of approved units and/or supervised research into which students are admitted and are issued with an Award at the completion of their studies.

"Non-Award Course" - A course of study that does not lead to the issuance of an Award of the University.

"ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority)" - The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector. ASQA regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.

"Scope of Registration" - The training products for which a Registered Training Provider (RTO) is registered to issue AQF certification documentation. It allows the RTO to provide either training and/or assessment resulting in the issuance of AQF certification documentation.

"Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)" - The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is the State statutory authority responsible for ensuring that employers of apprentices and trainees and providers of education and training (including course and qualification owners) meet quality standards, and that information is readily available to support informed choice in education and training.

"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.

"Specialisation (VET)" - A VE specialisation is an approved award title on the national register, where a combination of electives defines the award title in selected courses.

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