

Course Discontinuance Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a framework for the governance, teach out and transition arrangements where the decision to suspend or discontinue a course of study or components of a course at Whitecliffe Institute of Creative Arts and Technology (Whitecliffe). The objective of this policy is also to ensure transparency and diligence during the transition period.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all courses of study at Whitecliffe.

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Whitecliffe policies:

- Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Policy
- Monitoring Academic Progression Policy and Procedure
- Tuition Fee Refund Policies
- Statement of Tuition Assurance Exemption

All documents referenced in this policy can be accessed via the [Forms & Policies](#) section at the bottom of the homepage of the Whitecliffe website.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- Course Transition Plan and Procedure
- Course Transition Arrangements [for each course of study at Whitecliffe]

Related Legislation

- The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)

Definitions

For the purpose of this, Policy the following definitions apply:

Whitecliffe	means Whitecliffe Institute of Creative Arts and Technology Pty Limited, including staff, affiliates, and contractors
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Course Suspension	means the cessation of the offering of a course to new students for a specified period of time while its accreditation status is evaluated by Whitecliffe. Individual Course Components within a course can also be subject to suspension
Course Discontinuance	means the formal termination of a course of study by the Governing Board for educational, strategic, resourcing or budgetary reasons. Individual Course Components can also be subject to discontinuation within an accredited course

Policy

The following principles apply:

1. To promote and maintain high quality academic programs
 - a. the Whitecliffe may over time develop new courses of study and/or discontinue existing courses
 - b. the Academic Board may recommend to the Governing Board a course of study be discontinued for educational, strategic, resourcing, or budgetary reasons, or a combination of these factors
2. Before discontinuing a course of study, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure students are not disadvantaged in their studies and are able to complete the requirements of their award at Whitecliffe:
 - a. A proposal to discontinue a course may be made by the Executive Dean in consultation with the Chief Academic Officer, Academic Systems and Operations Lead, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other key stakeholders such as Course Advisory Committees and Student Focus Groups
 - b. The proposal will be forwarded to the Academic Board for their consideration and endorsement. The Academic Board will either endorse or reject the proposal or may request further information from the Executive Dean
 - c. where the Academic Board endorses the proposal, the Academic Board Chair will submit the recommendation to the Governing Board within a maximum period of thirty days from the date the proposal was made
3. On approval by the Governing Board:
 - a. There will be no new intake of students into that course of study
 - b. The course will no longer be advertised or marketed as accepting applications from potential students
 - c. The course, after the completion of the transition plan, will be removed from the list of registered courses
4. Where it is agreed that a course of study will be discontinued there will be a transition period:
 - a. During this period, all teaching and learning practices and academic support activities will continue as usual

- b. New students will not be enrolled in the discontinued course during the transition period
- c. Students who have deferred or taken a leave of absence may be allowed to re-enrol so they can complete the course of study during the determined transition period
- d. Any termination of staff will be in accordance with the employment contract and relevant legislation, including sessional academic teaching staff. Reasonable efforts will be made to find another suitable position for the staff member within other Whitecliffe courses.

Procedure

Recommending Course Suspension or Discontinuation

A proposal to suspend or discontinue a course may be made by the Executive Dean in consultation with the Chief Academic Officer, Academic Systems and Operations Lead, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other key stakeholders such as Course Advisory Committees and Student Focus Groups.

The proposal will be forwarded to the Academic Board for their consideration, oversight, and endorsement.

Proposal for Course Suspension or Discontinuation

A proposal will provide a rationale to suspend or discontinue a course – demand, capacity, performance, and financial viability – and sufficient data to support the recommendation which may include, but not be limited to:

- Student Enrolment Data (Head Count) in the course, and may include those on a leave of absence, showing their commencement date, study load and anticipated maximum completion date in accordance with the relevant college policies that guide enrolment and academic progression
- Student Enrolment Data (EFTSL) in the course and may include those who have deferred their commencement or are on a leave of absence, showing their financial obligations
- A list of acceptances for future intakes – domestic and international students who are yet to commence – including information related to their commencement date and mapping their anticipated completion date
- New Student Enrolment Data (Head Count) in the course, including those offered a place in the course
- Internal & External Evaluation Feedback including copies of student evaluation surveys, formal scheduled course review, Course Advisory Committees and other external consultation, and regulatory bodies etc
- Student Performance Data; and
- Student Satisfaction Data
- Resources Overview & Specification of current and future resources required to sustain the course of study including teaching and learning resources, staff resources, facilities, equipment, and

enrolments

- Impact on current students if the course is discontinued including the impact on any associated courses, units of study or academic support programs, and the availability in other courses of study
- Implications for associated staff as a result of the course being discontinued, including academic teaching staff and operational staff, showing their engagement type, discipline area, salary costs etc.
- Proposed Transition Plan, including a timeline of activities and milestone dates, and the proposed suite of communications to students, staff, industry, and regulatory bodies etc.
- Any other risks/benefits of the suspension or discontinuation of the course

Proposed Transition Plan and Procedure & Timeline

The timeframe for suspension of and/or discontinuing a course of study will be based on the time required for all enrolled students to complete their course of study.

In preparing the *Course Transition Plan and Procedure* as part of the Proposal for Course Discontinuation, the Executive Dean will consult with all interested parties and arrange for the development of a timeline of associated activities including the proposed date after which no new enrolments will be accepted, and the date at which the course of study will be permanently removed from the suite of offerings under the registration of Whitecliffe.

Proposed Transition and Communications Plan

Once a decision to suspend or discontinue has been made, affected staff and students will be notified through a program of written communications through the Executive Dean and Office of the Registrar.

In preparing the *Course Transition Plan and Procedure* as part of the Proposal for Course Discontinuation, the Executive Dean will consult with the Chief Academic Officer, Academic Systems and Operations Lead and Office of the Registrar and draft a suite of communications.

In notifying enrolled students of the decision to suspend or discontinue their course of study, their written communication will include an Individual Course Mapping Plan providing the following information, the:

1. Remaining units to complete their course requirements
2. Date by which the remaining units must be completed to receive their award from Whitecliffe
3. Length of time over which the course will be phased out
4. Availability of other suitable courses at Whitecliffe to which the student may wish to transfer

Any students who elect to transfer to an equivalent course will be issued with new Letters of Offer formally offering the student a place in the new course and confirming the course of enrolment, duration, and qualification; campus location; course-related fees and identify policies associated with the protection of

their rights as a consumer. Students must be provided sufficient information to allow them to make an informed decision and ensure their rights are protected.

Where the program has a CRICOS code, and the transition plan involves teaching out currently enrolled students, the CRICOS code is suspended for the remainder of the teach-out period. Any replacement program must be CRICOS registered prior to international students being offered a place.

Courses in teach-out will continue to meet all associated regulatory requirements and standards. The relevant regulators will be advised of the teach-out plan for the discontinued course to ensure the National Register and CRICOS Registers are updated promptly to ensure that in marketing courses, prospective students have accurate information.

In the unlikely event that Whitecliffe is unable to teach out a discontinued program, the Whitecliffe will follow the procedure as outlined in the Tuition Refund Policies.

The communications plan will also include draft notifications to the relevant regulatory bodies.

TEQSA must be notified no later than 14 days after any decision to suspend or discontinue a course of study is made.

Course Default Implications

Education provider default would occur should Whitecliffe be unable to:

- Deliver the course on the agreed starting day, or
- Continue to deliver the course after the agreed starting day and before the ending day

Should this occur Whitecliffe will:

- Offer a student a place in an alternative course that is acceptable to a student at no additional expense, or
- Pay a student a refund of any unspent pre-paid tuition fees they have paid to Whitecliffe

In the unlikely event that Whitecliffe is unable to deliver a course, Whitecliffe will follow all relevant procedures as outlined in the Tuition Refund policies.

The communications plan will also include draft notifications to the relevant regulatory bodies.

In the event a course does not start on the due date, TEQSA must be notified within 3 business days.

Implications for International Students

The student may also be offered enrolment in an alternative CRICOS registered course by Whitecliffe at no extra cost. The student has the right to choose whether they prefer a refund of the unused portion of

prepaid tuition fees, or to accept a place in another course. If the student chooses placement in an alternative course with Whitecliffe, the student will be issued with a new International Student Letter of Offer and a new Confirmation of Enrolment.

For more information on the process for tuition fee refunds and reporting provider default, refer to the *Tuition Refund Policy for International Students*.

Transition and Communications Plan Action List

Action List	Responsibility
Liaise with TEQSA case manager about the decision to discontinue course.	Chief Academic Officer
Determine any legal issues and contractual obligations that are relevant.	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Communicate the decision to discontinue (teach out / transition) to all staff and students.	Executive Dean
Advise all stakeholders that the course is to be discontinued and the date of the final intake at the original location.	Executive Dean
Nominate a contact person or persons to deal with student enquiries about the process.	Executive Dean
Develop a communication plan to advise current students and applicants with offers for subsequent intakes that the course will be discontinued and include information about the new location and provide details of a contact person.	Executive Dean/ Chief Academic Officer/ Academic Compliance Lead/ Registrar
Organise meetings with all affected students and staff to explain processes and address any concerns.	Executive Dean/Chief Academic Officer
Prepare subject timetables and individual course maps for students.	Registrar
Update website with information about the discontinuation.	Admissions and Marketing

Approval

The Academic Board will either endorse or reject the proposal. Where the Academic Board requests further information before making a decision, the Executive Dean will re-present the proposal having considered the feedback and requests of the Academic Board.

Where the Academic Board endorses the proposal, the Academic Board Chair will submit the recommendation to the Governing Board within a maximum period of thirty days from the date the proposal was made.

Where the Governing Board endorses a recommendation from the Academic Board to discontinue a course of study, approval is given to commence the implementation of the proposed Course Transition Plan and Communications Plan.

Transition Period

The Executive Dean, in conjunction with the Chief Academic Officer, Academic Systems and Operations Lead and Office of the Registrar (Working Party), is responsible for the implementation of the *Course Transition Plan and Procedure* and the provision of progress reports to the Academic and Governing Boards throughout the course discontinuance process.

Change and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Authored by	Approved by	Description
1.1	22 June 2021	QA Manager	Academic Board	Policy prior to change of Ownership
1.2	4 July 2022	Collaborative	Corporate Board	Policy amended to include course suspension and other updates as per DVE review
1.3	21 Aug 2024	Director of Operations and Compliance	Corporate Board	Policy amended to include provider default update as per Notice of Decision from TEQSA related to Compliance Assessment on course discontinuance
1.4	01 July 2025	Academic Compliance Lead	Governing Board	Updated Persons Responsible based on new positions/titles within the organisation.

Policy Information

Author:	Academic Compliance Lead
Policy owner:	Chief Academic Officer
Approved by:	Governing Board
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