

Closure, Suspension or Changing of HE Provision Policy 2022-2027

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Approved by:	College Leadership Team
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Closure, Suspension or Changing of HE Provision

1. Introduction

This policy summarises the procedures within Capital City College Group (CCCG) for the closing, suspending, removal or changing of any Higher Education (HE) programme of study including short courses and/or micro-qualifications at level 4 or above.

Reference points for this policy include the CCCG HE Admission Policy, CCCG HE Contract, CCCG Fees Policy, the Student Protection Plan, Competition and Market Authority (CMA) guidance for HE and the Higher education course changes and closure: statement of good practice (Nov 2015).

CCCG undertakes full compliance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015 to ensure that consideration and protection of the student interest remain central to the process.

2. Programme Closures and Suspensions

In exceptional circumstances CCCG may wish to suspend for a fixed period of time, remove or close a programme of study. The reasons for programme closures are varied and may include (but are not limited to) low recruitment, changes in strategic priorities or staffing alterations.

Decisions to close or suspend programmes would be taken by Heads of School, Assistant Principals and approved by the relevant Group Principal and reported at the HE Strategy Board (HESB). Such decisions would always be taken as a last resort and where possible, made in a timely manner.

Evidence required would include:

- Market rationale
- Strategic and financial implications
- The impact of relationships with partner institutions and/or PSRBs
- The impact on current and prospective students, including those students who may need to repeat modules or who have interrupted studies
- The impact on any employer relationships
- Arrangements for any replacement programme
- Arrangements for ongoing delivery and support during the teach-out period (*where applicable*)

Once the decision to close or suspend the programme is confirmed, the lead of the programme must inform relevant departments such as Registry, Admissions, Finance, Marketing and MIS.

2.1. Closure of programmes approved by Awarding Bodies such as Pearson Higher Nationals

CCCG has responsibility for ensuring that students remaining on the provision have the opportunity to complete their studies once they have started, and that academic standards for these students are maintained. CCCG is committed to 'teaching out' those courses whenever possible so that students can complete the programme and offers to new entrants will cease to be made.

Communications with students (CCCG digital channels, formal letters and face-to-face meetings) will be conducted at the earliest possible date for full consideration of the relevant options:
e.g. complete the programme of study, transfer to another programme within CCCG or apply for a transfer - with a Pearson unit certificate of achievement -- to another institution.

2.2. Closure of University validated Programmes

In the case of university partnerships, the formal processes and documentation of the relevant institution would be followed for approval through the appropriate deliberative structures. Both institutions will work together to ensure minimal interruption to students' studies, the maintenance of academic standards and that students are fully consulted and informed.

The Office for Students and the Office (OfS) of Independent Adjudicators Higher Education (OIAHE) should be informed of HE programme closures.

3. Discontinuation of Programmes - Applications

As soon as the decision has been approved for a programme to be discontinued, applicants holding offers must be informed as soon as practically possible by Registry/Admissions Team/Directorate Administrator. In addition, where possible and appropriate, they will be offered a place on an alternative programme within CCCG or supported by the Admissions and IAG teams.

4. Changing of Programme Content – Before and After Entry

In making any changes to programmes of study, consideration must be given to the student contract, CMA guidance and CCCG Student Protection Plan.

4.1. Applicants

In exceptional circumstances changes may be required between the publicly available materials and enrolment. These changes must be communicated to applicants as soon as possible by Registry/Admissions Team/ Directorate Administrator, advising them of their right to apply for entry to a suitably alternative programme at CCCG or to withdraw their application and seek entry to another institution.

4.2. Current Students

It is normal academic practice to make minor modifications and amendments to programmes during the enrolment term in line with CCCG HE quality assurance processes. These changes are usually made in response to student feedback, external examination, to enhance the learning opportunities and to meet the requirements of an external body.

The Head of School and relevant programme lead will inform every registered student of any editorial, minor or major changes or variations no later than six weeks of the term preceding the term in which the change or variation shall take place. In the case of changes due to circumstances beyond CCC's control (e.g. illness, sudden departure or death of a key staff), registered students will be consulted or informed as soon as is practically possible.

In the event of major changes to the programme, confirmation of consent of every student must be sought.

4.3. Decisions to amend published programme material would be taken by Heads of School with support from their Assistant Principal and endorsed through the HE Committee meetings.

4.4. All approved closures/cancellations or programme changes will be communicated directly to Marketing for publicity updating and notification to UCAS.

5. Refunds and Compensation

The CCCG Fees Policy sets out the circumstances in which CCCG will refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and provide compensation if applicable in accordance with Office for Students (OfS) and Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) guidance.