

# Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedure

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## 1 Purpose and scope

This policy provides a framework for courses that are proposed to be discontinued, to ensure that appropriate teach-out plans are in place and that students are not unduly disadvantaged.

This policy applies to all members of AIE Institute's higher education community.

## 2 Objectives

AIE Institute recognises that from time to time courses may become unviable or other external factors such as government or industry decisions may cause AIE Institute to decide to no longer offer the course.

AIE Institute ensures that:

- a. Decisions on course or unit discontinuation consider all factors, including the impact on students
- b. Students are notified promptly of decisions to discontinue courses or units
- c. Study options are provided to enable students to complete their course.

## 3 Implementation

All levels of governance ensure that viability modelling has occurred, and all background information obtained to determine whether a course or unit should be discontinued has been considered. This information should be included in a Course Discontinuation Proposal. The Academic Director is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## 4 Procedure

### 4.1 Course discontinuation proposal

The Academic Director and CEO consider all information before arriving at a recommendation to discontinue a course or unit. External factors should be considered, such as government or industry influences. Consideration should also be given to whether a course can be revised rather than discontinued. Refer to *Course Review Policy and Procedure* for details of course review processes.

A recommendation should be made to either discontinue the course or review and substantially amend the course. Options for students should be considered at this time and should include searching for alternative providers with comparable courses. Discussions should be held with potential alternative providers to determine their capacity to enroll students, if required.

Course review proposals should follow the procedures in *Course Review Policy and Procedure*, which includes a section on 'Impact from discontinuance'.

Course Discontinuation Proposals should include the following information:

- a. An overview of the reason for the proposal to discontinue the course or unit
- b. Government or industry factors
- c. Consequences and impact on other courses or units
- d. The consequences and impact on stakeholders such as students, staff and potential employers
- e. Alternative courses or providers, including any formal tuition assurance arrangements
- f. Consequences and impact on the Teaching and Learning Plan and the Strategic Plan
- g. Financial modelling and impact on financial viability and sustainability
- h. Outcomes of consultation
- i. Recommendation options
- j. A Teach-out Plan, which includes:
  - I. Numbers of students affected and the duration of the proposed teach-out period
  - II. Strategies to ensure that the academic quality of the course is maintained
  - III. Details of scheduling of units, and if any substitution of units are necessary
  - IV. Details of how students at risk, or those making unsatisfactory progress, are accommodated
  - V. Student communication strategy
  - VI. Plans for international students, where relevant, to ensure compliance with the *ESOS Act*.

#### 4.2 Approval process and options

If the recommendation is to discontinue the course, a Course Discontinuation Proposal should be prepared and submitted first to the Teaching and Learning Committee and then sent through the relevant governance structures for approval.

The Academic Board considers the Course Discontinuation Proposal and the Teach-out Plan and makes a decision to either endorse the proposal; endorse the proposal with amendments; or reject the proposal.

Options and procedures to be considered may include:

- a. Preparing individual Course Completion Plans for current students to complete the course within the current accreditation period
- b. Procedures for monitoring student progress
- c. Cessation of admissions into the course and cessation of deferment approvals for the course
- d. Cessation of marketing of the course and amendments made to the website
- e. Notifying education agents
- f. Offering students another course at AIE Institute
- g. Referring students to another higher education provider or university to complete a comparable qualification
- h. Enacting the relevant tuition assurance scheme
- i. Liaising with, and notifying the relevant regulatory authority, such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and the Department of Education
- j. Applying to TEQSA for teach-out accreditation, if relevant.

If the Academic Board decides to endorse the proposal, then the Academic Board's recommendation is forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval.

It should be noted that *unit* discontinuation only requires approval by the Academic Board. Course

discontinuation decisions are referred to Board of Directors. Refer to the 'Impact from discontinuance' section in *Course Review Policy and Procedure* for further details. I am not sure this is appropriate. I think it makes sense for the AB to endorse the proposal for approval by the BoD. The policy goes on to refer to approval by the BoD.

#### 4.2.1 Implementation responsibilities

The Academic Director and relevant Course Coordinator are responsible for implementing the individual Course Completion Plans in accordance with the approved Teach-out Plan. The Academic Director is responsible for notifying relevant staff.

The Teaching and Learning Committee are responsible for monitoring student progress and the overall Teach-out Plan, and reporting outcomes to the Academic Board each semester.

#### 4.3 Student notifications and process

Once a decision has been made and approved by the Board of Directors, students should be notified as soon as possible about the course discontinuation, preferably with at least one semester's notice before the teach-out plan commences. The notification should include:

- a. Final course completion dates and teach out period
- b. Transition arrangements or amendments to students' study schedules
- c. Study options available to students
- d. Student support options and advice.

Students are invited to an information session and then individual meetings arranged, where relevant, to assist students with options and amended study plans. Students are required to respond to the options in writing and agree upon an individual plan where relevant.

#### 4.4 Complaints and appeals

If a student is not satisfied with a decision or the handling of the process in this policy, they may seek an appeal as outlined in the Student Grievance Policy.

## 5 Definitions

**Admission** is the process for admitting an applicant into a course at the AIE Institute, following a successful application and acceptance of the offer of a place in the course.

**Course** is a single course leading to an Australian higher education award.

**International student** means a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations.

**Overseas student:** see international student.

**Teach-Out Period** is the period during which currently enrolled students may be allowed to complete all course requirements including assessment and qualification issuance in a discontinued course.

**Unit** is a discrete unit of study, where a combination of units contribute to a course of study.

## 6 Related documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- a. Assessment, Moderation and Progress Policy and Procedure
- b. Course Review Policy and Procedure
- c. Credit and RPL Policy and Procedure
- d. Student Grievance Policy and Procedure
- e. Student Support Policy and Procedure
- f. Tuition Assurance Arrangement Templates

Other documents related to this policy:

- g. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)
- h. Material Change Notification Policy (TEQSA).

## **7 Review**

Every 3 years.

## **8 Accountabilities**

The Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing and approval of this policy, with input from the Academic Board.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and the Institute's higher education community via the website and other publications.