



MORLEY COLLEGE LONDON

Higher Education Course Suspension and Closure Policy

POLICY OWNER:
FINAL APPROVAL BY:

Chair of HE Subcommittee
Policy Committee

Policy Category:

Student

Approved by Policy Committee:

17 June 2025

Approved by Governing Body:

N/A

Review Date:

30 June 2029

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope of Policy:

Morley College London is committed to providing a range of high quality courses serving the needs both of its local community and of a wide range of communities of practice. A decision to suspend or close any course is not taken lightly, and will only be taken when all reasonable efforts have been made to avoid such an outcome.

The College's Higher Education Course Suspension and Closure Policy has been informed by Office for Students (OfS) guidance and with the QAA Advice and Guidance on Course Development and Design published in November 2018.

2. Equality and Diversity Analysis Screening:

In accordance with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy, the development of this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

An impact analysis was not required for this policy, owing to its applicability to all students.

3. Applicability:

This policy applies to students who have applied to study or are studying on a Higher Education course at the College. It refers to Higher Education courses that have been approved for delivery and are being marketed by the College.

4. Definitions:

Higher Education (HE): courses in this context are accredited courses which are offered at level 4, 5 6 or 7 at Morley College London. They are prescribed courses, meaning they are eligible for funding through Student Finance England.

Awarding organisation or validating partner: these are the institutions that award the final qualification that the College delivers.

Course Suspension: this means that admissions will be suspended for a set period.

Course Closure: This means that a course will be withdrawn and closed indefinitely to applications or enrolments

5. Statutory and regulatory requirements:

This policy is a requirement of the College's Office of Students registration and sits alongside the published Student Protection Plan.

6. Policy Objectives:

The Policy aims to set out examples of possible reasons for course suspensions and closures including how in practice decisions should be made around these, including setting out the communication plan for all interested parties. Maintaining a good student experience and level of customer service is at the heart of the policy.

7. Policy statement:

Courses may be suspended or closed for educational, practical or business reasons, e.g. where student numbers are expected to be so low that the student experience will be harmed, where the College is unable to resource a course or where a course will not be economically viable.

Where the College decides to suspend or close a course, implications of the closure will have been carefully considered from a number of perspectives. Factors considered include:

- The strategic consequences of any suspension or closure, including potential or actual impact on other courses;
- The impact of any suspension or closure on students and staff;
- How the quality of the student experience will be maintained until the completion of the suspension or closure, including a strategy for ongoing delivery and support during the phasing-out period;
- The process of consultation with, or notification of, students where the delivery of the course will materially change, close or be closed;
- Progression of students who may need to repeat units.

8. Implementation of Policy:

8.1 The College is responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures and measures are in place where a course has to be suspended or closed, and it is the duty of the College to ensure that, where a decision to suspend or close a course has been made, it takes all reasonable measures to notify and protect the interests of affected students and other parties. All decisions to suspend or close courses should be student-focused, transparent and time sensitive

8.2 Course suspension or closure may be triggered by the following situations (this list is not exhaustive):

- Minimum enrolment numbers are not met by a specified start date (including subsequent stages of study in an extended course);
- Changes by the awarding organisation or validating partner to the course or withdrawal by the awarding organisation or validating partner;
- Specialist resources no longer being available;
- Circumstances outside the reasonable control of the College, such as a key member of staff leaving the College or being unable to teach;
- Unexpected lack of funding; industrial action; prolonged severe weather; loss or damage to facilities through fire, flood or other unforeseen damage; civil disorder; political unrest; government restriction, a public health crisis or serious concern about the transmission of serious illness making a course unsafe to deliver.

8.3 Where it is clear the best efforts of the College are unlikely to recruit critical numbers, all students enrolled or yet to enroll on the course will be notified of suspension or closure not less than four weeks before scheduled commencement (subject to circumstances beyond the College's control).

8.4 The College shall provide help and advice to those enrolled on the suspended or closed course to find an alternative course within the College, whether they are newly enrolled or existing students. If a course is suspended, the College will advise students when it will be rescheduled. Equally, if the College decides that a course is closed, students will

be supported to find an alternative course within the College if possible. Should an alternative course not be available in the College, help and advice will be provided to find an alternative course with another institution.

- 8.6 Where a student decides to withdraw from the course and not transfer to an alternative within the College, the College will initiate communication with the funding body for any refund of fees that may be payable.
- 8.7 A panel to consider the viability of all HE courses in the light of recruitment for the forthcoming academic year is built into the College's curriculum planning process at a time before the four week cut off for informing students. The panel will consider recruited students compared to the target required to successfully run the course.
 - 8.7.1 The panel must include the following persons:
 - Centre Principal for Centre where the course was scheduled
 - Vice Principal (HE)
 - The Head of Quality Enhancement (HE)
 - 8.7.2 The panel will consider:
 - The strategic reasons for suspension or closure, including any external factors;
 - Relevant developments within the subject/curriculum area;
 - A forecast of income and costs to assess the financial viability of the course;
 - Likely student numbers;
 - The potential impact on confirmed incoming students and/or students who have accepted an offer to commence studies and how any negative impact will be mitigated
 - 8.7.3 Following this panel a proposal to suspend or close a course should be discussed with the Head of School at the earliest opportunity. They should be included in the panel when available.
- 8.8 Once a decision has been made to suspend or close a course the appropriate Centre Principal (CP) should formulate measures to manage the closure or closure of the course. The CP should liaise with the Head of Quality Enhancement (HE) in facilitating this process.
- 8.9 The Head of Quality Enhancement (HE) must notify the awarding organisation or validating partner of the decision to suspend or close a course, including proposed dates and any other relevant considerations. They should also confirm the course suspension or closure with the relevant External Examiner.
- 8.10 The Admissions team should write to all affected students as soon as possible after the decision is made to inform them when a course is suspended or closed.
- 8.11 Once a decision to suspend or close has been taken, the Vice Principal (HE) should notify the following internal stakeholders of the suspension or closure, including proposed dates and any other relevant considerations:
 - MIS including exams
 - Finance
 - Marketing and Communications
 - Student Services
 - Library, IT and other support services
 - HR for possible staffing implications

9. Communication and training:

The policy will be made available via the College's website and internal policy library. Staff involved in HE delivery and the professional service departments should be aware of the policy and inducted on it when they start work at the College or on the Higher Education provision.

10. Monitoring and Reporting:

The Vice Principal (Higher Education) will be responsible for this policy.

This policy will be considered at least annually within the HE Sub-Committee when communicating the summer review date on course viability. It will be reviewed every four years, in alignment with the Access and Participation Plan.

A list of closed or suspended courses will be reported to the Academic Board and the Governing Body within the HE Annual Quality Review.

11. Related References, Policies, Procedures, Forms and other Appendices:

- [HE Complaints Policy](#)
- [Fees and Refunds Policy](#)
- [HE Admissions Policy](#)
- [Student Protection Plan \(HE\)](#)
- [Access and Participation Plan](#)