

APPENDIX 1: COURSE CLOSURE AND SUSPENSION

*From the Handbook of Quality Assurance and Enhancement*¹

Occasionally a course may need to be closed or suspended. There are a variety of circumstances that may lead to a member of the Executive Management Group proposing the suspension or closure of a course of study, including (by way of example):

- Dean of School as a result of consistently low student recruitment;
- Head of Finance where programmes or courses demonstrate continued evidence of ongoing financial deficit;
- Academic Registrar as a result of serious QA concerns.

In any case where there are serious concerns about a course, this should first be discussed thoroughly with the relevant academic and administrative offices, ensuring the involvement of the Dean of School or other senior officer (as appropriate).

Where these discussions result in a proposal for the closure of a course, this proposal must (a) be authored by a member of the Executive Management Group and (b) submitted to EMG, via its secretary.

The following process will then be triggered:

- i. EMG receives and considers the proposal;
- ii. if EMG supports the proposal, it will then authorise consultation with Academic Board for a period of one month² to consider the academic consequences and ratify the decision or otherwise;
- iii. where EMG supports a proposal for course closure, simultaneous to its referral to Academic Board the relevant Dean (supported by the Head of HR) will meet any relevant staff to:
 - a. inform them of the proposal and explain that the matter is therefore being passed to Academic Board for further consultation and discussion;
 - b. invite them to make a response to the consultation document which will be considered by Academic Board and EMG before any final decision is taken; and
 - c. discuss with them any possible rebalancing of their duties should the final decision be made to close the course.

At the end of the consultation with Academic Board:

- i. the decision is made not to close the course and the matter is either referred back to EMG and/or the Governing Body or the proposal is abandoned;
- or
- ii. the decision to close the course is ratified by the Academic Board and
 - a. formal QA procedures begin to enact the decision; and
 - b. either the Dean of School's Office rebalances the staff members' duties as agreed during the consultation or formal HR procedures begin to reduce the FTE or dissolve the post.

¹ This has been updated to reflect the 2021/22 version of the Handbook

² Where the Head of HR has confirmed that there are no HR consultation issues, the consultation period may be reduced.

Suspension due to student recruitment

Where the recruitment for the forthcoming academic session has been formally agreed as unsuccessful, then the intake for that year may be suspended.

In such cases applicants who had accepted should be automatically offered a place for the following cohort (which should include the continuation of any bursaries or scholarships which they have been awarded at that point) or the possibility to discuss transfer to another course within the School.

Any student that has paid tuition fees or deposits for a course that has its intake suspended will have those monies reimbursed if they do not wish to take deferred entry or transfer to another course at the School.

Following discussion EMG may approve the suspension of a course on recruitment grounds for one recruitment cycle. This should be notified to Academic Board.

It is expected that permanent staff would be retained when an intake is suspended in order to not jeopardize the future sustainability of the course, however staff duties may be reallocated accordingly for that year, although all student recruitment operations would expect to be continued in full.

If after delaying the intake of the course by one year the course is still unable to recruit sufficiently then EMG would normally propose the closure of the course to Academic Board as above.

APPENDIX 2: TEACH OUT

If the School concludes there is no other option than to close a programme or course, all reasonable efforts will be made to 'Teach Out' a programme. As laid out in Appendix 1, the decision to close a course will normally be made following a 1-year suspension of recruitment and a failure to recruit a full intake for the subsequent academic year. Therefore, where a programme is closed, this will mean that current students will be in their second or third years (BA, MA part-time or MFA degrees). It is important to be aware that whilst the School will make every effort to ensure any negative impact of this closure on your studies is mitigated, there is an inherent difference

To the best of our ability, in the event of a programme closure the School will:

- Seek to ensure all students currently enrolled or registered are able to complete their studies (either at Central or elsewhere, see APPENDIX 3 for further details)
- Maintain or increase the student-staff tutor ratio to support your learning
- Maintain access to the resources and services in support of your studies.

There are a number of factors the School will need to consider, including:

- Teach-out will need a suitable number of academic staff in order to successfully deliver a programme in alignment with the quality of experience students were promised during their application to the School. Whilst the School will make every effort to ensure this is the case, if academic staff seek alternative posts and suitable replacements cannot be recruited, then we will need to consider alternative options.
- Teach-out will also require a suitable number of students in order to provide a learning experience equitable to the intended aims and outcomes detailed as part of the offer made to students (for instance, within a programme specification). The exact number will differ between programmes and courses, and will be subject to the ongoing monitoring of the course team. Where student numbers fall below the minimum numbers required to offer a quality learning experience, we will need to consider alternative options.

APPENDIX 3: STUDENT TRANSFER

Where the School is required to close a programme or course, the following will be available for consideration.

For applicants with offers, we will discuss the possibility of enrolling onto another programme within the School. This will be in liaison with the relevant Course Leader and the Admissions Department.

For current students, may be able to facilitate a transfer. If a student decides they wish to transfer to another institution, the Academic Registrar's Office will provide an up-to-date transcript detailing the number and volume of academic credit the student has successfully achieved. Further, as required, the Course Leader (or another relevant member of academic staff) will provide an academic reference. There may also be an option to transfer onto another programme or course within Central, as described below:

Internal Course and Mode of Study Transfer³

Students may transfer between one course or mode of study and another only with approval of both Course Leaders and the Academic Registrar. Applicants for internal transfer should use the form available in the Student Handbook.

Internal Course Transfer may be dependent upon the student undertaking additional units and/or assessments. Where too many credits have been accrued to enable a transfer between courses or modes of study and maintain consistent study intensity without break, applications shall normally be rejected.

Tuition fees and the length of the course may change as a result of an internal course transfer.

The transfer shall normally occur at the start of a term or course year.

Accredited Prior Learning may need to be awarded where the transfer occurs part way through the course. The Course Leader and Academic Registrar shall determine if any of the units undertaken on the previous course may be included as credit towards the award and whether any units on the new course need not be undertaken as a result.

Students are permitted a maximum of two transfers between courses or modes of study for the entirety of their period of registration.

ACCREDITED PRIOR LEARNING (APL)

The School may, at its discretion, recognise for academic purposes prior certified or experiential learning. This recognition may give the prior learning a credit-value and permit it to be counted towards the total number of credits required for an award.

Students can apply for credit of accredited prior learning (APL) for one or several units.

The application process for accredited prior learning is published in the Admissions Handbook and is determined by the Academic Board of the School.

³ Taken from the [Academic Regulations](#), page 13 paragraphs 3.4-3.9.

The award of APL is not a student right, just as the offer of a place on a course of study even when an applicant is appropriately qualified is not a right. There is therefore no Appeal system.

The School can impose conditions when approving an application for admission with APL. These may include:

- a candidate could be required to take an alternative unit to the unit from which they are to be exempted (either as an assessment or on an attendance basis);
- the institution might require as a condition of entry that a successful candidate undertakes an additional programme of study or period of work experience (assessed or otherwise) outside of the School prior to their time on the course;
- subject to another course's agreement, a student might be required to undertake (assessed or otherwise) part of another comparable course where this would enable her/him to fill in any perceived 'gaps'.

The credits awarded shall be termed either Accredited Prior Certified Learning (APCL) or Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

The term accredited prior learning/APL without limitations shall refer to both APCL and APEL.

Programme Specifications will state if applications for APCL and/or APEL are considered.

APCL credits should be for previously assessed and certificated learning recognised for academic purposes from another Higher Education institution.

APEL credits should be for learning achieved outside education or training systems that is relevant to the registered course of study.

The award of APL credit can permit the student to begin part way through the course by ensuring that the period of study they have missed (e.g. by not starting in the first year) is accounted for in terms of credit.⁴

There are, however, a maximum number of credits that may be credited towards the award from study elsewhere:

- a) Certificate of Higher Education: 60 credits
- b) Diploma of Higher Education: 120 credits
- c) Honours degree: 240 credits (minimum of 120 credits at level 6 (H) must have been studied)
- d) Postgraduate Certificate: 20 credits
- e) Postgraduate Diploma: 60 credits.
- f) Master of Arts: 60 credits.
- g) Master of Fine Art: 120 credits, exceptionally (refer to 1.10 above).

Credit may be awarded either for a specific named unit or as "un-specified credit" which shall be a total value of credits at a specific level of study e.g. 120 credits at Level 4.

⁴ Otherwise students will reach the end of the course without accumulating sufficient credit to be entitled to their target award. For example, a student who transfers directly into the second year of an undergraduate degree course could, without APL credits be short of the 120 credits that would have been studied in the first year.

Students transferring onto a course of study would normally be awarded unspecified credit for the year(s) they have missed, though if appropriate they may be given credit for specific named units.

All credits awarded as accredited prior learning shall be recorded as a "Passed Unit".

APL credits may count towards the number of credits needed for the award. APCL credits may be used towards the classification of an award, but only where a mark has been agreed as part of the APCL application. With APCL credits, the method of determining the classification may be varied by the Chair of the Board of Examiners (on recommendation from the Academic Registrar's Office).

APEL credits shall not be included in the classification of award (i.e. first, lower second, merit, distinction etc).

APL credits from another institution may be used towards the degree if the credit has been awarded within the previous 5 years.

APL credits must be at the same or higher level than those being applied for exemption, i.e. a level 4 unit taken at another institution cannot count towards a level 5 unit at the School. However a level 5 unit could be used in lieu of credit at level 4 etc.

University Ordinances require that provisions for students to transfer with credit into University of London first degrees shall ensure that the minimum period of study in the School shall normally be not less than two years full-time (or the part-time equivalent); and that in no case shall the minimum period be less than one year full-time (or the part-time equivalent), that year being the final year of the degree course and such cases to be regarded as exceptional and subject to special consideration by the School.

Acceptability for credit transfer of work undertaken in other institutions within or outside the University of London does not confer right of entry to any course in the School. Decisions on admission, including decisions on crediting previous periods of study, remain at the discretion of the School only.

Accredited Prior Certified Learning (APCL)

APCL Credit may be awarded for previous learning on a course leading to an appropriate and nationally recognised qualification at a level commensurate with the stage of the course applied for providing:

- The course may have been completed successfully either partially or in its entirety.
- The content and learning outcomes of the earlier course should be shown to correspond clearly to the elements of the course applied for and for which academic credit is sought.
- The student will have an award certificate or (for a non-completed course) a Credit-Rating certificate or a Statement of Achievement (transcript) issued by the institution involved.
- The learning must have taken place in the last five years.

Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

Academic Credit may be awarded for relevant learning, knowledge and skills acquired through life, work, private study or non-certificated courses that equate - at the appropriate level - to the intended learning outcomes of the course elements for which credit is sought.

Applicants for APEL must normally be over 21 years of age.

Evidence for APEL might include:

- a portfolio of extant work
- references from previous employers
- further external evidences (e.g. press cuttings)
- specially submitted work (e.g. essays, artefacts).

Double counting and award revocation

Double counting occurs where credit that has contributed to an academic award (whether at Central or another higher education provider) at the same level is used for the purposes of APL. Double counting is not normally permitted.

Students who have accepted an exit award from Central and who subsequently re-enrol at the School with the intention of obtaining a higher award will have their exit award rescinded. For example, a student who has exited a BA programme with a Certificate of Higher Education after their first year will only be permitted to re-enrol in order to recommence their BA if they agree to have their Certificate of Higher Education rescinded.

The exit award will only be formally rescinded once the student has successfully completed the requirements of the higher qualification. If the student subsequently exits the programme without having obtained the higher qualification, the original exit award will stand.