

UNIVERSITY_{OF}
WINCHESTER

COURSE CHANGE POLICY

Document Title:	Course Change Policy
Responsible Role and Department:	Head of Quality, Registry and Academic Quality
Approving Body:	ULT
Date of Approval:	16 th September 2026
Date Effective From:	16 th September 2026
Review Date:	1 year Review (2027) then triennially (2030)
Applies to: <i>(Strikethrough text, only if appropriate)</i>	University of Winchester University of Winchester Services Limited <i>Note. This policy applies to all the organisations listed above, collectively known as the “University” or the “University of Winchester” for the purpose of this policy.</i>
Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only. Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision? <i>(Strikethrough text, as appropriate)</i>	Public Access Internal Access Only Applies to Collaborative Provision
Summary: This Policy sets out the University's approach to the approval, management, communication, and implementation of material course changes, closures and suspensions. It aims to ensure that decisions are made through appropriate governance arrangements, informed by an assessment of the potential impact on students and applicants, and guided by the principles of fairness, transparency, and student-centred decision-making. The Policy establishes requirements for impact assessment, consultation, communication, mitigation, and support arrangements, with the objective of minimising disruption, protecting students' interests, and enabling affected students to continue and complete their studies wherever possible. This policy is underpinned by our commitment to promoting a university wide approach to health, safety and wellbeing and is supported by the principles of the University Mental Health Charter. Care has been taken to ensure that the policy is written compassionately, with consideration of the potential impact on staff and students. These regulations make reference to other policies, procedures and regulations which can be found here: Policies and Regulations - University of Winchester	

Equality Impact Assessment	
Summary of process undertaken to determine equality impacts:	A review of all protected characteristics and the engagement requirements of the policy to establish any detrimental impact of policy, practice or procedure as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
University Committee (name/ date) where equality impacts discussed (may be Committee of approval, or another):	University Leadership Team
Identified equality impact(s) on colleagues and students (i.e. any specific impacts related to this policy that may cause disadvantage for people due to one or more particular protective characteristic)	
Protected Characteristic	Impact(s) identified and any action(s)/mitigation(s) to address these impact(s), as necessary.
Age	There are no discernible impacts relating to Age
Disability	Recognition of where reasonable adjustments may be warranted as defined in section 21 of the Equality Act 2010 are embedded throughout the policy.
Gender Identity	There are no discernible impacts relating to Gender Identity.
Marriage/Civil Partnership	There are no discernible impacts relating to Marriage or Civil Partnership status.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Recognition of where reasonable adjustments may be warranted as defined in section 21 of the Equality Act 2010 are embedded throughout the policy.
Race (incl. nationality)	There are no discernible impacts relating to Race and Nationality.
Religion and Belief	There are no discernible impacts relating to Religion and Belief
Sex	There are no discernible impacts relating to Sex
Sexual Orientation	There are no discernible impacts relating to Sexual Orientation

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 The University is committed to treating applicants holding an offer and students fairly and ensuring that any changes to, or closure of, a course are managed in a transparent, consistent, and student-focused manner.
- 1.2 The Policy establishes the University's approach to the consideration, approval, communication, and implementation of course changes and course closures. The Policy ensures that applicants and students are provided with clear and timely information, that the potential impact of proposed changes is properly considered before decisions are made, and that appropriate measures are taken to minimise disruption to students' studies.
- 1.3 The University aims to protect applicants holding an offer and students' interests by ensuring that course changes and closures are subject to appropriate governance, informed by assessment of their likely impact, and supported by effective communication and mitigation arrangements where required.
- 1.4 The Policy applies to changes that may affect the delivery of a course, including significant alterations to course content, structure, delivery, assessment, location, or accreditation, and to decisions relating to the suspension or closure of a course.
- 1.5 The University will ensure that applicants holding an offer and students affected by course changes or closures are treated fairly, are supported to make informed decisions, and are provided with appropriate options and support where significant changes affect their educational experience.

2. Definitions

2.1 Material Change

A significant change that a current student or potential applicant would reasonably need knowledge of in order to make an informed decision about whether, where, or how to study. Material changes may be major or minor in nature and would require consent for a contract variation.

2.2 Course Amendment

A major or minor change to a course that may be material but not always requiring a contract variation.

2.3 Course Suspension

Suspension of recruitment to a course e.g. the course shall not recruit a new intake for the next academic year, but planned to recruit for the following year.

2.4 Course Closure

Closure of a course from the University portfolio e.g. the course closes to new applicants and students are "taught out" on the closing course.

2.5 Student

A current registered student on a University of Winchester course of study.

2.6 Applicant

Used in this policy to mean applicants for a University of Winchester course of study awaiting an offer, applicants who hold an offer and applicants who have accepted an offer.

2.7 Applicant – awaiting offer

A person who has applied for a University of Winchester course of study, but no offer has been extended.

2.8 Applicant – offer holder

A person who has been offered a place on a University of Winchester course of study.

2.9 Applicant – offer acceptance

A person who has applied for, been offered and accepted a place on a University of Winchester course of study.

3. Scope

3.1 The Policy applies to proposed changes to, and closures of, University of Winchester courses, including those offered through collaborative academic partnerships providers under validated (where applicable or required) or franchise arrangements, that may affect applicants, students, or the delivery of a course. The policy applies to material changes as defined by the Office for Students, which include:

3.2 Course Changes:

- i. The removal or addition of all module types
- ii. Changes to the mode of delivery
- iii. Changes to HESA/KIS assessment types
- iv. Reduction or increase in contact hours
- v. Change of course or award title
- vi. Change of award type
- vii. Changes to the location of delivery
- viii. Changes affecting professional accreditation arrangements
- ix. The merging of courses
- x. Other significant revisions to curriculum content

3.3 Course Suspension or Closure

- i. The suspension or closure of courses for new students
- ii. The closure of a course before it commences
- iii. The suspension or closure of a course while students remain enrolled
- iv. The closure of a campus, department, or provision that affects course delivery

4. Principles

4.1 The University shall be open and transparent about proposed and approved changes and closures. Students and applicants (where appropriate) will be provided with clear, accessible, and timely information to enable them to understand the nature of any change and its implications.

4.2 Changes, suspensions and closures will be subject to appropriate levels of scrutiny, approval and oversight. The level of governance applied shall be proportionate to the significance and impact of the proposed change.

4.3 Students will be consulted on proposed changes. The University will seek to understand and consider student views as part of its decision making processes. The University will consider all course change proposals in students' best interests.

- 4.4 Where a course change, suspension or closure may adversely affect students or applicants, the University will take reasonable steps to minimise disruption and provide appropriate support, options or alternative arrangements.
- 4.5 The University will seek to ensure that students or applicants are able to complete their studies wherever possible. Where course closures occur, appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements shall be put in place.
- 4.6 Where statutory or regulatory changes are required in order to ensure compliance then students' consent will not be required. Students will be informed of the reasons for the required changes, advised how this will affect them and their studies and provided with relevant support and guidance in order to adapt to the required changes.

5. Governance and Approval

- 5.1 The level of approval required shall be proportionate to the scale and potential impact of the proposed change. Material course changes and course suspensions and closures will be subject to formal consideration and approval through the University's established governance arrangements.
- 5.2 Governance processes at the appropriate change approval stages will include consideration of regulatory and statutory compliance requirements¹ assured by collaboration with relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- 5.3 When making a change, the University shall consider the rationale for the proposed change, suspension or closure; assess the potential impact on affected applicants or students; whether the change is in the best interest of applicants/students; identify any implications arising from the proposal; consider the outcomes of any student consultation; and for course closures, support and teach-out plans are in place.
- 5.4 College Education Committee (CEC) shall consider all course amendments. For material changes CEC shall endorse these to Academic Planning and Portfolio Committee (APPC) who will make final decisions.
- 5.5 Academic Planning and Portfolio Committee (APPC) shall consider all material changes to course amendments. APPC also considers course suspension and closure requests, including full transition planning. APPC shall endorse the approval of these to Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- 5.6 Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will make final decisions on course suspensions or closures.
- 5.7 Documentation from all course amendments, suspension and closures shall be recorded and tracked using internal processes.

6. Consultation and Communication

6.1 Students

- i. Where a proposed change is determined to be material, the University shall consider whether consultation with affected students is appropriate and proportionate to the nature, scale and potential impact of the proposal.

¹ Regulatory and Statutory Bodies may include, but not limited to, The Office for Students (OfS), Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Student Loans Company (SLC) United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI and Home Office Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and any course level Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB).

- ii. Any required student contract variations will be effected only after explicit consent, by way of a directed survey, resulting in 100% of respondents with 90% consenting to the change.
- iii. Consultation shall provide affected students with information about the proposed change; the impact of the proposed change; gather views from students/applicants; inform decision making; and assist the University in identifying mitigation and support mechanisms.
- iv. After approval, communications shall be sent to affected students and should include a description of the change; the rationale; the expected timing of implementation; the likely impact on affected students; available options and alternatives; and support mechanisms available.

Information shall be presented in a clear and accessible manner and will be communicated through appropriate channels.

(Contract Variation and Students' Consent Procedures for all material changes will be deployed to ensure parity of consent processes.)

6.2 Applicants

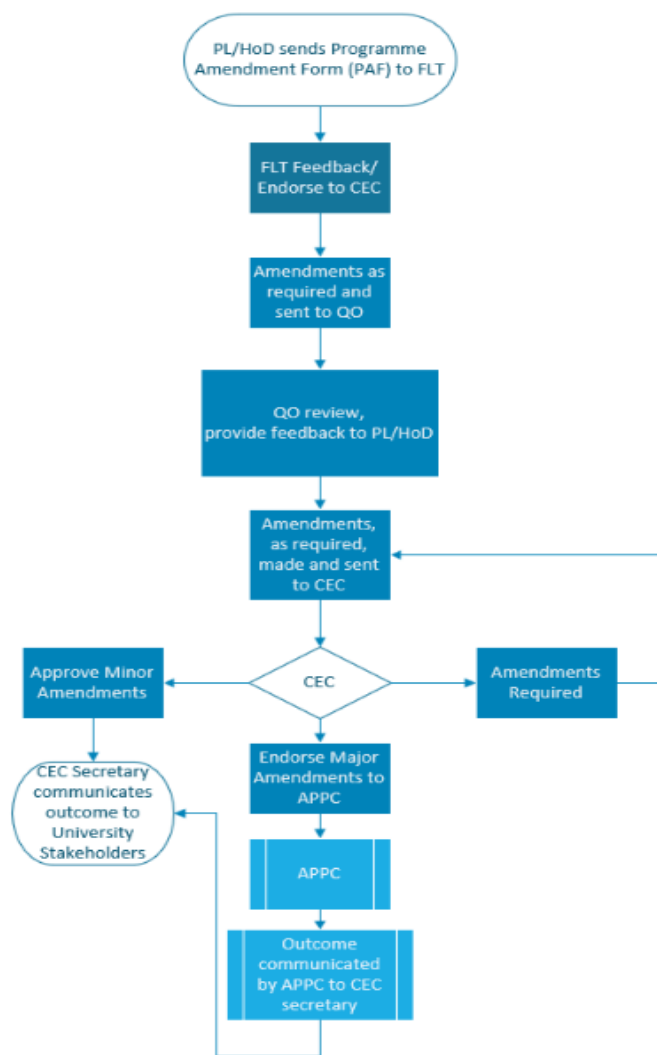
- i. Where a material change affects applicants, communications shall explain what is changing; when the change will take effect; and what options are available to the applicant.
- ii. Information shall be presented in a clear and accessible manner and will be communicated through appropriate channels.
- iii. Where changes are required all offer-holder applicants will be advised and their options communicated to them. This shall include options to rescind the contract or take up an alternative course offer.
- iv. Where a proposed material change affects applicants who have applied for and accepted an offer for a course, the University shall ensure that those applicants are provided with clear and timely information about the proposed change and any implications for their intended course. Applicants will be provided with information to support decision making.

7. Course Closure/Suspension implications and Teach-Out Arrangements

7.1 When a course is closed or suspended through the governance processes above, a full teach-out plan will be approved by the committee. The teach out plan includes impact assessment and mitigations against the risk of students being unable to complete the course. In each case, every effort will be made to teach out a closing course. If it is not possible, the University shall communicate this to students and outline the options available to them.

8. Change Process

8.1 Programme Amendment Process



8.2 Withdrawals and Suspensions Process

