

Programme Closure and Suspension Policy

POLICY DETAILS:

Date of approval	8 December 2021
Approving body	Academic Council
Supersedes	Programme Closure Policy: March 2021
Date of EIA	June 2017
Date of next review	<i>See departmental schedule</i>
Author	Academic Quality Office
Responsible Executive Group area	Registrar and Secretary
Related policies and documents	Programme Closure and Suspension Pro Forma Equality impact Assessment
Benchmarking	UK Quality Code for Higher Education University of Glasgow

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

PROGRAMME CLOSURE AND SUSPENSION POLICY

1. Context and General Approach

- 1.1 Glasgow School of Art's (GSA) policy and process for the permanent closure and temporary suspension of programmes shall be compatible with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the academic standards of GSA and the University of Glasgow.
- 1.2 Proposals to close or suspend programmes are only adopted after careful consideration of their relevance and the strategic objectives of the school and GSA as a whole.
- i. The following reasons may be regarded as sufficient cause for the permanent closure of a programme:
- Outcome of programme monitoring or review;
 - Reduction in student demand;
 - The programme is no longer financially viable;
 - Loss of expertise that cannot be replaced;
 - Withdrawal of relevant accreditation;
 - Changes in Memorandum of Agreement or other collaborative provision agreement;
 - Any other reasons underpinned by analysis of Management Information.
- ii. An insufficient number of students to run the programme in an educationally effective manner may be regarded as sufficient cause for temporarily suspending a programme.
- 1.3 Programme closure results in the permanent cessation of a programme, in contrast to suspension which is temporary. Once approved, suspended programmes will not recruit for one academic year and will automatically revert back on stream the following academic year. If a longer suspension is sought, the process must be repeated for each academic year. A programme can be suspended for a maximum of two academic years.
- 1.4 A core expectation is that due account is taken of the academic interests of the student. The relevant Head of School should discuss the implications of closing or suspending the programme with students at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 1.5 The Head of School shall outline the steps which will be taken to protect the academic interests of all students currently studying on the programme (including those who have taken leave of absence or who could potentially repeat or resit part of the programme) and those who have been accepted to study on it. The Head of School is required to confirm how the quality of the learning experience will be maintained during the period in which the programme is being closed or suspended.
- 1.6 If the closure or suspension of a programme will have an impact on a collaborative provision agreement, the programme closure or suspension will be managed in accordance with the terms set out in the relevant collaborative agreement. Legal services will be engaged where appropriate.

- 1.7 GSA and schools shall demonstrate their commitment to diversity and promoting equality by ensuring that due regard is given to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the implementation and application of this policy (see also section 2.4).
- 1.8 This policy does not apply to the closures of courses and electives; these should be considered in line with the 'Course Closure Policy'.

2. Process

- 2.1 The process detailed below is for the permanent closure and the temporary suspension of programmes, which outlines how GSA will manage and maintain academic standards throughout.
- 2.2 The Senior Leadership Group will require assurance regarding academic and non-academic matters, and Academic Council shall be responsible for approving arrangements in terms of academic matters. The Academic Quality Office will advise proposers of the information, documentation and approval routes regarding their particular proposal.
- 2.3 The permanent closure of a programme will be initiated by the Head of School based on one or a combination of the reasons set out in section 1.2(i). In instances of a reduction in student demand, the Head of School may propose a temporary suspension of a programme, as set out in section 1.2(ii). Once the decision has been made to close or suspend a programme, the process detailed below shall be followed and the documentation developed by the relevant Head of School.

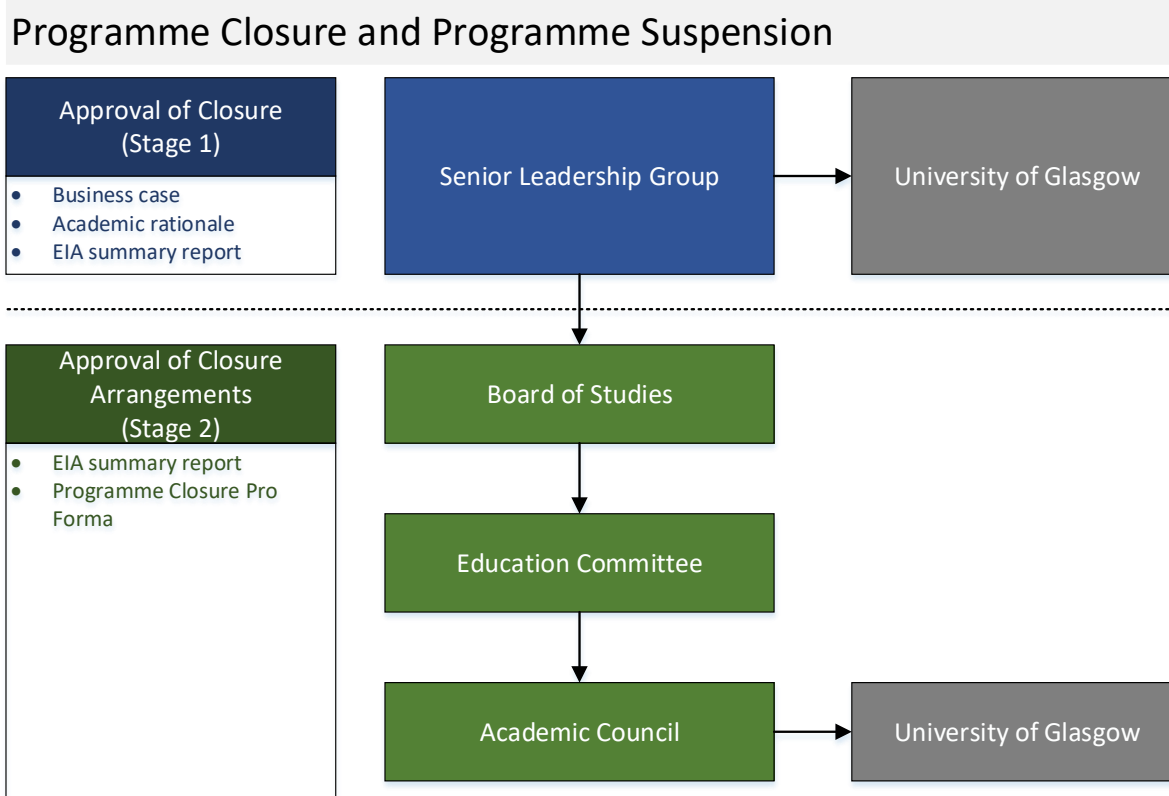
Stage 1: Approval of Closure

- 2.4 The proposal to close or suspend a programme is first considered by the GSA Senior Leadership Group. Key considerations are: the academic rationale; Equality Impact Assessment (EIA); and business case, including an assessment of matters such as resource and risk.
- 2.5 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of any programme closure or suspension must be undertaken and a summary reporting template completed. The EIA should be completed before any proposal is finalised and EIA summary report submitted in tandem with the business case and academic rationale to the Senior Leadership Group. If the Senior Leadership Group agree the proposal to close or suspend the programme, the documentation will be submitted to the relevant school's Board of Studies for consideration.

Stage 2: Approval of Closure Arrangements

- 2.6 Boards of Studies, Education Committee and Academic Council account for the GSA stages of a detailed academic consideration of programme closure or suspension arrangements. The school Board of Studies is responsible for the detailed scrutiny of arrangements and for making recommendations to the Education Committee.
- 2.7 The implications of closing or suspending a programme should be discussed with students and applicants holding offers at the earliest opportunity. The Head of School should be mindful that Education Committee and Academic Council will require evidence that consultation has been carried out with students at every stage of the process [refer to section 4 and 5 for details of the required arrangements for current students and applicants].

- 2.8 The School shall ensure and that the current External Examiner(s) is consulted on proposals for programme closure or suspension and provide details of that consultation.
- 2.9 All programme closure or suspension arrangements shall satisfy Boards of Studies and Academic Council that the assurance and review of academic quality and standards is in keeping with GSA expectations and reputation.
- 2.10 Boards of Studies shall not approve or recommend programme closure or suspension arrangements without having been assured that the proposal has been discussed with the Academic Quality Office and that the proposal has satisfied the guidance provided.
- 2.11 The Annual Report to the University of Glasgow Senate and the Joint Liaison Committee shall be appropriately utilised to inform and update the University regarding proposed programme closures or suspension arrangements. The arrangements shall be submitted to the University's Academic Collaborations Office for oversight and comment.
- 2.12 In the case of a joint programme (i.e. one that is jointly designed, developed and delivered by GSA and the University of Glasgow), programme closures or suspensions will be managed in accordance with the terms set out in the relevant Joint Programme Agreement.



3. Deadlines for Proposing Programme Closures or Suspensions

- 3.1 To close a programme, Senior Leadership Group approval should be sought one calendar year in advance of entry. Closure arrangements must be approved via Board of Studies, Education Committee and Academic Council by the following deadlines:

- 31 January, for programmes recruiting for September entry [refer to addendum A for example timeline]
- 31 August, for programmes with January entry

3.2 To suspend a programme, Senior Leadership Group approval must be obtained by the following deadlines:

- 31 December, for programmes recruiting for September entry [refer to addendum B for example timeline]
- 31 August, for programmes with January entry

Suspension arrangements must be approved via Board of Studies, Education Committee and Academic Council by March 31 for September entry and September 30 for January entry.

3.3 In contrast to closure arrangements, suspension arrangements may be approved at a later stage in the academic year. This is in recognition of the temporary nature of suspensions and to allow academic commitments to be reviewed against fluctuations in recruitment at a later date in the cycle, minimising financial exposure and inefficient allocation of resource.

3.4 The timeline above can be adjusted in exceptional circumstances, in consultation with the Academic Quality Office and with approval by the Senior Leadership Group.

4. Arrangements for Current Students

4.1 Academic Council requires assurances that appropriate management and resourcing of the final student cohorts in the programme being closed or suspended are in place.

4.2 The relevant school should seek the views of current students and include a summary of this with the recommendation to Academic Council.

4.3 Closure and suspension arrangements for programmes with a current student cohort should normally be approved and communicated before semester one of the year preceding implementation.

4.4 The school's proposed arrangements for students currently registered on the programme (including those on a leave of absence from study) must include the following:

- Confirmation that the standard of provision to current students will be maintained throughout their period of study
- Confirmation that students will be able to achieve the intended learning outcomes
- Confirmation that students can repeat or resit, where necessary
- Where applicable, detail of appropriate assistance to transfer to another programme within GSA

5. Arrangements for Applicants

5.1 Applicants should be contacted within 7 days of approval from the Senior Leadership Group to communicate the decision to close or suspend the programme.

5.2 Should the closure or suspension of a programme be approved, applicants will be informed of their options in regard to transferring their application to another programme within GSA at

the earliest possible opportunity, and in accordance with our current Admissions Terms and Conditions.

- 5.3 All communications with applicants on these matters will be managed by Academic Registry in consultation with the relevant School.

6. Changes to GSA and University Publications/Marketing Materials

- 6.1 The relevant school within GSA (and the University of Glasgow, if appropriate) must ensure that all necessary amendments are made to their student handbooks, publications and Web pages.
- 6.2 For the closure and temporary suspension of programmes, relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory bodies should be notified in a timely manner.

Associated documentation:

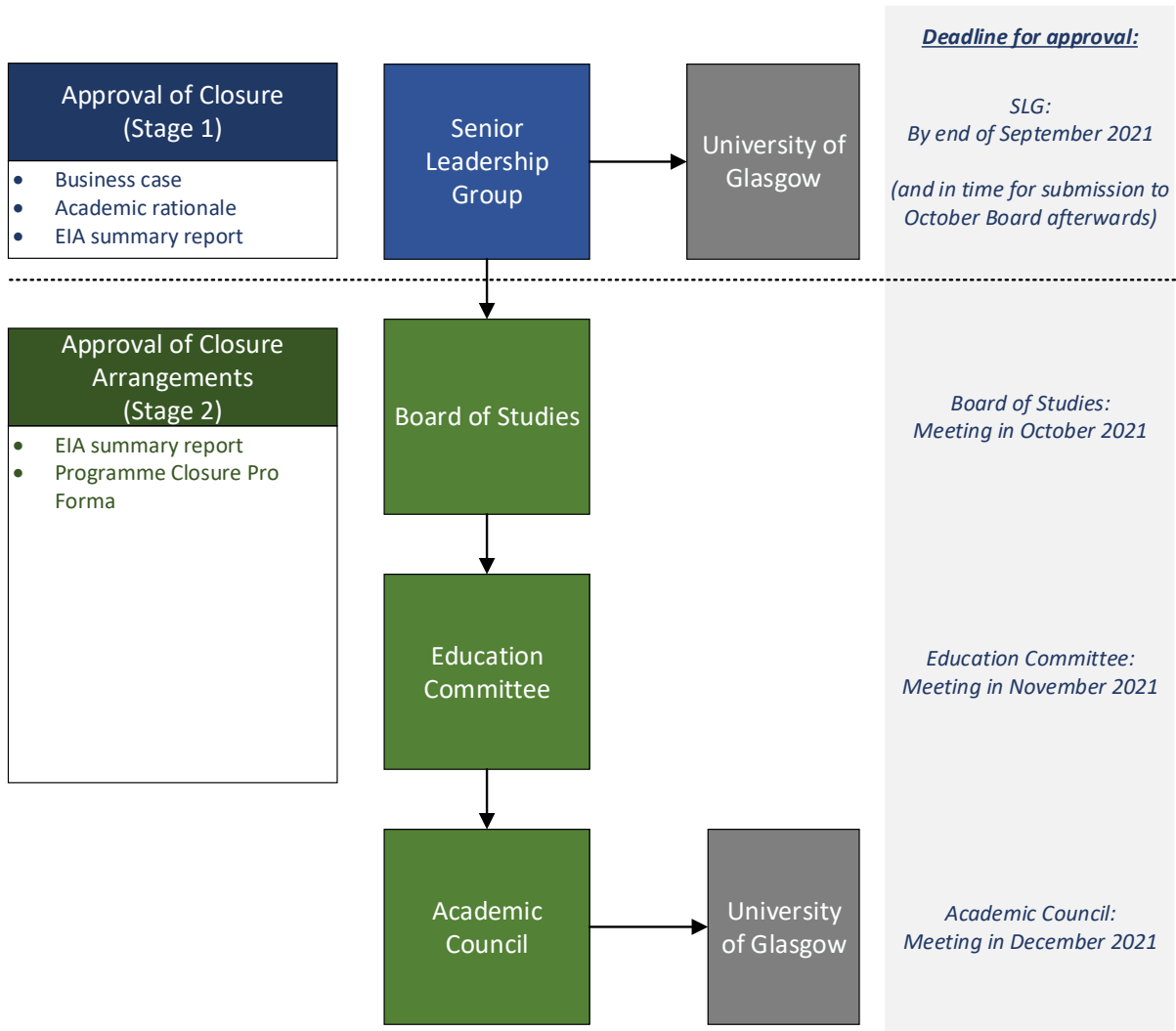
1. Equality Impact Assessment Guidance
2. Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report Template
3. Programme Closure and Suspension *Pro Forma*

Addendum

- A. Programme Closure: Example approvals route and deadlines for closure from September 2022
- B. Programme Suspension: Example approvals route and deadlines for suspension from September 2022

Addendum

A. Programme Closure: Example approvals route and deadlines for closure from September 2022



B. Programme Suspension: Example approvals route and deadlines for suspension from September 2022

