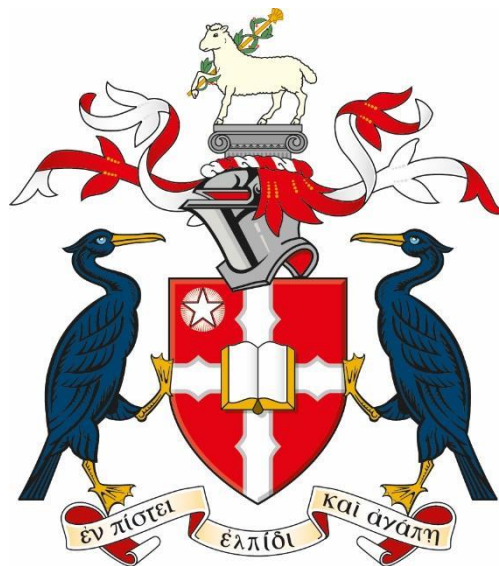


Liverpool Hope University



Academic Quality Handbook 6 (QH6):

Process for the Withdrawal or Suspension of Courses

Version control	
June 2022	
October 2024	Update to page 2 and cosmetic changes to include the restructure from Schools to Faculties

1. Withdrawing or Suspending a Course

The withdrawal or suspension of a course can occur in one of two ways:

- i. The decision to withdraw or suspend a course is initially made by the Subject Team who then inform the Head of School. The HOS notifies the Faculty Executive Dean who in turn makes a recommendation to the University Executive Board (UEB) – this process is undertaken via consultation of all relevant parties within the School/Faculty.

UEB consider the reasons for withdrawal/suspension before approving the decision. Once approved, the HOS notifies Faculty Academic Committee that the course is to be withdrawn/suspended. Finally, the Curriculum Overview Document for the School/Faculty is updated by the UEM who informs the Director of Student Enrolment and Administration¹.

- ii. A request to withdraw/suspend a course may come directly from UEB and the withdrawal/suspension is noted on the Curriculum Overview Document for the School.

2. Processes associated with Suspending/Withdrawing Courses

(a) Courses with Fewer Than Ten Students

Liverpool Hope is committed to providing an excellent student experience and to demonstrating value for money related to student fees. To support this premise, any 60-credit or 120-credit unit with fewer than ten students in the classroom is generally considered non-viable. This is on the basis that cohorts of ten students or less do not provide the appropriate student experience in terms of working as part of a group and are often unsustainable following student attrition, albeit avoidable or unavoidable.

In some cases, small numbers on individual courses can be mitigated against by the sharing of 60-credit units between different courses, so that the total number of students in each teaching session is increased. Where this is the case, no action is taken with respect to the individual courses.

Thus, the University is committed to suspending, or amending to use shared appropriate provision, for any course where a 60-credit component has the potential to be taught to a group of students of less than ten.

¹ The Director of Student Enrolment and Administration holds the University's master overview curriculum document.

(b) Process for Informing Students of an Amendment/Suspension

The process for informing students that there has been an amendment to, or suspension of their course is as follows:

1. Courses to be suspended / amended should be agreed on the Monday of Summer Graduation week.
2. Applicants on these courses to be contacted by the enrolment team by the end of Graduation week.
3. Applicants who have unconditional places on suspended / amended courses should be counselled on changes / alternatives as soon as the decision to suspend/amend has been made.
4. Applicants who have conditional places on suspended / amended courses should be counselled on changes/alternatives as soon as the decision to suspend/amend has been made and before confirmation.
5. Suspended courses should not be offered at clearing.
6. Current students (either Level F or Level C) on interruptions who are expecting to return to suspended/amended courses at Level C or F, as appropriate, should be counselled on changes/alternatives as soon as the decision to suspend/amend has been made.
7. When courses are suspended, the availability of course change procedures linked to joining those courses at Level C must be cancelled immediately.

(c) Identifying Courses and Subsequent Actions

At the start of Summer Graduation week, the University considers all predicted intake numbers and identifies all courses where fewer than ten students will be taught together in a classroom (despite any co-taught provision being included). Following serious consideration, the University then decides whether these courses should run in the coming academic year, the default being not to run. This should be in the light of any serious potential for increase in numbers to above the guideline at clearing.

Where courses are to be suspended/amended the students already holding places should be contacted and offered alternatives or be released into clearing where there is no other appropriate course at Hope. These courses should not be offered in the clearing period. Academic teams should also be told immediately to allow for redistribution of resources and staffing.

(d) Level F (Foundation Year) / Level C Students

Current students (either Level F or Level C) on interruptions who are expecting to return to suspended/amended courses at Level C or F, as appropriate, should be counselled on changes/alternatives as soon as the decision to suspend/amend has been made.

The University also needs to be very aware of students coming to the end of Foundation Year who might have been expecting to join affected cohorts, and returning students who failed in the previous year and will be expecting to join the new cohort.

(e) Network of Hope Courses

The timeline for agreeing viability of NOH courses for a given year needs to address both the very late recruitment pattern for some of these students and the need for resource management in both the University and the College. To allow for the recruitment of the maximum number of students and for the courses to run smoothly there is a formal later date for end of recruitment, a later point at which a decision to run/suspend is made and a consequent later start to teaching. The following has been agreed with the partner College:

1. Recruitment to NOH courses should continue formally until 30 September or the closest following Friday.
2. Decisions about suspension of courses should be made on 1 October (or the closest following Monday) in each academic year. The decision to suspend should be made by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with the Principal. Student registration information should be sent the following day.
3. At the point of decision making, all applicants should be in a position to be registered. Any still 'in the system' at 1 October should be required to defer entry to the following year.
4. Teaching for Level C on all NOH courses should start 14 October (or the closest following Monday).
5. Teaching patterns for Level C NOH courses should be adjusted to account for the later start date.
6. Where it is needed, a later Assessment Board should be scheduled for NOH courses at Level C.
7. The actual date for 1, 2, 4 and 6 above should be agreed at the final Principal's meeting of the previous academic year.
8. Level I and H courses should retain existing term dates.
9. Once decisions to suspend courses have been made they should not be reversed. If minimum number targets are to be adjusted it should be prior to the decision making point rather than after.

10. All marketing for NOH courses should be reviewed annually to ensure that minimum numbers on courses are clearly identified and that decision dates are visible.
11. Early applicants should be personally counselled about the dates relating to these decisions.
12. No student joining/ registration information should be sent from Liverpool Hope until after decisions about course viability have been made.
13. Where courses are to be suspended the students already holding places should be contacted by the NOH College as quickly as possible. They should be offered firstly a place on the equivalent course at Hope Park/Creative Campus, secondly an alternative course at the NOH college, thirdly a deferral to the next academic year and lastly the opportunity to be released with information about other opportunities as appropriate.
14. Academic teams should be informed about course suspensions immediately – this will allow for redistribution of resources and staffing.

(f) Taught Postgraduate Courses

Taught postgraduate courses are recognised to have a later recruitment window than traditional UG courses. It is however important that a decision whether to run the course in any given period is made in a timely fashion to enable preparation time for Schools and Faculties.

Decisions about viability of PGT courses should be made in the second week of September (for October start) or in the second week of January (for February start).

Any PGT course with 8 or more confirmed new students at either review date should be considered automatically viable and will run.

Any PGT course with less than 8 confirmed new students at either review date should be considered by the relevant Head of School and a recommendation in relation to its viability for that cohort sent to UEB by the end of the second week of September/January as appropriate. Consideration should, in particular, be given to any ramifications which might affect other postgraduate provision which has common teaching.