

**TYPE:** Academic  
**TITLE:** Program Suspension  
**NO.:** ACAD-106  
**RESPONSIBILITY:** Vice President, Academic and Students  
**APPROVED BY:** Durham College Leadership Team  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** November 2024

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## **1. Introduction**

Durham College (DC) provides innovative academic programs that advance its strategic priorities, and respond to industry and student needs. Contributing to the future sustainability, relevance and success of the College and its students, regular program review processes identify academic programs to be suspended or cancelled. This ensures that a consistently applied, comprehensive and evidence-based analysis of the program is undertaken.

## **2. Purpose**

This policy and procedure provides a framework for a comprehensive, strategic and evidence-based process for the suspension of an academic program.

## **3. Definitions**

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

## **4. Policy statements**

- 4.1. The decision-making process for suspending programs and/or program intakes will be transparent, consultative and evidence-based.
- 4.2. Program suspension is undertaken to ensure the most effective allocation and deployment of human, space and financial resources. Decisions on programs for suspension are made taking into account a variety of factors including, but not limited to:
  - student demand and impact;
  - community needs;
  - employment trends and employer needs;
  - new program development needs and opportunities;
  - program cost and sustainability;
  - perceived or actual competition or redundancies with other college programs;
  - educational pathways;
  - collective agreement provisions;

- availability of qualified faculty;
  - space and resource implications;
  - program quality assurance;
  - the College's program mix; and
  - alignment with the College's academic and strategic priorities.
- 4.3. The decision to suspend a program will be made with every effort to minimize impact on applicants, students, program teams and partners.
- 4.4. In the event of a program suspension, DC is committed to providing affected students with an opportunity to graduate from their program within the timeframe outlined in the Durham College Graduation Policy.
- 4.5. The Board of Governors shall approve all permanent suspensions of funded post-secondary programs.
- 4.6. Programs permanently cancelled need to be re-approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities in order to be re-instated.

## **5. Procedure**

Applicant interest and enrolment targets are routinely monitored. Programs at risk of not being sustainable will be identified by either the Office of the Registrar (RO) or Professional and Part-time Learning (PPL), then referred to the Vice President, Academic and Students (VPAS) for evaluation.

### **5.1. Post-secondary Program Intake Suspension**

- 5.1.1. The VPAS will discuss all post-secondary programs deemed at risk with the appropriate Executive Dean/Associate Dean and determine whether to suspend an intake or to continue to monitor applications. Where a decision impacts PPL, discussion will take place with the Executive Dean. The VPAS will advise the RO of the decisions made.
- 5.1.2. For decisions impacting post-secondary programs offered through PPL, the Executive Dean of PPL or designate will notify affected stakeholders.
- 5.1.3. If a program intake is suspended, the RO will notify the following internal departments in order to effect required changes and system updates:
- Academic Leadership Team
  - Admissions Office
  - Affected Faculty office(s)
  - Centre for Teaching and Learning
  - Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment
  - Dean of Students
  - Enrolment Services
  - Facilities and Ancillary Services

- Finance
- Financial Aid and Awards
- International Education Office
- IT Services
- Library
- Office of the Registrar Systems Team
- Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Scheduling

5.1.4. The RO will advise applicants of the program intake suspension during the application cycle and discuss options for applying to other programs.

## 5.2. Indefinite Post-secondary Program Suspension

5.2.1. The VPAS will discuss all programs deemed at risk with the appropriate Executive Dean/Associate Dean and determine whether to indefinitely suspend a post-secondary program or to continue to monitor applications. Where a decision impacts PPL, discussion will take place with the Executive Dean. A program does not have to experience a program intake suspension to be considered for an indefinite suspension.

5.2.2. After consultation and making a decision to suspend a program, the Executive Dean/Associate Dean will complete the Program Suspension form and submit to the VPAS, who will notify the following:

- Office of the Registrar
- International Education Office
- Centre for Teaching and Learning

For decisions impacting programs offered through PPL, the Executive Dean of PPL or designate, will notify affected stakeholders.

5.2.3. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance will notify the following internal departments in order to effect required changes and system updates:

- Academic Leadership Team
- Admissions
- Affected Faculty office(s)
- Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment
- Dean of Students
- Enrolment Services
- Facilities and Ancillary Services
- Finance
- Financial Aid and Awards
- International Education Office

- IT Services
- Library
- Office of the Registrar Systems Team
- Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Scheduling

5.2.4. The RO will advise applicants of the indefinite program suspension during the application cycle and discuss options for applying to other programs.

5.2.5. The RO or PPL, as appropriate, will work with Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment to update the program's status on the college's website and with Admissions to update the program's status on the Ontario Colleges Application Services' portal. The program will also be removed from all recruitment materials as soon as possible.

### 5.3. Permanent Post-secondary Program Suspension

5.3.1. The VPAS will discuss all post-secondary programs deemed at risk, or that have been indefinitely suspended for five years, with the appropriate Executive Dean/Associate Dean and determine whether to permanently suspend a program. Where a decision impacts PPL, discussion will take place with the Executive Dean.

5.3.2. The appropriate Executive Dean/Associate Dean will evaluate program performance metrics and factors affecting program sustainability, and may consult with academic, administrative and support areas. Where applicable, the Executive Dean/Associate Dean may consult with relevant external, regulatory or accreditation bodies.

5.3.3. After consultation with the appropriate Executive Dean/Associate Dean, the VPAS will recommend any permanent suspensions for post-secondary programs to DC's President for consideration and decision.

5.3.4. All funded post-secondary programs that are approved by the President for permanent suspension will be presented to the Board of Governors by the VPAS, for the Board's consideration and decision.

5.3.5. The VPAS will notify the following of all post-secondary programs that are approved by the Board of Governors for permanent suspension:

- Office of the Registrar
- International Education Office
- Centre for Teaching and Learning

5.3.6. If the program being permanently suspended has currently enrolled students, then:

- The academic Faculty will prepare a plan for currently enrolled students to have the opportunity to complete the program.
- The academic Faculty will communicate the plan to the RO and all students currently enrolled in the program. Students will be advised to contact their Faculty office to discuss a program completion plan.

5.3.7. Once approval to permanently suspend a program is received, the RO will communicate the decision to all current applicants.

For permanent suspension decisions impacting programs offered through PPL, PPL will communicate with current applicants and students.

5.3.8. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance will notify the following internal departments in order to effect required changes and system updates:

- Affected Faculty office(s)
- Academic Leadership Team
- Admissions Office
- Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment
- Dean of Students
- Enrolment Services
- Facilities and Ancillary Services
- Finance
- Financial Aid and Awards
- IT Services
- International Education Office
- Library
- Office of the Registrar Systems Team
- Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Scheduling

5.3.9. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance will inform the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) in writing of final decisions to permanently suspend Ministry-funded programs at all campuses and by all delivery modes.

5.3.10. Permanent suspension decisions impacting non-post-secondary programs offered through PPL do not require approval by the President or Board of Governors. These decisions will be communicated by the Executive Dean of PPL in consultation with the VPAS.

#### **5.4. Ministry Treatment of Dormant, Suspended Programs**

- 5.4.1. The MCU will provide the VPAS annually with a listing of DC programs that have been dormant or suspended for five years. The VPAS will provide this listing to the Dean, Teaching, Learning and Program Quality for action.
- 5.4.2. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance and Executive Dean/Associate Dean will review all dormant programs and identify those that can be cancelled or will remain active.
- 5.4.3. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance will provide an updated status list of dormant or suspended programs to MCU within 30 days. Failure to submit the updated status of dormant or suspended programs may result in the MCU automatically cancelling active programs.

#### **6. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

#### **7. Non-compliance implications**

Failure to comply with this policy could affect the allocation and deployment of human, space and financial resources in a manner that negatively impacts the future sustainability, relevance and success of the College and its students.

In addition, failure to comply may result in damage to the reputation of the College if it is seen as offering programs that no longer meet the needs of industry.

Failure to comply with MCU requests to confirm program status may result in the MCU automatically cancelling active programs.

#### **8. Related forms, legislation or external resources**

- Minister's Binding Policy Directive on the Framework for Programs of Instruction
- Program Suspension Form