



HARROW INDEPENDENT COLLEGE
School of Mathematics, Science & Economics

Student Protection Plan of Harrow Independent College (HIC)

Policy and procedures for Closure, Suspension and Changes to Further Education Courses and Higher Education Programmes.

These processes articulate HIC's procedures for applicants and students.

1. Introduction

This policy sets out HIC's procedures for closing, suspending or changing any programme or course of study. This policy outlines the procedures for closing, suspending or changing any course of study at the college designed for students at GCSE level, Sixth Form and Higher Education. It is also planned to reflect the Higher education programme changes and closures: statement of good practice 2015.

2. Closure and Suspension

HIC may wish to close and remove a programme or course of study from its portfolio. Closure of a programme, whether at sixth form or undergraduate level, means that the college will cease to recognise the programme as one for which a student may be registered.

Suspension of a programme or course of study is defined by a fixed timeframe in which the programme or course will not be delivered.

HIC may not close or suspend a programme or course without an approval of an accreditation body and/or funding agency because of the implications for the contractual relationship between current and prospective students and the college.

A request to close or suspend a programme or course must be made by the Senior Tutor in which that programme or course is positioned. HIC will only consider about approving the proposal in line with their strategic plans. The Senior Tutor is required to make an impact case to the senior leadership team (SLT) at the college who will make the final decision.

A request to suspend or remove a programme or course must be made by the Senior Tutor in which that programme or course is positioned, on the approved format and shall be accompanied by the following information;

- Impact on current and prospective students
- Impact on existing or proposed programmes or courses
- The expected impact on staff and resources
- Overall impact on the college

The format shall also confirm that consultation will take place with academic staff affected by the request.

Where there are any expected changes to staff/staffing structure consultation with HR must be sought.

On receipt of a request to close or suspend a programme or course at the college, SLT may agree one of the following:

- Decline the request
- Approve the request without condition(s)
- Approve the request with condition(s)
- Referred for further consultation with SLT (with clear deadline or timeframe)

3. Programme or Course Changes Prior to Registration

HIC may be required to make changes to programmes at the following times:

- between publication of the prospectus/programme or course information AND registration
- after registration

Where material changes (such as a number of changes to the structure of the programme or course, or the removal or addition of a number of modules) are made between the publication of the prospectus/programme or course information and registration, the college will draw these changes to the attention of applicants as soon as possible and advise them of their right to seek entry to another appropriate programme or course for which they may be qualified or to withdraw their application and seek entry to another institution.

Where the applicant has already accepted an offer, they shall be furnished with all necessary information, advice and guidance by the college to help them make an informed decision on their future course of action.

In normal circumstances, material changes to programmes or courses should not be made after registration, but where this is unavoidable, students and their parents and/or their representatives shall be consulted at the earliest opportunity on the changes and, where practicable, their views shall be taken into account.

If a student reasonably believes that a material change to their programme or course adversely affects them, they may cancel their application with the college. In such circumstances the college will offer suitable information, advice and guidance to a student and, where possible, facilitate their transfer

to another institution which offers an appropriate programme or course for which they are qualified.

Further to commencement of the programme or course and during the term of a student's studies, the college may make minor amendments to programmes or courses in order to improve the quality; to meet the latest requirements of an accrediting body; or in response to student feedback. Where such minor amendments to the delivery of a programme or course are necessary, the college will consult with or inform students and their representatives of these changes, as appropriate, and in line with the quality assurance processes.

4. Student Protection

Current students

Current students should normally be allowed to complete the programme or course of study for which they are registered unless each gives their explicit written consent to the contrary. Such consent must not be sought until a closure or suspension recommendation has been agreed.

Where a programme or course is being closed to new entrants only, HIC's proposed arrangements for students currently registered on the programme or course (including those whose registration is suspended but have not yet completed the programme or course) must comply with the following:

Current students should be informed of their option. The college will provide all necessary information, advice, guidance and support to facilitate students in deciding which option to follow.

The standard of academic provision and the student experience must, as far as is reasonably practicable, be maintained throughout their period of registration. In particular, the conditions must be maintained to enable the stated learning outcomes in the relevant Programme or Course Specification to be achievable by students who are being 'taught out'.

To ensure the student experience and to support the students, the Senior Tutor for Academic Transitions, together with the SLT will monitor their experience.

Applicants

In the event of a programme or course closure, suspension or material changes to programme or course content, all communications with applicants must be undertaken via Admissions.

Applicants who have accepted offers should not be contacted until the closure or suspension process has been fully completed.

Applicants thus affected should then be informed of their options to transfer their applications to another programme or course within the college or to another

institution.

Applicants who have been made offers, but have not yet accepted them, may however be advised that a closure or suspension request has been made. Such applicants should be advised that the offer of a place is suspended until a final decision has been made and will be withdrawn if the request is accepted. They should also be advised that they may choose another programme or course available with another institution.

UCAS should be notified when the closure or suspension request has been finalised by SLT.

5. Timing

Wherever possible, requests to delete, suspend or make material changes to the content of programmes or courses should be made in a timely manner.

Since preparation for the production of the printed prospectus/programme or course information takes place sometime ahead of publication, the process of strategic planning should identify those programmes which are likely to be closed prior to the commencement of the prospectus/programme or course information production process.

As a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. loss of specialist staff) it may be necessary to close or suspend a programme or course within a foreshortened timescale. In such circumstances, the student interest is paramount and full consultation should be undertaken with all affected students, their parents and their nominated representatives.

In order to ensure full compliance with the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and related regulations, students should be given the fullest information, advice and guidance to enable them to make well-informed decisions in the event of a programme or course closure or suspension.

6. Partner Provision

Where HIC is the owning party (i.e. registers the students as HIC's students), but the delivery is undertaken by a partner institution the processes as detailed above in section 4 will apply:

Current students should be informed of their option to complete their programme or course of study or transfer to another programme or course within the college or to another institution. The college will provide all necessary information, advice, guidance and support to facilitate students in deciding which option to follow.

The standard of academic provision and the student experience must, as far as is reasonably practicable, be maintained throughout their period of registration. In particular, the conditions must be maintained to enable the stated learning outcomes in the relevant Programme or Course Specification to be achievable by students who are being 'taught out'.

To ensure the student experience and to support the students, the designated Academic Senior Tutor, together with the SLT will monitor their experience.

Where the partner institution through staff changes/resources is unable to deliver the programme or course at their premises, at least one full academic year's notice is expected and the partner is expected to bear any expenses related to supporting the students in completing their studies.

HIC will provide all necessary information, advice, guidance and support to facilitate students in completing their studies.

7. Refund and Compensation Policy

We have a Refund and Compensation Policy as set out in our [Terms and Conditions for students and parents](#) which can be found on our website. It outlines the circumstances in which we will refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and to provide compensation where necessary, if we are no longer able to preserve continuation of study. We consider refunds and compensation to be a remedy of last resort and we are committed to doing all we can so that refunds and compensation aren't necessary. The Policy may be implemented as a result of any of the risks in this Plan occurring.

We have always had sufficient finances to refund/compensate students when appropriate and we factor this into our annual budgets on the basis of previous experiences. We are investing in various initiatives that will assist student support and retention and target a decrease in student non-continuation rates thereby reducing the level of refund/compensation payments.