



Programme Suspension and Cessation Policy

1. Context

All programmes leading to an award from either Trinity College Dublin or the University of Dublin are subject to formal procedures for the suspension and cessation of programmes of study, which give due regard to the statutory requirements that govern awards aligned to the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#). Certain programme elements¹ are also subject to formal suspension and cessation procedures, as outlined in Appendix 1.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles and processes that support decisions to suspend or cease (i) a programme of study at Trinity, (ii) programmes delivered collaboratively with Trinity and/or validated by Trinity, and (iii) certain programme elements¹.

3. Benefits

- 3.1 The risks associated with the suspension and cessation of programmes and of certain programme elements are managed proactively and this includes appropriate timelines, communications and the protection of enrolled learners on programmes delivered by Trinity, and on validated and collaborative programmes.

4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to non-CAO (direct entry) undergraduate programmes, and to undergraduate programme strands.
- 4.2 This policy applies to programme elements necessary for the successful operation of the undergraduate common architecture, such as: Trinity Joint Honours (TRH) subjects and TJH subject combinations², New Minor Subjects, Trinity Electives and Open Modules.
- 4.3 This Policy applies to postgraduate programmes, strands, subjects, category 4 structured PhD modules³, and to Micro credentials.
- 4.4 This Policy applies to programmes validated by Trinity and delivered collaboratively with Trinity.
- 4.5 A proposal to suspend or cease a CAO undergraduate programme must be discussed with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies prior to any application for its suspension or cessation.
- 4.6 The cessation of Dual and Joint degree programmes may require additional consideration as

¹ UG and PG programme strands, UG subjects (Trinity Joint Honours subjects, new minor subjects); Trinity Elective and Bespoke Open Modules, PG subjects; Category 4 Structured PhD modules, Micro-credentials.

² where the suspension or cessation of a TJH subject impacts the running of the TJH programme.

³ Modules Offered by Non-School Units (e.g., CAPSL, Library) – see further information on structured PhD modules [here](#)



provided for in the specific Memoranda of Understanding and must be discussed and mutually agreed by the institutions concerned.

5 Principles

- 5.1 The decision to suspend or cease a programme of study is based on an objective review of each programme, assessing its rationale, academic merits and financial viability.
- 5.2 The decision to suspend or cease certain programme elements is based on due consideration of the impact of the suspension or cessation on the ability to ensure certainty in the delivery of academic content, to provide sufficient curriculum choices and to enable students to fulfil their programme requirements.
- 5.3 Trinity is committed to the delivery of the full programme of study on which students have been enrolled, other than in very exceptional circumstances.

6 Definitions

- 6.1 **Suspension** of a programme of study or a curriculum element refers to its temporary discontinuation with the intention of recommencing it at a future date.
- 6.2 **Cessation** of a programme of study or curriculum element refers to the permanent discontinuation of a programme of study.

Other definitions relevant to this Policy can be found in the [Curriculum Glossary](#).

7 Policy

- 7.1 A proposal/request to suspend or cease a direct entry programme of study (undergraduate or postgraduate) should be made as early as possible, ideally before the programme is open for recruitment but no later than the closing date for applications, and should follow the sign-off and approval process outlined in Appendix 1
- 7.2 Requests for suspension of direct entry programmes of study are normally only considered for one academic year.
- 7.3 Direct entry applicants on a programme that has been suspended or ceased after recruitment has commenced will be refunded their application fee, and deposit (where applicable)
- 7.4 Programmes that are to cease will be phased out on an annual basis over the full cycle of the programme.
- 7.5 Trinity will endeavour to accommodate students on these programmes to complete their programme of study within a specified timeframe. Students who do not progress within that timeframe will be consulted on possible alternative options.
- 7.6 In cases where the cessation of a programme of study is associated with, and contingent on, a proposal for a new programme, details of the discontinued programme can be included within the proposal for the new programme.



- 7.7 The Calendar and Prospectus entries for the programme must be amended to reflect the approved suspension or removed, if the programme is being ceased.
- 7.8 The suspension or cessation of the delivery of programme elements should follow the sign-off and approval process outlined in Appendix 1.

8 Responsibility

- 8.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Registrar, as appropriate.

9 Related Documents

- 9.1 [Academic Affairs webpage for Suspension and cessation of undergraduate programmes](#)
- 9.2 [Academic Affairs webpage for Suspension and cessation of postgraduate programmes](#)
- 9.3 [Academic Affairs webpage for Suspension and Cessation of current Trinity Electives](#)
- 9.4 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#)
- 9.5 [Programme and Curriculum Design and Approval Policy](#)
- 9.6 [Dual and Joint Awards Policy](#)
- 9.7 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)

10 Document Control

- 10.1 Approved by: University Council
 - 10.2 Date of initial approval: April 2017
 - 10.3 Date revised policy approved: 14 May 2025
 - 10.4 Date policy effective from: 29 August 2025
 - 10.5 Date of next review: 2027/28
-

Appendix 1: Suspension and Cessation Approval routes for Programmes and programme elements

Programme or Programme element	Sign-off	Approval route	Application forms and further information
Undergraduate non-CAO ¹ Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Studies Committee University Council 	See Undergraduate suspension and cessation request forms, submission dates for USC and further details here
Undergraduate Strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Studies Committee University Council 	
Offerings on the common architecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trinity Joint Honours (TJH) programmes Trinity Joint Honours (TJH) subjects Trinity Joint Honours (TJH) subject combinations² New minor subjects Bespoke Open Modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) Faculty Dean Undergraduate Common Architecture Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Common Architecture Governance Committee (UCAGC) Undergraduate Studies Committee University Council 	See further information here
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School (on behalf of School Executive) Undergraduate Common Architecture Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Common Architecture Governance Committee (UCAGC) Undergraduate Studies Committee University Council 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other undergraduate modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval at School level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval at School level (programme/curriculum committee or by programme/strand director) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trinity Electives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive Committee) Module co-ordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trinity Elective Sub-Committee (TESC) Undergraduate Studies Committee University Council 	Proposals to cease or suspend a Trinity Elective can only be made after the TE has run for 4 years and must be approved by the last TESC meeting in February to take effect in the following academic year. See TE suspension and cessation request forms, submission dates for USC and further details here

¹ A proposal to suspend or cease a CAO undergraduate programme must be discussed with the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies prior to any application for its suspension or cessation.

² where the suspension or cessation of a TJH subject impacts the running of the TJH programme.

Programme or Programme element	Sign-off	Approval route	Application forms and further information
• Postgraduate Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) • Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate Studies Committee, • University Council 	See Postgraduate taught suspension and cessation request forms, submission dates for GSC and further details here
• Postgraduate Strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) • Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate Studies Committee, • University Council 	
• Postgraduate Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School (on behalf of the School Executive) • Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate Studies Committee, • University Council 	
• Postgraduate modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module co-ordinator • Director of Teaching and Learning PG • Shared modules sign-off by each School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval at School level (programme/curriculum committee or by programme/strand director) 	
• Structured PhD modules (category 2 - 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School/Area • Dean of Graduate Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies • Graduate Studies Committee • University Council 	Memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies
• Micro-credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of School • Faculty Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-credentials subcommittee • Graduate Studies Committee • University Council 	Memorandum from the Chair of the Micro-credentials subcommittee
• Trinity validated undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrar of the Linked Provider, on behalf of the Linked Provider Academic Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associated College Degrees Committee (ACDC) • Undergraduate Studies Committee or Graduate Studies Committee • University Council 	Memorandum from the Registrar of the Linked Provider