

COURSE DISCONTINUANCE POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the framework for the decision to discontinue a course of study at a course of study to ensure transparency and diligence during the transition (teach-out) period.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all courses of study offered by Proteus Technologies Pty Limited (trading as the Ikon Institute of Australia), including any courses or subjects delivered through third-party arrangements.

3. Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Deferral, Withdrawal, Refund and Tuition Assurance Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Statement of Tuition Assurance
- Course Review Policy

All policies and any associated forms referenced in this document can be downloaded from the *Policies & Procedures* section of institutional website at ikoninstitute.edu.au/policies-procedures/.

POLICY

4. Principles

- 4.1 To maintain high quality academic programs, Ikon may discontinue a course of study for academic, strategic, resourcing and/or budgetary reasons. Before discontinuing a course of study, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure students are not disadvantaged and can complete their course in a timely manner, or transition to a mutually agreed course.
- 4.2 A proposal to discontinue a course is made by the General Manager (Academic and Governance) in consultation with the Dean, Head of School, Chief Executive Officer, Head of Quality Assurance and other key stakeholders. The proposal will be presented to the Academic Board for consideration.
- 4.3 Where the Academic Board endorses a proposal for discontinuance, the Academic Board Chair will submit the recommendation to the Board of Directors within thirty days from the date of endorsement. Where the Board of Directors approves a course discontinuance, all marketing activities will cease, and no new enrolments or applications will be accepted. Students who have deferred or taken a leave of absence may be allowed to re-enrol so they can complete the course of study during the determined transition period.
- 4.4 The process of course discontinuance will be guided by a Transition Plan and Communications Plan, developed in accordance with academic governance processes and regulatory requirements. These plans will ensure timely communication, continuity of academic support, and appropriate consideration of third-party arrangements.

PROCEDURE

5. Proposal for Course Discontinuance

- 5.1 The recommendation to rationalise or discontinue a course must be made via proposal supported by relevant quantitative and qualitative data after appropriate consultation with key stakeholders.
- 5.2 A proposal to discontinue a course is made by the General Manager (Academic and Governance) in consultation with the Dean, Head of School, Chief Executive Officer, Quality Assurance Manager and other key stakeholders such as Course Advisory Committees, Student Focus Groups and Professional Industry Bodies relevant to the nature of the course. The proposal is presented to the Academic Board for their consideration, oversight and endorsement.
- 5.3 A proposal must provide a rationale for discontinuance – demand, capacity, performance, financial viability – and data to support the recommendation including, but not be limited to:
 - **Student Enrolment Data (Continuing & New Students)** for the course, including those on a leave of absence, those who have deferred and those offered a place in the course, showing their commencement date (or anticipated commencement date), study load, maximum completion date and financial obligations in accordance with relevant policies that guide enrolment and academic progression. Data must be presented as Head Count and EFTSL.
 - **Internal and External Evaluation Feedback** including copies of student evaluation surveys, formal scheduled course review, and other external consultation from experts, regulatory bodies etc.
 - **Resources Overview and Specification** of current and future resources required to sustain the course of study including teaching and learning resources, staff, facilities and equipment etc.
 - **Impact (Students)** including the impact on any associated courses, subjects or academic support programs, the availability in other courses of study.
 - **Impact (Staff)** including academic leaders, teaching staff and operational staff, showing their engagement type, discipline area, salary costs etc.
 - **Proposed Transition Plan** including a timeline of activities and milestone dates, and the proposed suite of communications to students, staff, industry and regulatory bodies.

6. Transition Planning and Responsibilities

- 6.1 The timeframe for discontinuing a course will be based on the time required for enrolled students to reasonably complete their course requirements or transition to a comparable course at lkon or at another provider.
- 6.2 As part of the Proposal for Course Discontinuance, the Dean and Head of School will develop a Transition Plan in consultation with key stakeholders. The Transition Plan must include:
 - a timeline of transition and/or teach-out activities
 - the proposed date after which no new enrolments will be accepted
 - the final date by which students must complete their course requirements
- 6.3 The final date for course completion must be calculated based on a cohort analysis and the maximum allowable timeframe for completion, commencing from the last student intake into the course.

6.4 The Transition Plan must also:

- include projections of student numbers during the transition period
- provide an indicative schedule of core or substituted subjects required to support course completion
- identify suitable alternative courses at Ikon or other higher education providers, including agreed credit transfer arrangements where applicable
- address any obligations under the ESOS framework and the Tuition Protection Service (TPS), including alternative arrangements and refund processes for international students
- consider any contractual obligations related to third-party delivery arrangements
- outline the academic and student support that will be provided to assist students through completion or transition

6.5 Where discontinuation follows a regulatory decision, the Transition Plan must also incorporate any actions required to meet directions or conditions issued by TEQSA.

6.6 Where discontinuation affects staff roles, any terminations will be managed in accordance with the relevant employment agreements and legislation. Where possible, reasonable efforts will be made to identify suitable alternative positions within Ikon.

6.7 The Transition Plan must ensure that the course remains accredited, and that Ikon continues to meet its registration obligations under TEQSA and relevant legislation for the duration of the transition period.

6.8 The Dean, in conjunction with the Head of School, Head of Quality Assurance, and the Registrar, is responsible for implementing the Transition Plan and reporting progress to the Academic Board throughout the process.

6.9 The CEO is responsible for reporting progress to the Board of Directors.

7. Communications Plan

7.1 Once a decision to discontinue has been made, affected students and staff will be notified through a coordinated program of written communications through the Dean and Head of School.

7.2 As part of the Transition Plan, the Head of School will consult with the Dean to develop a suite of communications for enrolled students, offer holders, relevant staff, and any other key stakeholders. Communications must be tailored to the needs of each group and updated as required throughout the transition process.

7.3 Written communication to enrolled students will include an Individual Course Plan outlining:

- the remaining subjects required for the student to complete the course
- the final date by which those subjects must be completed to receive the award from Ikon
- length of time during which the course will be phased out
- availability of suitable alternative courses to which the student may wish to transfer

7.4 Applicants who have returned a signed Letter of Offer for the discontinued course will be offered an alternative course or a full refund of any tuition fees paid. Applicants who have not yet formally accepted an offer will be contacted to explore alternative study options at Ikon.

7.5 Education agents will be notified of the decision to discontinue a course. Agents will receive details of suitable alternative courses and other relevant arrangements, enabling them to provide accurate information to prospective students affected by the course discontinuation.

7.6 The communications plan will also include notifications to TEQSA and other relevant regulatory or professional bodies, as applicable and as required under legislation.

8. Approval

- 8.1 The Academic Board will review the Proposal for Course Discontinuance and may endorse, reject, or request further information before making a final determination.
- 8.2 If further information is requested, the General Manager (Academic and Governance) will revise and resubmit the proposal for reconsideration, having considered the Academic Board's feedback.
- 8.3 Where the Academic Board endorses the proposal, the Chair of Academic Board will submit a recommendation to the Board of Directors within thirty days of the date of endorsement.
- 8.4 Approval from the Board of Directors authorises the commencement of the Transition Plan and Communications Plan, including formal notifications to students and regulators.

9. Transition (Teach-Out) Period

- 9.1 New enrolments will not be permitted in a course that has been approved for discontinuation. This includes students who have accepted an offer but have not commenced, and those who have deferred commencement.
- 9.2 Students who do not complete their course requirements within the timeframe specified in the Transition Plan will have their enrolment withdrawn. Where appropriate, students may be offered an exit qualification based on completed study.
- 9.3 Requests for changes to enrolment, including a leave of absence, during the transition period will generally not be approved unless exceptional or extenuating circumstances apply. Students must be advised in writing of the impact such changes may have on their progression and the limited options available for course completion. These requests will be assessed by the Dean and Head of School, with approval at the discretion of the Dean.
- 9.4 Adjustments to the Transition Plan may be necessary during the transition (teach-out) period to accommodate specific cohort needs, subject availability, or course mapping complexities. Changes that do not materially impact the timeframe, subject availability, or course structure may be approved by the General Manager (Academic and Governance). Material changes require approval from the CEO and Academic Board.

POLICY INFORMATION & HISTORY

Policy Category	Academic, Quality Assurance
Policy ID	QU013A
Approved by	Board of Directors
Date of Approval	1 September 2025
Endorsed by	Academic Board
Date of Endorsement	2 May 2025
Previous Versions	22 July 2022, 12 August 2019, 29 June 2015, 8 October 2014, 1 July 2011
Next Review Date	1 May 2028
Government Legislation	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Higher Education Support Act 2003 National Code 2018 Academic Qualifications Framework
Consideration	In developing this policy, the following documents were considered: Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Withdrawing a course/teachout (July 2024)
Responsible Officer	Dean
Benchmarking	External referencing activities were conducted against comparable providers and best practice using publicly available information for: Alphacrucis University College, Western Sydney University, University of Sunshine Coast, Melbourne Institute of Technology, Think Education Group, Adelaide Institute of Higher Education, Asia Pacific International College, Kaplan Business School, Australian College of Applied Professions, and Griffith University.

Schedule A**COURSE DISCONTINUANCE FLOWCHART****Prepare a Proposal for Course Discontinuance**

A Proposal for Course Discontinuance is made to the Academic Board by the General Manager (Academic and Governance) in consultation with the Dean, Head of School, Chief Executive Officer, Quality Assurance Manager and other key stakeholders.

General Manager (Academic and Governance) in consultation with key stakeholders

Recommend a Proposal for Course Discontinuance

Where the Academic Board endorses a Proposal for Course Discontinuance, the Academic Board Chair will present the recommendation to the Board of Directors within thirty days from the date of endorsement.

Chair of the Academic Board

Consider Proposal for Course Discontinuance

Where the Board of Directors approves the recommendation from the Academic Board to discontinue a course of study, approval is given to commence the implementation of the proposed Transition Plan and Communications Plan.

Board of Directors

Implementation of Transition & Communication Plans

The Dean is responsible for the implementation of the Transition and Communications Plans and the provision of progress reports to the Academic Board. The CEO is responsible for reporting progress to the Board of Directors.

Dean and CEO