

## **Closure of a Collaborative Partnership**

1. Whether a programme closure is initiated by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) or by the partner institution, the closure processes as outlined below must be followed. Safeguarding the interests of students is paramount and any action must include an exit strategy that preserves the integrity and continuation of their education. The university fully recognises, and accepts, its responsibilities towards the remaining students and a strategy will be developed that will enable these students to complete the award on which they originally enrolled.
2. Once it has been formally agreed to close a programme, no more students can be enrolled beyond the agreed final entry point.

### *Collaborative Programme or Partnership Closure Initiated by LJMU*

3. A decision to close a partnership programme may arise due to a change in strategic approach or as a result of issues arising from the operation and performance of the programme.
4. Where LJMU identifies a failure by the partner to meet the required academic standards on a collaborative programme, or any other substantive issue contrary to the terms of the agreement, a risk-based decision will be made by the university as to whether the partner will be given the opportunity to take corrective action. In the most severe cases, the university may take the decision to pursue termination without offering the opportunity for corrective action. Failure by the partner to take corrective action in the time specified in the Partnership Agreement may result in a breach of contract and a termination notice being issued.
5. When a closure is proposed by LJMU, a programme closure application should be made to the Academic Planning and Fees Panel (APFP) prior to any contact with the partner in relation to the proposed closure.
6. The School should prepare the application for programme closure(s) within Courseloop. If there are students on the programme, a closure form should be completed and attached to the closure proposal in Courseloop. In addition to the information that would be required for any closure application, to ensure the protection of the student experience for the teach out, the following aspects will be considered and set out within the application:
  - The ability of the university to close the programme from the perspective of the contract, the associated timescales and any other contractual considerations to inform the decision – this information will need to be confirmed with Legal and Governance Services.
  - The financial position – this information will need to be confirmed with Finance.

- The proposed approach to communicating the decision and agreeing the teach out arrangements with the partner.
7. The application will be submitted for consideration for endorsement by the Faculty Management Team (FMT) and then for consideration for approval by APFP.
  8. Following approval by APFP, the approach that has been agreed in relation to communicating the decision of the university with the partner will be followed, As part of the discussion with the partner, the number of students holding formal offers, and the teach out approach for remaining students and, where applicable, applicants, will be confirmed with the partner.
  9. Finally, any action to be taken in relation to the contract, in line with the decision of APFP, will be agreed with Legal and Governance Services.

#### *Partner Instigated Programme or Partnership Closure*

10. When the closure of an individual programme or of a partnership is proposed by the partner, this request should be shared initially with Academic Registry via the [collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:collaborativeprovision@ljmu.ac.uk) e-mail address. Academic Registry will then inform the appropriate members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) via the weekly collaborative group meetings.
11. The partner will be informed of the financial consequences of the closure by the Director of International Relations for international partnerships or by the Academic Registrar for UK partnerships.
12. If the partner still wants to close the programme, the closure by LJMU will then be co-ordinated by the PVC External Engagement and Partnerships.
13. Discussions with the partner will take place to determine the number of students holding formal offers. Academic Registry will confirm the number of active students on the programme.
14. The Faculty PVC and School Director will be advised of the partner's decision to close the programme with details of the financial agreement and of any remaining students. The Link tutor will also be advised of closure.
15. The School should prepare the application for programme closure(s) within Courseloop. If there are students on the programme, a closure form should be completed and attached to the closure proposal in Courseloop. In addition to the information that would be required for any closure application, to ensure the protection of the student experience for the teach out, the following aspects will be considered and set out within the application:
  - The ability of the partner to close the programme from the perspective of the contract, the associated timescales and any other contractual considerations to inform the decision – this information will need to be confirmed with Legal and Governance Services.
  - The financial position – this information will need to be confirmed with Finance.

16. The application will be submitted for consideration for endorsement by FMT and then for consideration for approval by APFP.
17. Finally, any action to be taken in relation to the contract, in line with the decision of APFP, will be agreed with Legal and Governance Services.

#### *Unexpected Closure of a Partner Organisation*

18. In rare circumstances, a collaborative partner may close unexpectedly, posing significant risk to both the students on programme and to the university. In such circumstances, the following procedure will be invoked immediately and the ELT will be alerted to the potential for risk.
19. The Registrar and Chief Operating Officer will become the sole university contact with the partner and will inform the Vice-Chancellor of the unexpected closure. The Registrar will be responsible for convening an emergency meeting to formulate and agree an action plan in relation to the unexpected closure.
20. This meeting will consider:
  - An academic plan for the students registered on LJMU programmes at the partner organisation, in line with the university's Student Protection Plan;
  - The legal steps to be taken to safeguard the university and the LJMU students on programme(s) at the partner;
  - A financial plan in relation to the withdrawal from the academic partnership;
  - A communication strategy (for dealing with students and the media) in relation to the closure of the academic partnership;
  - The responsibilities and key contacts across LJMU Schools in relation to the points above.
21. Attendees for the emergency closure meeting should include, as a minimum
  - Registrar and Chief Operating Officer (Chair).
  - PVC External Engagement and Partnerships
  - Academic Registrar.
  - Director of Legal and Governance Services, or nominee.
  - Academic Registry/International Relations representative.
  - Finance Director, or nominee.
  - Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations, or nominee.
  - Director of Student Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions.
  - Head of Academic Quality and Standards or Academic Quality and Standards Team Leader (Collaborative Provision).
  - Director of Student Advice and Wellbeing Services, or nominee.
22. Following the meeting, the Academic Registrar will draft a summary and action plan.