

**London School of Theology**  
**Closure of Programmes Policy**

Groups Responsible for Policy Review:	Executive Team
Executive Team Member Responsible:	ASDAS
Date Last Approved:	January 2026
To be Reviewed:	Every 36 months
Review consultation:	Executive Team, Academic Board, Board of Trustees
Date of Next Review period:	October 2029

**1. Reasons for Closure**

There are a variety of reasons why a decision may be taken to close a programme, including, for example:

- a decline in student demand such that the viability of the provision is threatened;
- a new programme is approved which replaces existing provision;
- a reduction in funding or in funded student numbers;
- documented concerns about the standards and/or quality of the provision, which may affect its credibility;
- a change in LST's priorities for academic development;
- failure to meet the criteria set by the relevant group following a periodic review exercise
- failure to recruit sufficient numbers for a new programme that has been validated and advertised, but that has not yet formally launched

**2. Authority to make closure decisions**

- a. Since the closure of a programme is primarily a business decision, the authority to initiate the
- b. programme closure process lies with the Executive team and the Board of Trustees, with final approval for any programme closure resting with the Board of Trustees (BoT). Academic Board also has a key advisory role in relation to the School's education portfolio, and in that capacity may bring concerns about the academic standards, quality and/or viability of a programme or programmes to the attention of the Executive team.

**3. Closure forms and process**

- a. The appropriate closure form should be completed (see 4 and 5 below). The Administrative process (completion of Form A) should be followed for programmes that have never recruited, or have no remaining students, or that are being replaced through the revalidation process. The alternative process (completion of Form B) should be followed for programmes with remaining students and/or current applicants holding offers (including deferred offers).
- b. All proposals for closure must, in due course, include the following information:
  - Clear rationale for closure;
  - Arrangements for phasing out the provision, or the identification of alternative provision, bearing in mind the School's contractual obligations to existing students and applicants holding offers;

NOTE: the aim of these arrangements should, wherever possible, be to enable existing students to continue on their current programme and complete the award for which they are registered at LST;

  - Measures to be taken to protect the quality of the provision being phased out;
  - Evidence of consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including staff and students.

**4. Administrative Closure (Form A)**

- a. Where there are no students or applicants on a programme, and the programme is to be archived, the closure form should be completed by the appropriate Programme Leader and the Academic Dean.

b. Where existing provision is to be replaced by a new programme in the same subject area, the implementation plan for the new provision, and phasing out of the old programme, will be outlined in the new programme submission document and in the report of the programme approval panel.

#### 5. Programmes with remaining students and/or current applicants (Form B)

- a. When a proposal is made to close a programme on which students are currently studying, or for which applicants are holding offers of a place, a risk assessment should initially be undertaken by the Programme Leader and Academic Dean in order to make recommendations about the process that should be followed in order to address the key issues as appropriate to the programme under consideration. The rationale for the closure, the initial risk assessment and the proposed closure process must be submitted to the full Executive team for consideration.
- b. While the formal decision to initiate closure of a programme or programmes lies with the Executive Team (as per Clause 2a above), *final approval* for any programme closure rests with the Board of Trustees (BoT). Once approved by the BoT, the closure process may proceed to confirmation with the relevant validating body/ies, formal announcement to the students concerned, and wider public notification as appropriate. At this point, the ASDAS should also notify the appropriate colleagues in Registry and Admissions, in order to ensure the programme is closed to further applications.
- c. Once the decision has been made by the BoT to close a programme with current students and/or applicants, the agreed, more detailed closure process as outlined below in 6 will be followed.

#### 6. Closure Policy and Process

- a. The ASDAS
  - i. must ensure that appropriate consultation is carried out with students, and that clear information is provided about the arrangements that are to be put in place for the remainder of their programme of study;
  - ii. ensure that consultation with relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body/ies and other key stakeholders (e.g. partner organisations, funding bodies) is undertaken;
  - iii. agree on the point at which applications to the programme should be suspended, and on the means and content of communications with applicants who are already in the system. If no further applications are to be accepted, the Admissions Team should be notified at this point in order to close recruitment to the programme
- b. The Academic Dean
  - i. must ensure that appropriate consultation is carried out with relevant faculty and staff, including their union representatives as appropriate, and that clear information is provided about the implications of the closure for their employment (referring to the HR guidance on handling redundancy and redeployment);
  - ii. also inform relevant Visiting Lecturers, alerting them to any implications for their working agreements with the School; draw up the proposed teach-out and quality assurance arrangements to be put in place to enable existing students to complete their programme of study, to inform the Academic Board of these arrangements, and to take account of any advice the Academic might offer on them.
- c. The Principal will agree on the means and timing of internal and external communications, and the processes to be used for approving message content.

#### 7. Suspension of Recruitment

- a. Suspension of recruitment, rather than closure, may be the preferred option where there is reason to believe that the issues underlying the decision to suspend are temporary. However, suspension of a programme is often a first step towards closure, being taken either to enable the revalidation of current provision or the development of new, replacement provision. It is recommended that a programme should not remain in suspension for longer than two years without a decision to re-open, replace or close it being made. During the period of suspension, the suspended programme will be subject to the normal QA processes.

- b. It is vital that appropriate processes are followed in order to ensure that the School is compliant with consumer legislation in respect of providing early communication about any programme changes to applicants and students, including suspension or closure. When a proposal to suspend is made, the Executive team will determine whether suspension, rather than closure, is the appropriate course of action. In the case of suspension, the Executive Team should consult with the Board of Trustees before confirming the decision to suspend. In the case of closure, the Executive should refer their initial proposal to close a programme or programmes to the Board of Trustees for final approval, as set out above.