
Standard Number:	2003	Effective Date:	Jan 1, 2024
Standard Title:	Program Suspension and Discontinuance	Last Updated:	Nov 28, 2023
Standard Category:	Academics	Next Review Date:	Sep, 2025

Purpose

This standard is to ensure transparency and attention to duty of care when suspending or discontinuing programs at Ridge Meadows College.

This standard does not apply to adjustments to the number or timing of program intakes during an academic year that are part of the routine management of a program's delivery.

Definitions

Duty of Care: the responsibility of the college to avoid acts or omissions that could cause likely harm to students or others. This is inclusive of, but not limited to, physical, emotional and financial harm.

Permanent College Closure: The decision to cease operations and all programs at the college.

Program: the complete set of all courses required to achieve a regulated certification, or the collection of courses defined as a program by the College.

Program Discontinuance: Elimination of the offering of a program.

Program Suspension: Temporary cancellation of a program, or intakes of new students to a program for a period of one year or more.

Statement

Ridge Meadows College is operated by School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows) as a service to the community. The college is committed to offering quality programs in alignment with its mission. Due to various reasons, it may be necessary to suspend or discontinue a program. In such cases, the procedures outlined in this Standard will be followed.

Program Suspension or Discontinuance

1. Any decision to suspend or discontinue a program will be made using a thoughtful and collaborative process that involves the Program Chair, the college Manager and member(s) of School District No. 42 (SD42) Senior Team. The discontinuation of any program must be approved by a member of SD42 Senior Team.

2. Conditions that may lead to suspension or discontinuance of a program may be, but will not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Demand, including student and market (employment) demand.
 - b. Capacity, determined by various program inputs such as faculty / staff availability, student interest, facility limitations or curriculum reasons.
 - c. Performance, including graduation rates, student intake levels, and contribution to the strategic direction of the college.
 - d. Financial viability, including a program's direct and indirect costs as well as long-term sustainability.
3. In the case of program suspension, only new intakes of students will be affected. Any students currently enrolled in the program will be able to continue with their previously approved program plan.
4. In the case of program discontinuation, a plan to accommodate current students will be developed and implemented by the program chair and college manager. A communications and transition plan will also be implemented. The college is committed to provide reasonable opportunities for students mid-way through a discontinued program. A discontinued or cancelled program will be phased out in the following manner:
 - a. No new applicants will be accepted into the program
 - b. First term courses will be discontinued, followed by second and subsequent term courses in order
 - c. Students may be granted permission to transfer in courses from other institutions or substitute courses with others of an equivalent nature as determined by the program chair.
 - d. Partnerships with other institutions may be investigated for students who would like to transfer.
 - e. All students will be permitted to complete their program pathway as it stands at the time in which the program discontinuation was confirmed.
5. Students wishing to graduate from a discontinued program must apply to graduate within one year of completion of the program.

Permanent College Closure

The decision to permanently close the college may only be made by SD42 senior team in collaboration with the School District No. 42 elected board of trustees after an appropriate consultation process has taken place with the college manager and program chairs. The school district and college are committed to following best practices regarding principles of equity and duty of care should a permanent college closure take effect.

Any programs in operation at the time of the decision of permanent closure will be discontinued in the manner specified within this service standard.

Records for the college and its students will continue to be held by School District No. 42 and remain accessible to former students indefinitely after the college has closed.

Related Standards

- 2002 – Program Review