

THE GAZETTE, MONTREAL

THE NATION

Queen's says castle program faces axe if cash drain continues

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KINGSTON, Ont. — A Canadian university program operating in a 600-year-old castle has been given six months to plug its drafty cashbox.

Queen's University's board of trustees has voted to continue its International Study Centre at Herstmonceux Castle in Sussex, England, until November.

By then the board wants the centre to have found a partner to help pay off nearly \$15 million in debts.

Most of that, \$11 million, was spent renovating the castle in 1994 so the centre could begin offering arts and humanities courses to students from Canada and around the world.

Operating losses since the Kingston-based university started the centre two years ago have reached almost \$4 million.

If the centre can't demonstrate it is at least close to finding a partner and that it has stopped the cash drain, the board will adopt an "exit strategy," according to a Queen's news release.

Seventy-five students registered for courses at the centre in the 1995-96 school year. They pay \$6,800 a term, but the fees don't cover the cost of paying 18 professors and operating the castle.

Herstmonceux and its 111-hectare estate were donated to Queen's by alumnus Alfred Bader and his wife, Isabel, who paid \$6 million for the property.



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