

Student protection plan

Provider's name: Salford City College

Provider's UKPRN: 10005032

Legal address: SCC Group, Dronfield Road, Salford, M6 7FR

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Jane Nickisson

Student protection plan for the period 2021-2022

1. An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students, how those risks may differ based on your students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise

In the unlikely event that we are unable to deliver courses in specialised programmes in the next three years we will provide information, advice and guidance at the earliest opportunity, so our students are aware of the options available to them.

The College's circumstantial and environmental risks are the same as those of any major educational institution. These risks include events that could not be anticipated and/or are beyond our control, such as fire and flood (often referred to as "force majeure"). We also will take into consideration any anticipated risks posed by the current and ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic in line with Public Health England guidance and in consultation with our Higher Education partners and validating organisations.

In the event of a major event occurring the College has in place business continuity plans which address potential issues and detail mitigation, such as ongoing safety inspections, risk assessments and having appropriate insurance in place. The College has made significant investments in its estate to provide the best possible learning experience for its students. The risks are also mitigated due to the provision being delivered from multiple campuses. The College will also ensure that all Public Health England measures are put in place to ensure the health and safety of all students whilst on the college premises.

The risk that the college is unable to operate is very low because our sound financial performance. The College has sufficient cash flow to pay existing debt and make improvements to the College estate. Prudent financial management and a robust budgeting process ensures that the College finances are well managed. The college has reported an operating surplus in the last 3 academic years and continually increased its Income and Expenditure Reserves. It has continued to increase its student enrolments year on year with an increase in the courses offered in partnership with University of Salford, University of Bolton and Pearson. The College ensures academic quality and standards through robust internal processes.

We believe that the risk around delivery of programmes in the next three years is low. The College has forged close links with its partner institutions and these arrangements are reviewed periodically from both a quality and compliance point of view. Relationships are managed by the Partnerships Office who closely work with their counterparts in the partner organisations. However, during this pandemic period we will likely move between face to face and remote delivery on a regular basis to safeguard the experience and health and wellbeing of all students. The wellbeing of all students is a high priority for The College and such steps will be put in place to ensure that all students may be able to continue with their studies whether on site or working remotely.

Our curriculum planning process ensures perceived risks are identified and contingency arrangements discussed prior to the approval of new programmes. Any changes to programme, amendments, are communicated with the students in line with the Competition and Markets Authority guidance. During the pandemic period, reasonable adjustments, and adaptations to assessed work have been made in line with Public Health England guidance and validating partner regulations to safeguard the academic process.

Any planned suspension or withdrawal of programmes comply with the Consumer Protection Law, ensuring "teach-out" and offer alternative programmes of study or transfers where it is appropriate. The risk that we are no longer able to deliver material components of our courses is low because we design our modules to be taught by integrated teams of academic staff.

The Corporation regularly reviews the key risks to which the college is exposed. It has implemented operating, financial and compliance controls to mitigate those risks. The College risk register is regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors. This ensures we identify any potential risks around the delivery of our provision and any mitigating actions discussed and approved.

Some of the risks to the continuation of study for students are:

Event	Likelihood
We lose specialist facilities	Low
We decide to cease or to suspend recruitment to a programme in one or more subject areas.	Medium
The College has lost validation for one or more of its courses	Low
Financial risk	Low
We are no longer able to deliver material components of our programmes due to the unanticipated departure of members of staff.	Low
Courses ceasing to operate entirely due to Covid-19	Medium

2. The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise

Event	Evidence
We lose specialist facilities	<p>Our specialist facilities are managed by technical experts, and we review and update facilities on a rolling basis, while investing on upgrading the facilities on an on-going basis.</p> <p>The stability of our estate is very high with no short-term leases for buildings.</p>
We decide to cease or to suspend recruitment to a programme in one or more subject areas.	All programmes are reviewed regularly. Following these reviews, decisions are made to cease or suspend recruitment to certain programmes. In such circumstances, applicants will be contacted in a timely manner, notify them of the changes and support them to find an alternative programme at Salford or elsewhere, as appropriate.
The College has lost validation for one or more of its courses	<p>The College has strong relationships with the Universities and other awarding bodies that validate the Higher National, Degree and post graduate Programmes. A partnership manager has been allocated to the college and regular partnership meetings are held with the relevant programme managers and the College HE Partnerships & Operations lead.</p> <p>In the event of a partner institution deciding to stop validating any course, the College will work with the partner institution to “teach-out” the course.</p> <p>For courses that are franchised through a university, there is commitment for students to transfer fully to the university or alternative provider within the franchise.</p>
Financial risk	<p>The College has been rated good by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for 2020-2021 and this has continued in 2021-22, at the time of writing this statement, and we anticipate it will continue beyond the academic year.</p> <p>The College has in place robust financial controls and procedures including effective budget monitoring and control to ensure that the College continues to maintain a sound financial base in terms of both solvency and liquidity.</p>

<p>We are no longer able to deliver material components of our programmes due to the unanticipated departure of members of staff.</p>	<p>Our programmes are designed to be taught by integrated teams of academic staff. This mitigates the higher risk in specialist areas.</p> <p>Where changes are required to material components of a programme, the students will be given as much notice as reasonably practicable. Programme teams will ensure that the impact on students is mitigated wherever possible.</p>
<p>We are no longer able to deliver material components of our programmes due to the Covid-19 Pandemic</p>	<p>In the event that practical elements may not be delivered on college premises due to guidance from Public Health England, or validating bodies, the College will seek to facilitate adaptations to assessments and alternative strategies to ensure that students are still able to meet learning outcomes.</p> <p>During periods where students are face to face, practical activities will be prioritised and theoretical elements maybe delivered remotely.</p>

3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study

Salford City College has developed this policy which sets out the circumstances in which the College will refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and provide compensation where necessary if the College is unable to provide continuation of study for one or more students on its higher education programmes.

The risk that this may occur has been assessed, through this Student Protection Plan, as highly unlikely. However, if it were to occur then any affected students should receive a refund of fees and appropriate compensation.

In compiling this student protection plan we provide assurance that there are no existing courses or groups of students where we would need to transfer courses or provider as the college has adequate resources to ensure the teach out of existing courses. No refund will be made if the students are either on a “teach- out” or transferred to another provider.

If the situation changed and we were unable to offer “teach-out” or transfer to another provider, the College has sufficient resources to provide refunds and compensation.

As per the tuition fee policy, under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the College, and where the student can demonstrate that extenuating circumstances exist to prevent them from continuing with their course, the Director of Finance may authorise a refund or credit note. This will represent a proportionate amount of the tuition fee applicable to the remaining classes of the course, which the student will be unable to attend.

Our Higher Education Refund and Compensation Policy (to be published on our web site once it has final sign off from our governing body) explains the College’s procedures for refunds. These are dealt with on an individual basis and in line with our complaints procedure as well as reference guides from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) e.g. 'The OIA's approach to Remedies and Redress'. The College subscribes to the OIA.

Tuition fee refunds may be considered if any of the following circumstances exist:

- The college terminates a course, which has already started
- The college is not able to provide an advertised course
- The college changes the time or location of a course from that advertised
- The college recommends a student transfers to a course with a lower fee
- The college has overcharged a student or assessed their fees incorrectly
- Medical conditions, certified by appropriate medical professionals, resulting in the student having to leave the college completely

This plan considers:

- Refunds for students in receipt of tuitions fee loan from the Student Loans Company.
- Refunds for students who pay their own tuition fees.
- Refunds for students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor.
- The payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course.
- Commitments to honour student bursaries.

- Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to preserve continuation of study.
- Compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students must transfer courses or provider.

4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan

We will publicise our student protection plan to current and future students by incorporating this at induction as well as on our student intranet/internet.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose course/module amendments via our robust curriculum planning process.

We will review our student protection plan and include students in this. The plan will be reviewed annually as part of HE monitoring forums, curriculum planning processes and ultimately, HE Academic Board.

We will inform our students if there are to be material changes to their course by at the earliest possible opportunity both verbally and in writing.

We will give students as much notice as possible when we need to make material changes to their course.

If we need to implement the measures in our student protection plan, we will ensure students are aware of both the academic, pastoral support as well as counselling/chaplain and citizens advice.