

Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: **Bath College**

Provider's UKPRN: **1001465**

Legal address: **Avon Street, Bath BA1 1UP**

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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

The Student protection plan is a sub-section of the College's overall Risk Management Register, and will be monitored by the senior management team, and approved by the Governing Body.

The risk that Bath College as a whole is unable to operate is **low** because our financial performance is strong with an ESFA financial health rating of good, projected to remain good for the foreseeable future.

The risk that Bath College is no longer able to award qualifications for which students are registered is **very low**. We have a track record with our awarding bodies and validating partners of providing high quality provision. Our main awarding body is Pearson, and we have very positive External Verification (EV) reports in all subjects, often highlighting best practice. We have a rigorous internal quality processes that are managed by our Quality Performance Manager. There is also a quality cycle with our validating Universities that is followed, with regular quality meetings (PPMCs) and Exam Boards.

The risk that we would be unable to deliver courses at a particular site is **very low**. All our HE provision is situated at our City Centre Campus in Bath. If this centre became unavailable, we would be able to recreate provision at our other campus (Somerset Valley Campus), and we have an agreement with the University that they would be able to house our Applied Computing students.

The risk that we would be unable to deliver courses to students is **moderate** due to the relatively low number of students that that College recruits. The most likely risk is that a course does not enrol enough to run in the first place. Once a course has started, the College is committed to ensuring that the course continues to completion. Our courses are generally advertised as one-year courses for this reason. The exception is our two Foundation Degrees, where we are committed to providing provision for the full two years.

The risk that we would be unable to deliver one or more modes of study to students is also **moderate**, as it is linked to the ability to run a course (all HE courses are only available as one mode of study at present)

The risk that we would be unable to deliver a programme, or part of a programme due to loss of single subject dependency staff is **low**.

The risk that we are no longer able to deliver material is **low**. Staff are required to store resources centrally and on the relevant online platform to ensure that material for curriculum are available and accessible

The risk that we would be unable to deliver courses due to a loss of IT infrastructure is **low**.

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

If we are unable to deliver courses at our City Centre campus in the next three years we will:

- Arrange transport to allow learners to deliver the relevant courses at the College's Somer Valley campus.
- Give existing students notice of the move, and a period of consultation to identify barriers that may occur
- Provide solutions to these barriers (e.g. increased transport, timetable changes etc)
- Provide sufficient resources that replicate facilities at the City Centre Campus
- Consult with relevant stakeholders and employer links to assist in providing provision
- Inform new applicants of the relocation
- Offer blended or distance learning delivery models subject to HEI or AO approval.

'If we are unable to deliver courses or material components in specialised programmes in the next three years we will:

- Secure insurance arrangements with partner colleges such that we will be able transfer learners to another provider.
- Secure insurance arrangements in place with partner colleges where we can share resources to allow the continuation of the courses/delivery.

The College has an agreement with the partner universities that they would assist with staffing if a long term replacement was required. The College is also advertising for 'bank staff' in specialist areas so there is a pool of talent to draw upon in case an absence occurred that couldn't be filled through normal recruitment processes. Material for courses is also developed for the college's online platform so that students can access material online and/or have content delivered in different ways due to staff absence. There are also 'Plan B' contingency plans in place for courses whereby certain optional units can be changed to ensure continuity of business.

If we close a course before it starts, the following process is already in place

- Applicants are informed at the earliest opportunity. (We also have a caveat in any offer that we make that the course will not run if numbers are too low and students will be advised as soon as possible if this is going to be the case)
- Applicants are given support in finding alternative provision in the region by direct signposting from the College to other providers.

Our IT systems are monitored regularly and there are robust cyber-security measures in place.

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

Bath College has a Fees Policy which now includes a Refund and Compensation Annex. This Annex refers to:

- 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 have to transfer courses or provider.

Bath College is committed to ensuring business continuity for its students, and Senior Management and Governors monitor this through the College's Risk Register.

Bath College will put in place insurance arrangements in line with the College's refunds policy.

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:

- Including the protection plan in the current students' induction
- Including details of the protection plan in the HE student handbook
- Ensuring all HE staff are trained in the details of the student protection plan
- Publish the student protection plan on the College intranet and website.
- The plan will be published as a word document. The attached Excel document is to allow senior staff to monitor the plan.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose course changes by:

- Ensuring all HE staff are trained in the details of the student protection plan
- Putting in place course panels to approve and manage the communication around course changes

We will review our student protection plan using the students' voice by involving them at the draft stage prior to submission and on an annual basis thereafter.

If the College's student protection plan needs to be implemented:

- A course panel will review the proposed changes and the potential impacts
- If approved, the changes will be communicated to students via the HE staff (trained) and the Curriculum Manager for HE, Enterprise & Digital.

- Follow up sessions will take place with students collectively by the Curriculum Manager for HE, Enterprise & Digital to ensure that changes are being managed effectively.
- All learners will be communicated in writing individually.

Learners will be given 4 weeks' notice when the College needs to make material changes to their course.