

## Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: **Anglia Ruskin University**

Provider's UKPRN: **10000291**

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### Student protection plan

**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**

It is our analysis that our current financial position and performance means that none of the situations detailed below are likely to crystallise in the foreseeable future.

At the point of registration with Anglia Ruskin, students are informed of, and asked to agree to, various terms and conditions of which a subset relate to any changes to the course they have joined that may be deemed necessary during their time as an Anglia Ruskin student. These types of changes are governed by a range of quality assurance approaches and involve student consultation. It is important to note that these relate to provision that is on-going and that they apply to applicants who have accepted an offer as well as registered students. Therefore, such circumstances do not fall within the remit of this plan as they do not constitute a risk to the continuation of study.

Based on our current situation, the range of risks relating to continuation of study for our students which could occur are detailed below, listed in order of likelihood and severity. In all the scenarios detailed below, we will ensure the construction of exit strategies for each and every course in terms of numbers of students; modular implications and the fulfilling of re-assessment obligations in line with our regulatory framework. On occasion this may result in a reduction in optional module choice as numbers diminish. Consultation with the affected students underpins all related activity and we would consider the particular needs of different types of student (part-time, distance learners, mature students, international students, students with additional needs, etc.)

#### **a) Course closure**

This is the most likely cause of discontinuation and is likely to occur when either (i) a course is deemed to have reached the end of its natural life due to a trend of falling recruitment and/or satisfaction or (ii) is replaced by a new product. In either case, Anglia Ruskin commits itself to 'teach out' the appropriate curriculum to all students registered for the course.

#### **b) Partnership closure**

From time to time, collaborative arrangements come to end either through mutual agreement due to the partner achieving its own awarding powers or transferring to an alternative awarding body or, rarely, the financial stability of the partner means that the collaboration has to cease. Our due diligence of new partners at the initiation of a relationship, and the on-going monitoring of the financial health of our partners during the relationship, reduces further the risk of partnerships ending due to the continuing viability of the partner.

From this academic year, as part of our due diligence work, new partners will be required to have a student protection plan in place which is approved by Anglia Ruskin University. Current partners will be required to submit an approved student protection plan at partnership review. An approved student protection plan will include measures for ensuring that suitable teach out arrangements will be in place for existing students on an Anglia Ruskin award programme at a partnership provider should the continuation of study for these students be affected,

In all cases, our guiding principle will be to determine a solution which is in the best interest of the students with our default position being to 'teach-out' the curriculum, as specified in our existing formal legally binding agreements with all our collaborative partners which we intend to honour. This may involve Anglia Ruskin staff taking over direct responsibility for delivery and the use of short-term contracted staff where necessary. However, we highlight that all our legal contractual arrangements with our partners state a requirement to 'teach out'.

In exceptional cases, and more likely to be an option that needs to be considered with our TNE work, we will engage in discussion with the students and the partner to determine the solution that is in the best interests of the students. If our default position of 'teach out' articulated above proves not to be possible, such a solution may include the transfer of a subset of students (who are nearer the beginning of their course) to an alternative Anglia

Ruskin location, collaborative partner, an alternative provider or another awarding body (where appropriate provision exists). This option is very much the exception and will usually only be pursued after all other options have been exhausted. Precise detail of any plan will be very much linked to the individual circumstances surrounding the end of the partnership and, also, the legal jurisdiction within which the students are located. To this end, it may be required to consult with education authorities appropriate to the geographical location

**c) Subject area/discipline closure**

This is likely to be a long term strategic decision and is therefore likely to occur less frequently but would always follow the principle of 'teach-out'.

**d) Campus closure (and transfer of courses to other campus)**

Given our current financial viability, the unplanned required or forced closure of a campus is unlikely. Campus closure is more likely as part of strategic considerations in which case the process would be carefully planned. We would pursue a 'teach-out' strategy wherever possible and transfer provision to other existing campus(es) or, depending on the geographical context, other alternative locations.

**e) Campus closure (and closure of associated courses)**

As d) above but is likely to also include consideration under a) and d) above which would occur concurrently. We would pursue a strategy of teach-out but may also consider alternative locations/providers/awarding bodies if this is deemed to be in the best interest of the students following discussions with the affected student body.

**f) Loss of Degree Awarding Powers**

Given our history of a stable financial position and successful performance in various QAA (and other organisations') audit and review methodologies, this is extremely unlikely to crystallise. If it did occur, we would identify alternative awarding bodies with whom we could work to continue to teach our courses to our student body.

**g) Loss of Right to Recruit International Students (loss of highly trusted status)**

Our basic compliance assessment shows that we are performing consistently within the expected thresholds on the key metrics in order for us to maintain our Tier 4 arrangements for recruiting international students and, therefore, we have no reason to believe that this scenario is likely to crystallise. However, if the situation were to occur, we would consider the implications that no international student recruitment may have on the continued viability of certain courses but, moreover, look to secure alternative providers for international students to allow them to complete their higher education.

**h) Institutional closure**

Given our current financial viability this is extremely unlikely to crystallise. As such an eventuality is likely to be due to unforeseen circumstances, appropriate consideration would be given to all options following the *principle of the best interests of the students*.

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

Temporary Disruption (eg: lockdown measures, industrial action, staff illness, fire/flood. etc.)

Where a situation that causes temporary disruption occurs, we always attempt to maintain a service including the teaching of courses to all students.

On occasions where this does not prove possible, we will make alternative timetabled arrangements to replace any scheduled teaching that is missed.

In the event that the University is unable to deliver face to face teaching, where possible we will deliver an online teaching provision to students, with equivalent learning opportunities. This would apply only where the University is unable to deliver face to face teaching as a result of government requirements,

Where disruption caused is prolonged and could cause significant disadvantage to students, we would consider the use of appropriate refunds and/or compensation. We also consider appropriate amendments to the assessment process to take any disruption into account so as not to disadvantage students but still maintaining the academic integrity of the process.

It should be noted that we do not have any staff in the USS Pensions Scheme so have been unaffected by recent industrial action in this regard.

### **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**

Our Rules, Regulations & Procedures for Students, to which students agree at the annual (re)registration point, details the situations in which a tuition fee refund is available (eg: the time limit by which a student has to have withdrawn from a course for a refund on tuition fees to be liable). A copy can be found [here](#).

We have a University Student Refunds and Compensation policy which runs separately to our Tuition Fee policy. This applies in relation to tuition fees, accommodation fees, other relevant costs and miscellaneous payments where the University is no longer able to preserve continuation of study for students on either a permanent or temporary basis.

The policy is available here: [Refund and Compensation Policy](#)

If all of our plans to mitigate and manage any of the risks identified above proved to be insufficient, as a last resort, we would call on contingency and other funds to address the situation. As a part of our financial strategy, we retain cash balances that would be more than sufficient to deal with any of the scenarios above to refund tuition fees and provide compensation where necessary where it proves impossible to preserve continuation of study.

### **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 via our webpages and reference it on the Course Information Sheet and the Student Charter.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose course changes through the appropriate quality assurance processes (Course (Re) Approval, Curriculum Revisions and Periodic Review).

We will review our student protection plan through our Corporate Management Team and our regular liaison meetings with the Students' Union executive officers and senior staff (USU) on an annual basis. Our students will be involved in our review via our Students' Union and the course representative system in line with our Principles of Partnership agreement that we have with our Students' Union.

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

If this protection plan needs to be engaged in any way we would aim to provide all students with a minimum 6 months' notice of closures/withdrawal although excepting that in emergency situations or events beyond our control, this may not be possible.