

## **Student Protection Plan 2018/2019**

This Student Protection Plan sets out the policies and procedures the University has in place to ensure the continuity and quality of your study from enrolment to completion of your studies.

### **Risk Assessment**

The institutional risk register is monitored and kept under review by Audit Committee throughout the year. The areas of the register include: Financial, Learning and Teaching, International, Staffing, Innovative Research & Enterprise and University systems. The register is presented to University Council for approval annually, last approved in March 2018.

The University has a long standing, excellent financial performance. This is evidenced in the Financial and Sustainability submission made to HEFCE in December 2017. It also has a strong track record as a provider of high quality education, suggesting that it is unlikely to be responsible for serious breaches of standards that might lead to the withdrawal of degree awarding powers. We have had successful institutional audits and our Teaching Excellence Framework rating is Gold. The University was the winner of the first Higher Education Academy Global Teaching Excellence Award in 2017. Levels of complaints are low (18 in 2016/17) and we have had no serious concerns expressed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. The University is located on one campus, with no foreseeable reasons for campus closure. Systematic and well established planning systems make it highly unlikely that whole Schools will be closed, as processes of horizon scanning and portfolio development planning ensure that the University continues to recruit well.

The University has insurance in place to protect students in the case of catastrophic external events which impact on our ability to continue our business, as well as a regularly reviewed business continuity management policy. The University's Business Continuity Management Policy is monitored by Audit Committee throughout the year and was approved by University Council in March 2018.

### **Mitigation Measures**

#### **Course Closure**

The University has a clear policy for the management of course closures. The policy is contained within the Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards, Sections B, 8.1 available at:

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulations-and-policies/qa/>

Where significant changes are made to courses for professional, pedagogical or market reasons, this is done in line with CMA requirements, following the University's guidance on implementing CMA expectations, issued to all staff.

It is recognised that the University's responsibilities for and commitments to students on courses only conclude on completion of the final module by the final student. If a school course team proposes the closure of a course they must complete the exit strategy for approval by the School's Senior Management Team setting out how students who remain on the course will be facilitated to achieve course outcomes. The approved exit strategy will be noted at the University's Teaching and Learning Committee and monitored by the School's Teaching and Learning Committee. This is applicable to students taught at the University and those taught as part of our collaborative provision. It is clearly flagged in collaborative agreements. The University has had to make limited use of this and all students have successfully completed.

In the unlikely event that an applicant has accepted an offer from the University at the point of a course closure notice being approved, the University's admissions team will notify the applicant and ensure any financial payments made by the applicant are refunded.

The University honours student bursaries where students transfer courses as a result of programme closure or significant amendment.

The University has a number of Degree Apprenticeships and is committed to supporting apprentices to find alternative employment should the need arise.

The exit strategy is available at:

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/registry/qualityassurance/validations/>

### **Collaborative Partnerships**

The University has robust due diligence processes for the approval of new partnerships with additional layers of scrutiny for overseas partnerships. Guidance on these processes can be found at:

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulations-and-policies/handbookforcollaborativeprovision/>

It is reasonable that CP programmes may close from time to time as a result of one party's wish to change partners, award their own qualifications or from market changes. As with home provision the School's Senior Management Team will approve an exit strategy which will be noted at the University's Standing Committee on Collaborative Provision and at University Teaching and Learning Committee. This will be monitored by the School's Teaching and Learning Committee and the Standing Committee on Collaborative Provision. Teaching and support will not cease until the last student has completed.

### **Refunds and Compensation**

The University has substantial cash reserves which would be sufficient to provide refunds and compensation should a risk of non-continuation to study arise. If a student is unhappy with the closure of a course and wishes to transfer to another institution the Dean of School and Director of Finance will agree on a financial package with the student to ensure the student is not disadvantaged academically or financially. This will take into account those with protected characteristics or from different backgrounds.

## Tuition Fee Refund Policy

This policy is contained within Section 1; Part B of the Students' Handbook of Regulations \* and refers to students registered on full and part-time programmes at the university including research students who decide to withdraw from the University.

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Student-Handbook-of-Regulations.pdf#page=25>

If **a student** has decided to suspend or withdraw from the University this policy provides essential information on tuition fee refunds. Students who are required to pay tuition fees and withdraw or suspend from their studies during the year will be charged a proportion of the tuition fee for their course as set out below, depending on when they withdraw or suspend.

For students leaving in:

- First month – no charge
- Term 1 - 25% charge\*
- Term 2 - 50% charge
- Term 3 - 100% charge

\*For overseas students who have paid a non-refundable deposit and leave in Term 1, the non-refundable deposit will be lost. For students leaving in or after Term 2 the above tariff will apply.

Additional fee information is available at: <https://students.hud.ac.uk/finance/>

Fees will be refunded to the payee:

- Refunds for students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loans Company will be referred back to the SLC;
- Refunds for students who pay their own fees will be refunded back to the student;
- Refunds for sponsored students will be returned to their sponsor, for example your employer or embassy;
- Refunds to apprentices will be paid back to the ESFA.

## Ancillary Charges

Where ancillary charges remain unpaid these will be treated as a debt to the University and the University reserves the right:

- i. not to invite the student to the University graduation ceremonies
- ii. to refer a student's account to an external debt collection agency until the University agrees that the debt has been paid in full.

## Circumstances Under Which Tuition Fees Will Not be Refunded to Students Who Are Withdrawn by the University

For September starters (pro-rata for other start dates)

If a student is withdrawn from a programme of study by the University for the following reasons tuition fees will not be refunded if the student is in attendance after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the summer term (pro-rata for other start dates):

1. If the student has failed the programme of study
2. If the student has been withdrawn as a cumulative outcome of Academic Integrity
3. If the student has been withdrawn for purposes of being unfit to practise
4. If the student has been withdrawn as part of the attendance monitoring policy
5. If the student been withdrawn on academic grounds
6. If the student has been withdrawn for a breach of the University's Disciplinary Regulations.

### Communication with Students

The University will publicise the Student Protection Plan to future students on course finder and the prospectus. It will be made available to current students via the Student Portal, the Student Contract and the Students' Handbook of Regulations.

The University will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our Student Protection Plan when they propose course changes as it will be a standing item for all Validations and SAVP processes, and via the CMA Good Practice Guidance training.

The provisions in this Student Protection Plan have been developed via existing practice and policies at University committees with representation from the Students' Union. The plan will be reviewed annually by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee which has representation from the Students' Union.

A student who wishes to complain about measures implemented under the terms of this plan may do so using the University's complaints procedure and would be required to evidence his/her complaint. The complaint would initially be handled by the Dean of School at Stage 1, by Registry if referred to Stage 2 and to the PVC/DVC as appropriate if referred to Stage 3.

If the University needs to implement the measures in our Student Protection Plan, we would put in place consultation meetings with the course leader and Head of Department for individual courses. If this were to happen on a larger scale the Dean/PVC would communicate with students and ensure that our students have access to independent advice through the Students' Union. In the case of collaborative provision this would also involve the partner and institutional or designated academic liaison officers.

### Complaints

Students who wish to make a complaint about their course may do so using the University's complaints procedure which is available to all students at:

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Student-Handbook-of-Regulations.pdf#page=127>

If a complaint is upheld the University may offer a remedy and in some circumstances compensation where the student has been materially disadvantaged. Any remedy or compensation offered are in line with the OIA's Approach to Remedies and Redress available here:

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/121676/remedies-and-redress-april-2018.pdf>

#### Additional Information

Further information on policies related to your enrolment as a registered student of the University is contained within the Students' Handbook of Regulations available at:

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Key-Facts.pdf>

**Note: All policies referenced in the Students' Handbook of Regulations and Quality Assurance Procedures for Taught Courses and Research Awards are reviewed annually and published on-line prior to the start of the academic year.**