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UNIVERSITY

Student Protection Plan Guidance

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Contents

What is a Student Protection Plan?	3
Purpose of the Student Protection Plan	3
What are the potential risks?	3
What steps do we take to protect your study?	3
Table 1: Potential Risks Events	4
How will current and future students be aware of the plan?	5
How will you know if the Student Protection Plan is triggered?	5
Further Advice and Support for Students	5
The University’s Refund and Compensation Policy	6
Developing the Student Protection Plan	6
Feedback	6
Concerns and Complaints	7
Information and Support for Staff	7
Appendix 1: Leeds Beckett University’s assessment of potential risks	8
Appendix 2: Other Events	12

What is a Student Protection Plan?

All providers of higher education in England are required to have a Student Protection Plan (SPP). This Leeds Beckett University's Student Protection Plan sets out potential risks required to be assessed under the Office for Students regulatory framework which, **if** they were to arise during your studies, **may** have an impact on your continuation of study.

Our plan has been developed in consultation with the Students' Union and has been approved by the Office for Students (V 1 August 2018). This plan was updated to V1.1 August 2019. This plan will be updated annually or when circumstances require. Feedback on the plan is welcomed and should be sent to

studentprotectionplan@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Purpose of the Student Protection Plan

The purpose of Leeds Beckett University's Student Protection Plan is to mitigate risks and where practicable preserve the continuation and quality of study for all our students whenever a risk under this plan occurs and is likely to impact on our students. The term "the University" in this plan refers to Leeds Beckett University.

What are the potential risks?

We have identified and assessed the potential risks to students' continuation of study in Table 1 below. Our assessment considers the likelihood and the severity of impact of these risks for our students, should these risks occur. These risks are each assessed overall as **low risk** (as at 3 July 2019). Information on this assessment is provided in Appendix 1.

There are other events which may arise that normally would be dealt with separately and not treated as potential risk events under the student protection plan with examples provided in Appendix 2.

What steps do we take to protect your study?

As set out in your Student Contract with Leeds Beckett University, we will take all steps which are reasonably in our power to provide your educational services. We will implement measures to mitigate the risk to your continuation of study should any of the potential risks identified in this plan arise. We will consult with the Students' Union and affected students to inform our University's planned measures being fair and reasonable in the circumstances and to take into account student diversity, including mobility, educational needs, parity of course content or financial consequence. The University has undertaken an equality impact assessment on our Student Protection Plan.

Table 1: Potential Risks Events

Potential Risks Events identified under this Student Protection Plan	
1	The University as a whole is no longer able to operate or no longer intends to operate.
2a	The University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because the Office for Students has varied or revoked our degree awarding powers.
2b	The University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because of a loss of designation of our courses for the purposes of access to statutory student finance or funding for degree apprenticeships.
2c	The University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because a validating partner has withdrawn validation arrangements (where applicable).
2d	The University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because an international in-country body no longer recognises or approves our provision (where applicable).
2e	The University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because we are unable to offer research awards.
3	One or more locations at which the University delivers courses to our students is/are no longer available.
4	The University is no longer able to deliver courses to students in one or more subject areas and/or departments.
5	The University is no longer able to deliver one or more courses to students, particularly if course closures are likely in the next three years.
6	The University is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, particularly if there are areas of vulnerability, such as single person dependencies for teaching.
7	The University is no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to students, particularly if withdrawal of a mode of study is likely.
8	The University is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student.
9	The University is no longer able or decides to no longer deliver or provide courses with a collaborative partner institution.
10	The University is no longer able to provide educational services arising from circumstances that are beyond the University's or Students' reasonable control in accordance with our Student Contract.

How will current and future students be aware of the plan?

We make the Student Protection Plan, a factsheet for students' and guidance available on our website for current/future students. This information forms part of the information provided to students with their Student Contract (commencing from 2018/19 academic year).

How will you know if the Student Protection Plan is triggered?

Should any of the risks identified under this plan arise and present risks to the continuation of study for our students, the University's Registrar will trigger the Student Protection Plan (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Triggering the Student Protection Plan



A Student Protection Plan Implementation Team will be formed by the University's Registrar in accordance with the University's guidance to oversee and manage the implementation of measures for the mitigation of risk to the continuity and quality of study of students affected. Students likely to be affected will be contacted in writing and may be invited to a meeting to discuss the risk, measures and plans.

The University will endeavour to provide at least 15 working days' notice should the Student Protection Plan need to be implemented and is likely to result in substantive or material changes to their course.

Further Advice and Support for Students

Further advice and support will be available from your Dean of School or nominated Senior Academic Manager should the student protection plan need to be implemented. Independent advice is available from the Student Union Advice Service.

The University's Refund and Compensation Policy

The University's Student Contract and the Fee Schedule and Liability Policy in Schedule 1 of the Contract sets out the liability of the University in respect of the provision of educational services. The Fee Schedule and Liability Policy 2019-20, is available from:

www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/public-information/student-regulations/fee-schedule-and-liability-policy.pdf?la=en

This Fee Schedule and Liability Policy sets out the University's fees and charges and arrangements which may apply in relation to students' liability for course fees and charges, refunds of tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and possible compensation where necessary in the event that our University is no longer able to preserve continuation of study for our students. The responsible manager overseeing the Student Protection Implementation Team Plan will make recommendations overseen by the Registrar for compensation in accordance with the University's guidance.

The University will ensure that we can deliver the financial implications of our refund and compensation policy where necessary in the event that we are no longer able to preserve continuation of study due to a risk arising under the Student Protection Plan. Our financial strategy requires that we maintain significant cash reserves each year (of equivalent to at least 90 days' worth of expenditure) and in our budget process we provide for unplanned events through incorporating a significant budget for contingencies. Together they ensure we have the resources available to provide refunds and compensation.

Developing the Student Protection Plan

We will review our student protection plan annually, or when circumstances require an earlier review and seek approval of our plan by the University Executive Team and Board of Governors. The revised plan will be provided for students, the Students' Union, staff and collaborative partners via notification and updating of the University's website and intranet site and related information. The Office for Students will be notified and provided with our revised plan.

Students are invited to be involved in the review of the plan through engagement of the Students' Union, feedback via our deliberative structures and through any specific consultation relating to the implementation of the plan.

Feedback

Feedback on the University's Student Protection Plan is welcomed and should be sent to: studentprotectionplan@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Concerns and Complaints

If students, staff or collaborative partners have a concern about changes that we make to a published course, before or after it commences, or are concerned that the Student Protection Plan is not being implemented appropriately, you should:

- a) Discuss your concerns with the relevant person e.g. Dean of School, Course Representative or Students' Union so these may be addressed informally.
- b) Contact the University Registrar's Office to raise your concerns providing a written summary for further consideration by the University to studentprotectionplan@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Students wishing to raise a formal complaint in connection with the Student Protection Plan, may do so using the University's Student Complaints Procedure, available from: <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/student-regulations/>

If, having followed the Student Complaints Procedure to completion, students are still dissatisfied, you have the right to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education at www.oiahe.org.uk. They will consider your case when you have concluded the complaints procedure available to you at our University.

Information and Support for Staff

Information, guidance and staff development on the Student Protection Plan is made available for staff, the Students' Union and collaborative partners. Further advice and guidance is available from the University Registrar's Office: studentprotectionplan@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

The student protection plan, students' factsheet, guidance and student transfer plan are published on our University's web site:

<http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/student-regulations/>

Information and further guidance relating to the identification of potential risks and implementation of the plan is provided for staff on the University's intranet site:

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/staffsite/services/quality-assurance-services/>

Information and signposting to our University's Academic Regulations and processes relating to course changes, published information, course closures and student transfer plan will be available on the intranet with the student protection plan.

Appendix 1: Leeds Beckett University's assessment of potential risks

The following evidenced statements provide Leeds Beckett University's assessment of the range and level of potential risks to students' continuation of study which are all assessed as low risk:

	Potential Risks and University Statement of assessed risk
1	<p>The risk of the University as a whole being no longer to operate is low as our financial performance and position is healthy.</p> <p>Cash generation is strong and a minimum level of performance is targeted through our financial strategy which is overseen by our Board of Governors. Independent verification is provided through our external audit of our annual financial statements and our internal auditors independently verify the effectiveness of our internal controls. Our risk management processes ensure we have appropriate mitigation and contingency arrangements in place to ensure business continuity.</p>
2a	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because the Office for Students has varied or revoked our University's degree awarding powers, is low, because we will take steps to comply with all initial and ongoing conditions of registration and any special conditions that may be required. This is evidenced by positive current external quality assessments e.g. QAA HER 2014, HEFCE APR 2017, TEF 2017 Silver.</p>
2b	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because of loss of our designation of courses for the purposes of access to statutory student finance or funding for degree apprenticeships is low because of 2a above and due to our University's effective financial and operational management of student loans/degree apprenticeship funding.</p>
2c	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because a validating or recognising partner (where applicable) has withdrawn validation arrangements is low because the University has degree awarding powers and maintains robust academic standards of awards and standards of recognition/ accreditation and this applies to a very small scale of sub-degree provision licensed under Pearson.</p>
2d	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because an international in-country body no longer recognises or approves our provision (where applicable) is low because we manage</p>

	transnational education and provision with others in accordance with the UK Quality Code and comply with the requirements of in-country bodies including annual returns; and also because of 2a above.
2e	The risk of the University being no longer able to award the qualifications for which our students are registered because we are unable to offer research awards is low because we manage these awards in accordance with the UK Quality Code and recognised research degrees frameworks/standards and manage these with institutional oversight through our deliberative structures.
3	<p>The risk of one or more of the locations at which the University delivers courses to our students is/are no longer available is low because</p> <p>a) We have an approved estates strategy which is focused on the ongoing development and investment of our city and Headingley campuses which will support students' continuity of study on our campuses.</p> <p>b) New estates developments (Creative Arts Building at city campus and Sports building at Headingley campus) will provide new teaching and specialist facilities at each of our campuses. This will lead to relocation of some of our current provision into these new campus buildings/locations (and for music related courses a change in the campus location) and is also likely to lead to future consolidation of off campus locations used presently for delivery in Leeds for some courses in the School of Film, Music and Performing Arts. This will have a low impact on students' continuity of study with improved facilities available in close proximity on the city campus rather than on leased premises off campus. The University has in place a migration plan which will continue to be updated. We will establish appropriate arrangements for communication with students/applicants as necessary.</p> <p>c) The university undertakes a risk and due diligence assessment of collaborative partners and locations for provision delivered in partnership with others when considering whether to partner and due diligence in respect of employers in the provision of degree apprenticeships. These approaches enables appropriate control measures and risk management to be implemented where partnerships are entered into.</p>
4	The risk of the University being no longer able to deliver courses to students in one or more subject areas and/or departments is low because the University normally would "teach out" current cohorts and not withdraw courses for current students until they had all

	completed their study. We manage our portfolio decisions for cessation or withdrawal of courses and new course development carefully with senior oversight and via a defined process/deadlines for this. This approach applies to all courses including collaborative provision. Should other reasons, events or circumstances crystallise and increase this risk, then we will put in place measures to mitigate risk and update the Student Protection Plan.
5	The risk of the University being no longer able to deliver one or more courses to students, particularly if course closures are likely in the next three years is low because the University normally would “teach out” current cohorts and not withdraw a course for current students until they had all completed their study. We manage our portfolio decisions for cessation or withdrawal of courses and new course development carefully with senior oversight and via a defined process/deadlines for this. This approach applies to all courses including collaborative provision. Should other reasons, events or circumstances crystallise and increase this risk, then we will put in place measures to mitigate risk and update the Student Protection Plan.
6	The risk of the University being no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, particularly if there are areas of vulnerability, such as single person dependencies for teaching is low because we plan carefully our course delivery, staffing and other resource decisions each year and strategically for the next three years, which enable risks to be managed and mitigated.
7	The risk of the University being no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to students, particularly if withdrawal of a mode of study is likely, is low because the University normally would “teach out” current cohorts and not withdraw a mode of study for current students until they had all completed their study. We manage our portfolio decisions for cessation or withdrawal of courses/modes and new course development carefully with senior oversight and via a defined process/deadlines for this. This approach applies to all courses including collaborative provision. Should other reasons, events or circumstances crystallise and increase this risk, then we will put in place measures to mitigate risk and update the Student Protection Plan. Where the university wishes to make substantive changes such as closure of a mode of study before the course commences, it will do so as early as possible and it will consult students regarding the change, seeking to minimise the impact of these changes wherever possible. If a student does not wish to continue, they will have the right under the Student Contract to cancel their contract according to the processes in the contract.
8	The risk of the University being no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student is low because a) we have in place effective arrangements and audit processes for the management of Tier 4 licences and compliances for students and staff;

	<p>b) the university undertakes a risk and due diligence assessment of locations and collaborative partners for provision delivered in partnership with others when considering whether to partner; and</p> <p>c) the University undertakes due diligence in respect of employers in the provision of degree apprenticeships.</p> <p>These approaches enable appropriate control measures and risk management to be implemented where partnerships are entered into leading to a low assessment.</p>
9	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able or decides to no longer provide courses with a collaborative partner institution is low because the university</p> <p>a) undertakes a risk and due diligence assessment of locations and collaborative partners for provision delivered in partnership with others when considering whether to partner to minimise risk to our students and the University’s</p> <p>b) manages exit arrangements through an exit strategy with collaborative partners to protect continuation and quality for students; and</p> <p>c) normally would “teach out” current cohorts and not withdraw until current students had completed their study.</p>
10	<p>The risk of the University being no longer able to provide educational services arising from circumstances that are beyond the University’s or students’ reasonable control in accordance with Leeds Beckett University’s Student Contract is low because the University has measures in place to manage the consequences e.g. our Business Continuity Plan because the University has a Business Continuity Plan in place, which covers other events which may cause disruption, for example acts of terrorism or natural disasters; the University also has in place measures required under the Prevent Duty.</p>

Appendix 2: Other Events

There are other events which may arise that normally would be dealt with separately and not treated as potential risk events under the student protection plan. The following examples and the way in which the University would manage these are set out below:

- a) **Course Changes:** It is sometimes necessary for the University to make changes to the courses offered and to the content of courses. Normally these changes would not present a risk to students' continued study and usually relate to course enhancements. Where substantive changes are proposed, (such as material course content or delivery location) the University will follow procedures set out in Leeds Beckett University's Student Contract, available from: <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/student-regulations/> in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and informed by Consumer Markets Authority guidance.
- b) **Contractual Changes:** The University may from time to time, need to make changes to its Student Contract or Relevant Documents listed in the contract Schedule 1, including this Student Protection Plan. Further information and the University's process for this is set out in Leeds Beckett University's Student Contract.
- c) **Termination or Suspension of Students' Registration:** The University sets out specific circumstances when it may temporarily or permanently cancel a student's registration in Leeds Beckett University's Student Contract. These do not constitute potential risk events as Table 1 under this student protection plan.
- d) **Industrial Action:** We have established methods of consultation with the recognised trade unions and work together to achieve reasonable solutions to matters which may arise. Where there are instances of Industrial Action which might affect students' studies we will maintain usual services and operations as far as reasonably possible, taking steps to minimise disruption and to mitigate risks to the continued study of students.

Should these examples or other events give rise to a potential risk event identified in the Student Protection Plan Table 1 above then the University will take steps to mitigate the impact on and preserve the continuation and quality of study for students in accordance with the Student Contract and will implement the measures set out in this plan.