

Bradford College

STUDENT PROTECTION PLAN 2023–2024

Provider's name: BRADFORD COLLEGE Provider's UKPRN 10000840.

Legal address: Bradford College, Great Horton Road, Bradford, BD7 1AY

Contact point for official enquiries about this student protection plan: Craig Tupling Vice Principal
Quality and Student Experience c.tupling@bradfordcollege.ac.uk

Executive Summary

As a registered higher education provider, Bradford College, like all other Higher Education providers in England, is required to publish a 'Student Protection Plan'. This Student Protection Plan details what the College is doing to prevent serious disruption to your studies and what it will do if your studies were to be seriously disrupted.

A Student Protection Plan covers the following:

- An explanation of potential risks to the continuation of study for Bradford College students and the likelihood that those risks will become real.
- An explanation of the measures that the College has put in place to mitigate risks.
- The College's approach to student redress in the event that the institution is no longer able to ensure continuation of study.
- Information about how the College will communicate with students and staff about the student protection plan.
- Information about how the College will consult with students through the development of the Student Protection Plan.

The Student Protection Plan will be reviewed annually. This review will be overseen by the College's Academic Board.

If you have any general queries about this plan please contact HEAwards@bradfordcollege.ac.uk

Introduction

This policy should be read in the context of the College's statutory responsibilities under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA), the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) and the arrangements for the institution's registration with the Office for Students. Additionally, the College seeks to ensure compliance through this Student Protection Plan with its responsibilities to OIA and QAA guidance. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the College's Student Contract and Complaints procedures.

We seek to make our policies and practice in this area fair, consistent, clear and accessible.

Section One – Assessment of Risk

1. Risk to the provision of Higher Education at Bradford College

Bradford College is committed to the delivery of Higher Education as a core component of its portfolio. The risk that the provider is unable to operate as a higher education provider is **low**. The College is a registered provider with the Office for Students and meets its reporting obligations.

2. Risk to Programme Delivery at Bradford College

Our Student Protection Plan (SPP) is aligned with our Student Contract which is signed by all of our students as part of the admissions process. The SPP is also aligned with our commitments under consumer protection law. Provisions under our SPP are also reflected in our Fees Policy for any students who leave their course earlier than the scheduled date for their target award.

While we may decide to suspend admissions to a programme of study to new students due to viability, shifting market demand, strategic review or other factors; only in exceptional circumstances would we cease to continue to offer the course 'as advertised' to existing students.

- The risk that we are no longer able to deliver courses in highly specialised areas such as ophthalmic dispensing, initial teacher education or social work, during the next three years is **low**. This is because student demand is high, and the College has a strong history of delivery in these areas, with a strategic intent to continue to support the programmes to meet the workforce needs of the City and Region.
- The risk that we are no longer able to deliver core components of our courses is **low** because of our prudent financial management and academic planning oversight managed through an annual Business Planning process.

Our primary aim will always be to 'teach out' those programmes which the College has decided for strategic reasons to decommission. In those cases where, through force majeure, we have no option but to discontinue a programme for existing students, we will work closely with other providers in the Bradford to affect a smooth and appropriate transition for students.

The College takes its responsibilities to students very seriously. In the unlikely event of non-continuation of provision and there being no appropriate similar course to which the student can reasonably transfer, we will where appropriate, in principle, be prepared to offer refunds or

compensation in line with our Refunds and Compensation Policy. Particular consideration will be given to ensure that students' are not disadvantaged by virtue of any protected characteristic. Additionally, appropriate recognition will be given to economic circumstances of the students involved in assessing for example what reasonable steps the students might have taken to mitigate impact.

3. Risk to Placement Delivery

The College values the enhanced skill development and employability which placements offer as part of the curriculum. Many professional bodies require placements as a condition of professional recognition. The College has managed placement schemes in areas such as Initial teacher Education, Youth & Community work, Social Work, and Sport Science for many years.

In areas where placements are essential, we have teaching partnerships with placement providers, often as part of the workforce planning arrangements as in the case of social work, for example. Our placements are covered by agreements signed by the student, the Head of School and the provider which indicate specific responsibilities and key processes.

As a result, the risk that a placement provider is no longer able to offer our students placements is **low**.

4. Risk of material changes to the programme

We will give students adequate notice when we need to make significant material changes to their courses. We will always do this well in advance of changes (with particular attention in relation to substantial changes to the date or location of any assessment arrangements). We will work in partnership with affected students to consult on these changes. However, should we need to make strategic decisions, for example to decommission one building due to the construction of a new facility, we would be able to give students up to 2 years notice. We will in each case consider what is in the best interests of the majority of students and also prioritise the impact on students with protected characteristics.

5. Risk associated with changes to validating partnerships

Any changes to validating partnerships will seek to enable students to be 'taught-out' under the existing validation partner arrangement. As a result, the college is committed to working together with all partners to ensure that there is no material impact on the student experience.

In the event that a change to a validation arrangement does not enable a period of 'teach-out' (due to regulatory sanctions on either party) the college will work with local providers and the Office for Students to enable students to transfer to an alternative provider.

Section 2: How we will work with our current students in the development of our student protection plan.

- We will consult the College SU on the annual review of the SPP. There will be an annual review of the SPP itself which will normally begin in May prior to the year of application.

- Our Student Representatives will be involved in the review of the draft SPP prior to Academic Board and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) approval. This consultation will take place during semester 2 Student Council meetings.
- Academic Board includes student representation, including the SU President and will receive the SPP draft for consideration and approval prior to SLT approval and publication.

Section 3: How we will ensure our students and staff are aware of the Student Protection Plan.

We will publicise our Student Protection Plan to current and prospective students by including a link to the policy on our website. We will incorporate reference to the Policy in our Student Contract documentation.

We will use social media channels, induction and all-student emails within the first three months of the academic year to make applicants and students aware of the provisions within the Student Protection Plan. In terms of ongoing awareness, the Student Handbook will detail the purpose and provision of the SPP.

We will work closely with the College Students' Union so that they can also communicate the arrangements within the SPP to new and continuing students through their website and induction events, as appropriate. In addition, we will always seek to contact all students through emails where they are, or might be affected by changes to their programme of study. We will work with the College Students' Union, to fulfil the substantive responsibility to communicate with students directly on student protection matters.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our Student Protection Plan when they propose course changes by incorporating the need to advise students into our documentation. Detail regarding the Student Protection Plan will be included on the staff-facing Quality pages of the intranet. Training on Complaints will incorporate appropriate reference to the provision of the Student Protection Plan, including a student's right to redress as outlined in the Complaints procedure.

Section 4: How we will communicate with Students in the event that the Student Protection Plan needs to be implemented

We will proactively share the policy with students at an early stage should the risk of course or College closure significantly increase. This will be done as part of the College's consumer protection law obligations.

Should key aspects of our SPP need to be implemented we will inform our students by email, through student representatives for the affected provision, through social media, through open meetings and through the officers and elected representatives of the Students' Union, as appropriate. We will ensure appropriate provision for students with disabilities and any additional support needs, recognising that some external procedures may be complex and couched in technical language. We will always seek to communicate clearly with students as to the nature of the changes, the actual or potential impact on them, the reasons for the changes and what their options are.

In order to make a claim for Refunds or Compensation students should go through the College's standard complaints procedure, available [here](#).

Section 5: How we will Support Students in the event that the Student Protection Plan needs to be implemented

Individual support on academic aspects will be provided by personal tutors and pastoral support will be available through our Student Services. Working closely with the Students' Union, HE Student Finance Advisors will be available to help students understand the funding implications of any transition in recognition of the complexities and uncertainties that such changes can entail.

We will put in place arrangements to allow our students to have access to independent advice where appropriate if we need to implement the measures in our student protection plan in relation to changes of institution. This might include facilitating support from the Students' Union locally and, where appropriate, from NUS nationally. Beyond this, we will always seek to ensure that students have the option of securing independent advice from career and academic advisers from outside their School or Department.