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LSBU

Student Protection Plan 2020/21 and 2021/22

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London South Bank University Student Protection Plan 2020/21 and 2021/22

1. Introduction: what is a student protection plan for?

- 1.1. As a registered provider of higher education, London South Bank University (“LSBU”) must publish a student protection plan, which sets out how we will protect you, our student, in the event of a risk to the continuation of your studies arising.
- 1.2. This Student Protection Plan explains the kinds of risks that might arise, and what we commit to do in that situation.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This plan applies to all students studying for a qualification with London South Bank University, and takes into account the different needs, characteristics and circumstances of our student community.

3. Responsibility

- 3.1. The Pro Vice Chancellor Academic Framework (the “PVC Academic Framework”) has overall responsibility for this procedure but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the staff identified in this procedure. All relevant members of staff have been made aware of the student protection plan and have received appropriate guidance.
- 3.2. We review our Student Protection Plan annually, with input from specialist professional service teams, and at the Student Experience Committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, which includes student members.

4. Our commitments

- 4.1. We commit that in the event of any significant risk to the continuity of your studies we will:
 - Be open and transparent with you about the risks, and inform you in a timely manner.
 - Take reasonable steps to protect your studies if we discontinue a course, or close a department, division, School, a location where a course is taught, or in the event the University closes.
 - Consult students and take students’ views into account, in a timely manner where possible, before taking decisions to change a course in a substantial way, or to discontinue it.
 - Take the needs of all our students into account, and the impact on you of any proposed changes and protective measures.

4.2. We will inform the Office for Students if any circumstances arise which mean we need to review this Student Protection Plan or change any of the measures within it.

5. How will I find out about any risks, and be consulted?

5.1. If the Student Protection Plan needs to be triggered, you will be contacted by your School's Director of Operations or nominees by email via your LSBU email address. They will inform you of the risk, how you will be consulted, and where you can obtain academic advice and support within the School.

5.2. You can contact the Student Life Centre with any questions, see: <http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/student-life/student-services>

5.3. The Students' Union provides academic advice and support. They can also make sure you know who your course rep is to help co-ordinate information and feedback. For more information, go to: <https://www.lsbu.org/advice/academic-advice/>

6. What if I don't agree with the proposed solution or protection?

If you do not think the proposed solution works for you:

- please see the **Student Compensation and Refund Policy**, which can be found at http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/131085/student-compensation-and-refund-policy.pdf ;or
- consider submitting a student complaint via the University **Student Complaints Procedure**, which can be found at http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/84423/student-complaints-procedure.pdf

7. What kinds of risk does the Student Protection Plan protect me from?

Any risk to the continuation of your studies could arise either from events which are internal to the University, or in the external environment beyond our control.

A. Could the University close?

The University considers the risk of organisational closure to be very low. Our LSBU Group income (July 2020) was £184.5m, we have cash balances and deposits of £52.2m, bank and other loans of only £34.5m, and delivered an operating surplus of £1.4m. We have business continuity arrangements and plan for a range of incidents, including running simulation exercises. We have regular and robust independent scrutiny in place through our Board of Governors, which includes independent members, and our independent external auditors.

B. Could the location where my course is taught change?

We actively manage our estate. Health and safety staff monitor and promptly address any hazards, and we maintain a register of nearby facilities we can relocate university activity to in the event any facilities become unavailable for a reason such as flooding. Therefore, the risk that we decide to close the location (building or campus) where a course is taught during your studies, without being able to find suitable premises at a nearby location, is low.

C. Could the University close my course?

The risk that we decide to discontinue your course on timescales that directly affect you is low because we plan any course discontinuation to allow current students to complete their studies. Where a course is discontinued, we close the course to new recruitment, and ‘teach out’ current student cohorts. We would expect this to make no material change to your experience – it should feel like ‘business as usual’. Course teams have to ensure they have a ‘teach-out’ plan in place before the course closure is permitted. We have experience of managing this process successfully.

We may suspend recruitment to a course that is not recruiting sufficient numbers of students to make a good student experience. If you have applied and been accepted for a course that doesn’t recruit enough students to run, we will inform you as quickly as possible and suggest an alternative LSBU course to you.

The risk that the qualification you obtain is significantly different from the one you enrolled on, not by your choice, is very low. It is possible that if you have interrupted for a long period that the award may have changed in some respects, and we will need to work with you on what would be the most suitable award to return to. If you withdraw before completing your intended award, you may be awarded a lower qualification.

We plan our courses carefully, with professional and industry input, and they undergo a thorough validation process. We retain the right to make minor adjustments and improvements to courses and modules year to year, in response to student feedback and as part of quality enhancement. We endeavour to communicate planned and major changes in a timely and helpful manner.

For our apprenticeship provision, we have clauses in place to protect you against discontinuation.

D. What if my course loses its professional accreditation?

We make the utmost effort to maintain professional and regulatory body accreditation of courses wherever this applies. If there is a risk of losing professional accreditation, we will inform you at once and consult you on the possible options, which will include arranged

transfer to a similar course in another university that holds the professional accreditation.

E. Could the University lose its Student sponsor licence?

We actively manage the risk of losing our Student sponsor licence. We have specialist teams in place to understand and respond to UKVI requirements. We are careful to review our processes regularly, and continually improve them, and there is clear senior accountability, ownership and reporting lines in our governance structure.

F. What if there isn't a suitable LSBU supervisor for my dissertation or thesis?

Our research activity is clustered in one of our 12 major Research Centres or 26 Research Groups. Therefore, we have a critical mass of suitably qualified supervisors, who work in a team to protect your experience. In the event that several specialists leave the University during the period that you are registered with us, we will assign another supervisor with suitable expertise. If that is not possible for any reasons, we will recommend other universities with suitable research programmes to which you can transfer your registration. We structure your supervision and progress reviews to make sure your work is readily transferable in the unlikely event you need to transfer to another provider.

8. What measures has LSBU put in place to mitigate the risks assessed as most likely to occur in the next three years?

- 8.1. Whenever possible, we will make arrangements to 'teach-out' our current students if we have voluntarily decided to close a course. This means we commit to ensuring awards can be completed by all currently enrolled students within the timeframes determined by the course and University regulations, even if the course is being discontinued and we are not registering any new students.
- 8.2. Where this is not possible, we will offer an alternative course at London South Bank University, or support students in seeking another provider utilising student transfer arrangements, to enable you to continue your course elsewhere.
- 8.3. Where students are studying on specialist programmes which are not readily available locally or nationally, we will investigate alternative options which may include internal or external transfer.

9. What if something happens that is outside the University's control?

- 9.1 The University will do all that it reasonably can to provide educational services as described on its website or in the prospectus or other documents issued by it to enrolled students.
Sometimes circumstances beyond the control of the University mean that it cannot provide such educational services. Examples of Events Outside the

University's control include (but are not limited to): industrial action by University staff or third parties; over or under demand from students; staff illness or absence; the unanticipated and/or unavoidable departure or absence of key members of University staff; insolvency or deterioration of the financial position of a sponsoring employer or an apprentice employer; changes to the University's funding or to higher education policy; legislative or regulatory change; damage, interruption or lack of access to buildings, facilities or equipment; power failure; severe weather; natural disasters; fire; terrorism; civil disorder; political unrest; government restrictions; the acts or delays of any governmental or local authority; pandemics, epidemics and other threats to public health; and/or concern with regard to the transmission of serious illness.

- 9.2. In such circumstances, the University will take all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to those services and to affected students, by, for example, offering affected students the chance to move to another course or institution, or by delivering a modified version of the same course, but to the full extent that is possible under the general law the University excludes liability for any loss and/or damage suffered by any student as a result of those circumstances.

10. Can I get a fee refund or compensation, if London South Bank University is unable to preserve my continuation of study?

You can see our **Student Compensation and Refund Policy** here: http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/131085/student-compensation-and-refund-policy.pdf, which has embedded links to the specific information you may need.

11. How do I get all the information I need about this Student Protection Plan?

- 11.1. We publish our Student Protection Plan via our website to current and prospective students. It is located on [lsbu.ac.uk](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk) under About Us, policies and procedures tab:
<https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures>.
- 11.2. We ensure staff are aware of our Student Protection Plan and its implications through briefings to executive and academic leadership, and via references in our course approval documentation.
- 11.3. Contact point for enquiries about this Student Protection Plan:
Professor Deborah Johnston, Pro Vice Chancellor Academic Framework

Provider's name: London South Bank University

Provider's UKPRN: 10004078

Legal address: 103 Borough Road, London, SE1 0AA

URL for publication of this Student Protection Plan (once approved):

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