

## Annex D: Template for a student protection plan

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### **Student Protection Plan for the period 2018- 19**

All documents related to OfS registration have been prepared as part of a joint development planning group and in consultation with The University of Bolton. From academic year 2018/2019 there will be no new students enrolling directly with Bolton College. All new students taught at Bolton College will be contracted to the University of Bolton.

Continuing students remain to be contracted to Bolton College for one further academic year in 2018 - 2019.

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 Bolton College and The University of Bolton will become a merged entity. <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/latest-news/merger-update/>

**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.**

- **Students covered by this Student Protection Plan (SPP) are: All HNC and HND students progressing/continuing into their second year of study in 2018-19.**
- **Students undertaking the University of West London (UWL) award (FdA Healthcare Play Specialism), are covered by the UWL SPP:**  
[https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student\\_protection\\_plan\\_v8.pdf](https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student_protection_plan_v8.pdf)
- **All new HNC, HND and PGCE students enrolled with the University of Bolton (UoB) for 2018-19 are covered by the UoB SPP:** <https://www.bolton.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Condition-C3-Student-Protection-Plan.pdf>  
AND: <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/assets/Uploads/Attachments/HE-Strategies-and-Frameworks/BC-Terms-Conditions-for-HE-students-2018.pdf>

The Student Protection Plan (SPP) of Bolton College (BC) is based on its "student lifecycle approach". This approach considered a wide range of risks to the continuation of study for our students including marketing and promotion of our programmes, application, provision of offer letter, acceptance, enrolments, programme of study, work-based experience, and graduation. The following category of students was ascertained to identify key risks.

#### **A. On-campus Students**

On campus provision of Bolton College includes students on undergraduate (Pearson HNC and HND) programmes. The students encompass UK Home students studying on-campus in Bolton, UK.

Based on the above category of students, a broad range of risks are identified to their continuation of study which includes, but not limited to the following:

- i. Suspension or closure of courses: **LOW RISK**
- ii. Programme modifications: prior to enrolment and after enrolment: **LOW RISK**
- iii. Risks associated with the sustainability of the institution (e.g. closure): **LOW RISK**
- iv. Strategic changes by the College (e.g. closure of a building or campus): **LOW RISK**
- v. Changes in the nature and structure of the College (e.g. merger): **LOW RISK**
- vi. Major accidents and incidents causing disruption to Teaching and Learning: **LOW RISK**
- vii. Loss of staff and structural changes in staffing: **LOW RISK**

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

- **Students covered by this Student Protection Plan (SPP) are: All HNC and HND students progressing/continuing into their second year of study in 2018-19.**
- **Students undertaking the University of West London (UWL) award (FdA Healthcare Play Specialism), are covered by the UWL SPP:** [https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student\\_protection\\_plan\\_v8.pdf](https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student_protection_plan_v8.pdf)
- **All new HNC, HND and PGCE students enrolled with the University of Bolton (UoB) for 2018-19 are covered by the UoB SPP:** <https://www.bolton.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Condition-C3-Student-Protection-Plan.pdf>
- **AND:** <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/assets/Uploads/Attachments/HE-Strategies-and-Frameworks/BC-Terms-Conditions-for-HE-students-2018.pdf>

- A. Policies and documents to protect students:** BC has a robust set of policies and documents to ensure that the students have clear and detailed understanding of the measures put in place to mitigate various risks related to their programme of study. These include a) Bolton College Regulations (conditions of enrolment), b) Refund Policy, and c) Student Admissions Policy. These policies, accessible through the College website, provide information regarding course fees, refunds, advice, information and guidance for transferring to a different course, within BC, and transferring to another institution, process of changes to the course, communications etc.
- <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/about-us/corporation/he-strategies/>

AND

for costs and financial support: <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/higher-education/>

AND: for college regulations concerning conditions of enrolment: <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/about-us/corporation/key-policies/>

AND

for refund information:

<https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/home/SearchForm?Search=refund+policy>

**LOW RISK**

**B. Suspension or closure of courses:** BC has established systems to mitigate risks resulting from suspension and/or closure of courses. BC's "Policy for closing or suspending a programme" specifies these in detail. BC has well tested teach out arrangements for students on courses that are earmarked for suspension or closure (i.e. for recruitment of new students). Where there is a possibility of material impact on the current students, the effect will be mitigated by:

- i. Consultation with current students and other stakeholders who may be affected.
- ii. Communications with current students to provide assurance that their programme of study will not be adversely affected by the decision.
- iii. Provide assurance regarding quality of their learning experience and that they are able to complete their studies at the Institution.
- iv. Ensure appropriate academic and support staff (e.g. lab technician) capability and capacity to enable students to complete their programme of study.
- v. Ensure appropriate facilities and technological infrastructure to enable students to complete their programme of study.
- vi. Any applicants (for future cohorts) will be notified in accordance with UCAS deadlines, allowing sufficient time for students to apply for an alternative suitable programme (where relevant) at BC.

**LOW RISK**

**C. Modifications to programmes or course content (prior and after enrolment):**

BC has clear systems and guidelines for making any modifications to validated modules or courses to endeavour to safeguard the students and that their learning experience is protected. The Modification to Existing/Modification to Module (MEP/MEM) process and form, which needs to be completed by the respective Head of Area requires to specify various aspects including timeline of modifications, nature of change, implications for students, implications related to professional body accreditations, student consultation undertaken, and student support provision planned to implement changes effectively. The Course Committee, HE Committee, and the HE Quality Assurance Committee assess the MEP/MEM and approve them where appropriate.

The College will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver the programme in accordance with the programme specification and course information presented in on the College web site and leaflets. However, to ensure currency and relevance of the courses from time to time, the College may need to implement minor or major in-year changes to course content. In such instances the College will ensure that:

- i. Changes are restricted to the minimum necessary levels to achieve the required knowledge and/or quality of learning experience
- ii. Affected students and other stakeholders are consulted as appropriate
- iii. Students are notified of the changes and how it will impact them

In the instances where the modifications to courses affect students prior to their enrolment (e.g. after an offer is accepted), the College will communicate and work with such students to ensure the offer is still acceptable to them. Where necessary BC will allow students the opportunity to withdraw from the programme and offer reasonable support.

**LOW RISK**

**D. Merger with University of Bolton:** Since 1 August 2018, the University has acquired Bolton College into its group structure. This arrangement involves the College being a wholly owned subsidiary of the University as a company limited by guarantee, with the College (and the University) retaining its day-to-day operational arrangements and branding. Bolton College is an exempt charity as it is administered by the University. The ability of the College and the University to protect its student community is low. The governance, planning and funding arrangements for the enlarged group have been reviewed and approved by the Department of Education, having previously been endorsed by HEFCE and the ESFA.

- All current Year 2 progressing/continuing, including HNC and HND HE students in the College will be taught out for the remainder of the 2018-19 academic year as the last cohort of HE students contracted directly to the college. This means that these students will be covered by this SPP and subject to BC policies, procedures, and regulations, and Pearson policies, procedures and regulations.
- All current Year 2 UWL registered students will be taught out for the remainder of the 2018-19 academic year as the last cohort of HE students contracted directly by the college and the UWL. This means that these students will be covered by the UWL SPP and also subject to BC policies, procedures, and regulations:[https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student protection plan v8.pdf](https://www.uwl.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Departments/About-us/student%20protection%20plan%20v8.pdf)
- All new, Year 1 HNC and HND students starting in 2018-19 are now subject to the University of Bolton policies, procedures, and terms and conditions, and may be taught at the College or the University.  
<https://www.bolton.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/student-policies/>
- After 2018-19 academic year the current determination is that any HE students taught at Bolton College will be contracted to the University. This means that from 2019-20 all new students will be University of Bolton students, and will adhere to the UoB policies, procedures, and terms and conditions.

Mitigation: The University and Bolton College have worked collaboratively and discussed and shared documents in relation to Student Protection issues in Spring and Summer 2018. There has been a working group focusing on smooth transitions for students entering and graduating from access to HE and related courses. There is a high level of awareness of the needs of these students and there can be confidence

that any difficulties for these students will be noticed early and dealt with swiftly and effectively between College and University. More generally the University has been in dialogue with student representatives on issues such as shared sports facilities to ensure that the merger promotes enhanced opportunities for both university and college students.

**LOW RISK**

**E. Major strategic changes (Infrastructure, Nature and Structure of the College):**

BC has robust governance mechanisms to ensure that any major strategic change proposals are appropriately consulted before decisions are made. These may include changes to infrastructure such as buildings, strategic associations (e.g. merger), etc. The Board of Governors work closely to ensure that the students and their learning experience are protected.

**LOW RISK**

**F. Major accidents and incidents causing disruption to Teaching and Learning:**

BC has contingency and business continuity plans which cover scenarios affecting business continuity, such as acts of terrorism, major fire accidents, and damage to buildings or equipment.

**LOW RISK**

**G. Loss of key staff or structural changes in staffing:**

BC has robust mechanisms to ensure that the institution maintains appropriate levels of academic and support staff to ensure effective and efficient delivery of courses and student learning experience. In the scenarios where the College loses key staff:

- a. Where possible, allocate current members of staff with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience, and capacity to the courses where staff losses occurred.
- b. Fill the vacancies as quickly as possible with new staff with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience i.e. recruiting externally to avoid disruption to the students' programme of study.

**LOW RISK**

**H. Institutional Closure:** The College has well established systems, processes and governance arrangements to identify strategic risks (e.g. of closure) and implement measures to mitigate them. Institutional failure risks will be monitored through risk management processes in accordance with the regulatory bodies and any such scenarios will be managed accordingly. In the highly unlikely scenario of institutional failure, where the College has no option, other than to close, it may consider measures, including but not limited to the following, to protect students, continuation of their programmes of study and their learning experience:

- i. Bolton College is a 'Designated Institution' in relation to the parent institution, the University of Bolton. All higher education students, from 2019-20, will become University of Bolton students. Students starting in academic year 2018-19 are also University of Bolton students. Only continuing students, who are in their final year in 2018-19, are designated Bolton College students; and it is highly unlikely that the college will close in this academic year. Therefore the risk is low.

**LOW RISK**

**2. 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**

**Policies, documents and communications:** BC has a robust set of policies and documents to ensure that the students have clear and detailed understanding of the measures put in place to mitigate various risks related to their programme of study. These include a) Bolton College Regulations (conditions of enrolment), b) Bolton College Refund Policy 2018-19, and c) HE Admissions Policy. These policies are accessible through the BC website, providing information regarding course fees, refunds, transferring to a different course within BC, transferring to other institution, process of changes to the course, communications etc. in the highly unlikely scenario of BC being unable to preserve continuation of study, it will systematically compensate the affected students financially material and demonstrable loss.

This link directs to College policies and includes refund policy: <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/about-us/corporation/key-policies/>

AND:

<https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/home/SearchForm?Search=refund+policy>

AND HE Admissions policy: <https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/about-us/corporation/he-strategies/>

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

1. We will ensure effective communication of SPP to prospective and current students as well as our graduates by publicising it in detail through various modes including the College website, SiD Homepage for students, HE Intranet, Student Handbooks, Course Committees
2. Coordinate with the Student Representatives and Course Committee meetings to review and enhance SPP based on a systematic feedback mechanism
3. Staff development and training to familiarise both teaching and support staff with SPP, its implications and implementation through the College's staff development programme, the HE Committee, HE Quality Assurance Committee, the HE Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Group, and other fora. SPP will also be embedded in training by the HE Co-ordinator for staff who are new to delivering HE.