

Student Protection Plan

1. Introduction

This plan lays out the policy and measures that Regent's University London will follow to protect students' interest and ensure continuity of study in the case of material change, e.g. programme suspensions or closures, programme closures which involve the replacement of a programme in a particular discipline with a new one or university closure.

The plans and policies are aligned with the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education¹ and CMA guidance and the requirements of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. The principle underpinning the plan is that in all cases processes will be in place to protect the academic interests of students on the programme and plans are actively monitored to ensure the continuation of academic assurance and quality.

Events that may trigger the adoption of a Student Protection Plan (but not limited to):

- A significant material change;
- Closure or suspension of an individual programme;
- Institutional closure or closure of part of university and market exit;
- Loss or restriction of University status;
- Withdrawal of designation for student support purposes;
- Suspension or removal of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence;
- Changes to regulatory framework affecting specific programmes
- Disruption of University activity.

2. Measures to Inform and Protect Students

- a. The University is committed to communicating changes to students as early as possible, with clear information and options.
- b. We will include student consultation and representation in our decision making.
- c. All reasonable steps will be taken to minimise disruption to affected students by, for example:
 - to avoid implementing change during the academic year;

¹ QAA UK Quality Code Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review

- in the event of programme closure, and where possible, to ensure that existing students may complete their current programme to the original timescale at Regent's;
 - where changes are such that existing students may not be able to complete their current programme, we will offer affected students the chance to move to another programme or to deliver a modified version of the same programme or to provide assistance to transfer to a different provider of higher education.
- d. Where a student is required to transfer programme, or move to another institution there may be implications for student finance arrangements. The University's Finance team will be notified of students affected in the event of the above steps being taken. Finance and Student Services will contact students and provide detailed information, advice and guidance based on their individual circumstances.

3. Measure we will take in specific situations

In the following paragraphs, a number of risks and scenarios are identified, along with the measures that Regent's University London will take to minimise disruption to the student's studies. These are in addition to, or by way of further detail on, the general undertakings in section 2 above. Please note that inclusion of a scenario should not be assumed to mean that it is likely to occur but an indication of our requirements under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017.

i. Updating of programme content, regulations and policies

Regent's University London is committed to quality assurance and enhancing its programmes on an on-going basis and to regularly review programme content, regulations and policies.

The University will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver the programme in accordance with the programme description for the academic year in which a student began their programme. Nevertheless, where updates to programme content are made, for example changes to module content or assessment activities arising, for example, from external examiner comments, these will be proposed via programme committees and subsequently the Programme Planning Panel, where students are represented. Such changes will only come into force at the beginning of a new academic year.

Changes to regulations and policies will be considered and approved by Senate, where students are represented and in most cases regulations are scrutinised prior to their approval by Senate by the Academic Regulations Scrutiny Panel that also has student representation. New or revised policies shall generally apply to all students from the start of

the academic year following approval, unless the change is disadvantageous to the student in comparison with the policy/regulations in place at the time of initial enrolment.

ii. Closure of an individual programme

The University may make a strategic decision to close a programme because of declining student numbers, key staff leaving the University, replacing an existing programme with a new one, changing strategic priorities, concerns about the quality and academic standards of the programme and as a result of periodic programme review. In considering whether to close a programme, the Faculty should consider the arrangements from the point of view of the affected students, applicants and potential applicants, as well as from an academic perspective. Established and tested procedures are in place in the event of closure/suspension of a programme². Where a decision has been taken to close a programme, Regent's will offer existing students three options that will start at the beginning of the new academic year:

- a. to continue as planned to be "taught out" on the original programme, where the University considers this to be a viable option on academic and student experience grounds, noting that this may itself be subject to the number of students so electing;
- b. to transfer to a similar or replacement programme at Regent's, where available;
- c. to transfer with Regent's assistance to a programme at another university.

iii. Withdrawal of Designation

In the event of de-designation of its programmes for "Student Support" purposes (resulting in the withdrawal of statutory finance for its courses) the University, will take all reasonable steps to minimise the resulting disruption to students by, for example:

- working with relevant funding and regulatory bodies to allow enrolled students to complete their programme. Where appropriate apply for "teach out designation" allowing eligible students to access student tuition and maintenance loans;
- where the above is not possible, supporting students to transfer to appropriate programmes at other providers and, where appropriate, financially compensating students where they suffer demonstrable, material financial loss because of disruption to their studies.

It is anticipated that de-designation, in itself, is unlikely to have a material effect upon current students eligible for student loans, while other students may also be unaffected as they are not eligible for or do not wish to apply for student loans.

² See University Academic Regulations B7

iv. Loss or Restriction of University Status

In the event of loss or restriction of University status, Regent's University London will work with the regulatory body to:

- ensure all reasonable steps are taken to minimise the resultant disruption to affected students;
- ensure that, as far as possible, changes are made in a transitional manner.

v. Suspension or Removal of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence

In the event of suspension of Tier 4 Sponsor status, the University will take all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to those services and to affected students by, for example;

- working with UKVI to allow enrolled students to complete their year of study/programme;
- allow students already in receipt of a VISA based upon an allocated CAS from the University to enrol and commence their studies;
- offer students who have not commenced their travel to the University, the opportunity to postpone their application pending the resolution of the suspension.

In the event of revocation of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence, the University will take all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to affected students by, for example:

- where Tier 4 regulations permit, the University will endeavour to transfer students to an approved alternative sponsor;
- depending on the circumstances the university will appeal the decision/make a new application for a Tier 4 license with a view to restoring the license as soon as possible.

vi. Loss of accreditation

Programmes in the areas of psychotherapy and psychology have Professional Statutory Regulatory Body accreditation from Health & Care Professions Council, UK Council of Psychotherapy and the British Psychological Society. In the event of the University losing PSRB accreditation, it will consider measures to protect the student experience, such as those listed below:

- work with the PSRB to allow where possible current students enrolled on the programme to complete their studies with accreditation;

- offer affected students the chance to move to another programme;
- deliver a modified version of the same programme;
- provide assistance to affected students to switch to a different provider that holds the relevant accreditation.

vii. Closure of Part of Regent's

Where part of the University's buildings are rendered unusable for activities by students, the University will invoke its Business Continuity Plan and consider implementing the following:

- relocating provision to an alternative location or installing temporary buildings;
- revising the timetable to allow all of the scheduled teaching to take place in the available facilities. This may involve teaching outside the published teaching hours. Where such an approach is taken, appropriate consultation will be conducted with stakeholders who may be affected and appropriate impact assessments undertaken;
- delivering programmes via alternative means, such as Distance Learning.

viii. University closure and market exit

Institutional failure will be monitored through risk management and through the oversight of the Board of Trustees. In the rare event of an extreme set of events that may lead to the University having no option, other than to close, it may consider measures such as those below to protect the student experience:

- where possible closing in a gradual way, over a period that would allow current enrolled students to complete their studies at the University;
- where the above is not possible, in supporting students to transfer to appropriate programmes at other providers and (where appropriate financially) by compensating students where because of disruption to their studies they suffer demonstrable, material financial loss;
- merging with another institution to maintain all or part of the current provision.

Author Professor Simon Jarvis, Deputy Vice Chancellor

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