

# Norwich University of the Arts

## Student Protection Plan



Provider's UKPRN: 10004775

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### Introduction

This Student Protection Plan sets out the measures that we have in place to protect you in the event that something happens that prevents the continuation of your studies. Section 1 sets out the types of events that may affect your studies. Section 2 contains information on the measures that we have put in place should any of these events materialise.

The measures that we have set out in this Plan apply to all students who are studying on a course at the University, and in some circumstances to prospective students who apply to us. These are in addition to the protections that you have under consumer protection legislation and these measures will not affect your statutory rights.

We are required to submit the Student Protection Plan to our regulator, the Office for Students.

### Section 1

An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for students, how those risks may differ based on students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise.

The following outlines the University's assessment of the risks that might affect you while you are on your course.

The University has assessed these risks as:

**Extremely low:** an event may occur only in exceptional circumstances (less than 10% chance)

**Very low:** an event could occur at some time (between 10% and 30% chance)

**Low but possible:** an event will occur at some point in time (between 30% and 50% chance)

**High:** an event will occur during the duration of your course (between 50% and 90% chance)

**Very High:** an event is expected to occur (more than 90% chance)

#### **The University is unable to deliver a significant component of your course**

The University's courses are designed to be delivered through a fixed series of approved units whose curriculum covers the course content. You will co-design your learning experience and exercise your choice through the work that you choose to undertake in response to project briefs within the units. As a result of the way that we have designed our courses, the delivery of the curriculum is not dependent on the skills or knowledge of specific individual staff members, so the risk of us being unable to deliver a significant component of your course is **extremely low**. We do not guarantee that any specific staff member will remain teaching on your course for the duration of your study. Staff members may decide to change jobs or careers and where this happens it is beyond our reasonable control.

The other risk that may impact on a course is if a specific workshop becomes unavailable. The risk of this is **extremely low** because we have well-qualified technicians with sufficient cover and capacity to ensure that staff holidays or absence can be covered.

### **The University makes substantial material changes to a course**

The University has an Award and Credit Scheme which governs the structure of your course, and a regular and rigorous procedure for approval and periodic review of its academic provision to ensure that courses cannot be changed without formal approval. The University may change components of your course as a result of annual monitoring or periodic review, or in response to feedback from students, staff or creative industry representatives, to ensure that your course remains academically robust and industry relevant and that we can deliver the best student experience for you. Minor changes made through our normal processes are part of our commitment to continuous enhancement and are not covered by this student protection plan.

The risk of your course being substantively changed through these processes is **very low**.

### **The University is unable to deliver a course**

The University has a rigorous planning process to ensure that we have the resources and staff to deliver our courses so the risk that we are unable to deliver a course or a programme to students who are studying on it is **extremely low**.

In exceptional circumstances the University may close a course to new entrants if the numbers of prospective students applying to the course is too low to run the course. This is a planned closure and the course would close to new entrants but continue to be delivered to existing students. Over the past three years the University has experienced good application numbers. We have judged the risk of closing a course to new entrants as **very low**.

### **The University has to close a building**

The University's campus buildings are based in Norwich within walking distance of each other and we do not have any separate campuses which could be affected by closure. The risk of us being unable to use one of our buildings is **extremely low** as we maintain our estate to a high standard and ensure that it is properly looked after. We have business continuity plans in place to cover any temporary loss of one or more of our buildings. The risk of us losing possession or ownership of a building on a permanent basis is **extremely low** as we own most of our buildings or have guaranteed occupancy on a long lease. The permanent loss of a building is very unlikely to happen without us having plenty of time to plan for a relocation of your course to a suitable alternative.

### **The University has to stop sponsoring overseas students**

The risk that the University is unable to sponsor overseas students is **very low** as we have a good track record of Tier 4 sponsorship. The University received a positive audit from the UK Visa and Immigration Service in 2012.

### **The University loses its validation for its Postgraduate Research (PGR) Degrees**

The University's Postgraduate Research Degree programme is validated by the University of the Arts London (UAL). We have a strong track record with UAL and consider that the risk of losing our validation is **extremely low**. The last UAL review of our Postgraduate Research provision was completed in May 2018 and the validation partnership was renewed.

### **The University is no longer able to award its degrees**

The risk that the University has its degree awarding powers revoked or varied is **extremely low**. We have a strong track record of assuring the quality of our courses and maintaining our academic standards and we consider that the risk of becoming de-registered or losing our taught degree awarding powers is mitigated through our rigorous quality assurance processes.

### **The University is no longer able to operate**

The risk that the University is unable to operate as a higher education provider and has to close all of its courses is **extremely low**. We have built up a robust level of reserves over the past few years and have relatively modest bank borrowing. We perform strongly on all of the sector's key financial performance indicators.

## Section 2

### The measures that we have put in place to mitigate the risks in Section 1

The University is a member of the UK Arts and Design Institutions Association (UKADIA) <https://ukadia.ac.uk/> and has entered into an agreement with other UKADIA members that in the event that we can no longer offer a particular course, an alternative course will be sought with another UKADIA member. Where students prefer, or need, to stay in the locality of Norwich, we will seek to source an alternative course with a provider in the Eastern Region. We have a long-standing relationship with Anglia Ruskin University and will approach ARU in the first instance to find alternative courses for students who wish to remain in the Eastern Region.

#### **If we are unable to deliver a significant component of your course**

In the event that a member of staff leaves, the University has Human Resources policies and procedures in place to recruit new staff or reallocate existing staff with appropriate skills and qualifications to ensure that the delivery of your course is not adversely affected. Existing staff are able to cover academic and technical teaching while the recruitment process is taking place. Where required, the University will make temporary cover appointments such as part-time lecturers or technicians to support specific elements of the course.

If we are unable to cover a specific component of the curriculum at a certain point in time, we will rearrange the delivery of the relevant component and timetable this at a later date to ensure that you receive all relevant teaching for your course. In the event that delivery impacts on the time available for you to prepare for the assessment of your work, we have a procedure that allows the University to grant an extension to your submission deadline that will accommodate the need for extra study time.

In the event that staff take part in industrial action we will make every effort to minimise any disruption to your studies. We will communicate with students and the Students' Union throughout any period of industrial action to ensure that students can raise any concerns directly with us.

#### **If we make substantial material changes to a course**

If we make substantial material changes to a course we will ensure that we advise you of the changes, and the reasons for the changes, at the earliest opportunity and that all affected students are given the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss any impact that these changes might have. Students who remain unhappy with the changes will be offered support to transfer to an alternative NUA course, or will be helped to transfer to another course with an alternative provider.

#### **If we are unable to deliver a course**

If the University is unable to deliver a course then it will take the following action:

- (i) For students who are already registered on the course, the University will maintain staffing and resources to ensure that students can complete their course. In the exceptional event that we are unable to continue to teach your course, we will speak with you and find you a suitable alternative course either with a UKADIA member institution or with a regional provider.
- (ii) For prospective students who have applied to the course, we will advise you as soon as a decision to close a course has been made and we will offer you an alternative course. In the event that we are unable to offer you a suitable alternative, staff in our Admissions team will help you to find another course with a different provider. If you are applying through UCAS, we will follow the UCAS guidance. If you are applying directly to us (e.g. for a Masters course) we will apply the principles of the UCAS guidance and assist you in finding another course.

#### **If we have to close a building**

If the University loses access to a building on a temporary basis, arrangements will be made to relocate your course into another one of our buildings, or to an external location in Norwich. We have good relationships with external companies in Norwich from whom we can rent external accommodation if we needed it.

If we are unable to use a building on a permanent basis, we will have planned for the relocation of your course to a suitable alternative location.

**If we are required to stop sponsoring overseas students**

If we are unable to continue to sponsor overseas students, we will contact you and help you to find a suitable alternative course either with a UKADIA member institution or with a local provider.

**If we lose our validating partner for Postgraduate Research (PGR) Degrees**

If our validating partner withdraws from the current partnership arrangement, the University will seek a new validating partner to continue its provision. This will be a managed process and affected students will be given prior notification and opportunities to discuss the changes with University staff. The provisions put in place to ensure continuation of study will depend on the terms of the revalidation process. In any event, all students will be given the opportunity to remain on the NUA PGR programme with a new validating partner. Where students do not wish to stay on the NUA programme the University will discuss options with the student(s) on a case by case basis.

**If we are no longer able to award our own degrees or to operate**

It is highly unlikely that this risk will materialise, but in the event that it does, we will collaborate with UKADIA member institutions and local providers to find you an alternative course.

**Refund and Compensation Policy**

Our refund and compensation policy is published on the University's website alongside the terms and conditions and other regulatory documents on the "Apply" sections of the website.

**How we will communicate this Plan with our students**

This Student Protection Plan will be published on our website and will be located on the "Apply" pages with the terms and conditions and other regulatory documents that form part of our offer. The plan will be published separately for prospective undergraduate, MA and Postgraduate Research students so that all prospective students will be able to locate it where they would expect to find it.

We will also publish this on the University intranet for current students.

We will review our Student Protection Plan through our Student Representatives Group on a bi-annual basis and consider any recommendations for change through our Senior Management Team and Academic Board.

In the event that we need to implement the provisions of this Student Protection Plan we will inform all affected students, or prospective students, by email, and where appropriate, by post.

Students already registered on a course will be offered opportunities to meet with University staff to discuss their circumstances and options. Prospective students will be contacted by a member of our admissions team.

Any specific deadlines for students or prospective students to make decisions about alternative courses will depend on the time of year and the relevant circumstances. All information, including deadlines, will be communicated to students or prospective students in writing. In all events we will ensure that students are given a reasonable amount of time in which to make a decision.

The University will work closely with the Students' Union to ensure that affected students are supported through any changes and given enough information to make informed decisions about their choices.

## STRATEGY & POLICY REVISION SHEET

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