Student Protection Plan

Bloomsbury Institute Ltd

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LONDON

Index

Bloomsbury Institute Ltd 0

1. Our commitments to students 2

2. Main risks and what we will do 2

2.1 Institutional closure 2
2.2 Loss of OfS registration 2
2.3 Loss of Awarding Body 2
2.4 Course withdrawal/suspension/closure or substantial course change 3
2.5 Loss of key staff and/or industrial action 3
2.6 Unforeseen events 3
2.7 Loss of teaching facilities 4

3. Refunds and compensation 4

4. How we communicate this Student Protection Plan 4

5. Complaints 4

6. Annual Review 5

What is a Student Protection Plan?

This Student Protection Plan (SPP) explains how Bloomsbury Institute will protect you and your studies if something unexpected happens that could affect your ability to continue or complete your course.

All higher education providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) must have an approved Student Protection Plan in place. This plan applies to current students based at all teaching sites, applicants who have accepted an offer, and students due to enrol in the future.

Our commitment is simple: We will always take reasonable steps to help you continue and complete your studies, either with us or through supported transfer to another provider if necessary.

1. Our commitments to students

If any serious disruption occurs that affects your studies, we will:

- Tell you as early as possible and explain what is happening and why
- Consult with affected students and student representatives
- Always seek to teach out your course, where possible
- Support you to transfer to another suitable provider, if teach-out is not possible
- Support the provision of your academic records promptly
- Consider refunds and/or compensation, where appropriate
- Offer academic and wellbeing support throughout the process

Our Finance, Audit and Risk Committee maintains a Corporate Risk Register with escalation routes to mitigate and reduce risks in a timely manner. We keep any impact on the student experience at the centre of how we manage risks.

2. Main risks and what we will do

2.1 Institutional closure

If this occurred, we would inform current and prospective students as soon as reasonably practicable. We would seek to teach out all students. If this was not possible, we would support transfers, provide academic records and arrange refunds and/or compensation, where appropriate.

2.2 Loss of OfS registration

We would apply for teach-out designation to enable our students to continue their studies through to completion. If this was not approved, we would support transfers, support the provision of academic records, and arrange refunds and/or compensation, where appropriate.

2.3 Loss of Awarding Body

If our awarding body terminates our partnership, we will inform current students as soon as reasonably practicable, about arrangements for a teach-out.

We will seek an alternative awarding body. If we are unable to source an alternative awarding body, prospective students who have applied to start a course will be informed our awarding body has withdrawn its approval. In these circumstances, if the prospective student has accepted an offer to start a course, they will be entitled to cancel the contract within 14 calendar days of the date we inform them.

2.4 Course withdrawal/suspension/closure or substantial course change

A significant change to a course must be approved at least six months prior to the start of the next academic year. Prior to seeking approval for a significant change to a course, we may consult with current students on the course. We will also involve, where appropriate, external stakeholders, such as applicants, employers, external examiners and any relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

Any significant change to a course will be communicated to all affected current and prospective students as soon as it has been approved. Prospective students will be entitled to cancel the contract within 14 calendar days of the date they are informed of the change, and we will refund all tuition fees paid.

A decision to withdraw/close a course must be approved by our Academic Committee. Students are represented on the Academic Committee. If we decide to withdraw or suspend a course, we will inform current and prospective students as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will always seek to teach-out the course so that current students are not impacted. In the very unlikely event that we decide not to teach-out the withdrawn course, we will support current students to transfer to another higher education provider. If a current student incurs additional costs because they must transfer to another higher education provider, we will reimburse such additional (and reasonable) costs, provided the student provides the necessary proof.

Prospective students who have applied to start a course will be informed if the course is withdrawn or suspended no later than three months prior to the course's start date, where possible. In these circumstances, we will refund all tuition fees paid. Where possible we will make the prospective student an offer for an alternative course and/or support the prospective student to secure a place at another higher education provider

Our priority will always be to protect students' ability to continue and complete their studies.

2.5 Loss of key staff and/or industrial action

We will ensure that normal operations and services are maintained wherever possible. We have sufficient experienced academic and professional services staff to be able to provide temporary cover.

We will seek to fill any vacant position as quickly as possible, minimising any disruption to current students and/or prospective students. This could be done by either appointing staff internally, hiring temporary staff and/or appointing new permanent staff.

We will take all reasonable steps to fulfil our responsibility to students to ensure that such disruption is minimised, and that any cancelled classes or examinations are rescheduled in order to ensure affected students are not disadvantaged.

2.6 Unforeseen events

If unforeseen circumstances cause disruption, we will inform current and prospective students as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will consider, and follow, where appropriate, any external guidance issued by, for example, any Government Departments, HM Revenue and Customs, the Office for Students (and its designated bodies), the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, the Student Loans Company and Advance HE.

We are fully equipped to deliver scheduled classes online and our staff can work remotely and securely access all systems. Current students will continue to have access to course materials through the Virtual Learning Environment and to the online library. Current and prospective students will be able to telephone reception during office hours. Campus-based assessments will be replaced by alternative assessments, subject to the approval of our awarding body and any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB). Advice and additional support will be provided through the website, Bloomsbury Radio broadcasts, and regular student and stakeholder communications from the Chief Revenue Officer.

2.7 Loss of teaching facilities

If Birkbeck, University of London withdraws its teaching facilities, we will secure alternative premises, but this could result in a change of location. Current students will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. If a current student incurs additional travel costs due to this change of location, we will reimburse such additional travel costs provided the student supplies the necessary proof.

We will inform prospective students during the recruitment process about a potential change of location. In these circumstances, if the prospective student has accepted an offer to start a course, they will be entitled to cancel the contract within 14 calendar days of the date we inform them.

3. Refunds and compensation

Refunds and/or compensation may be paid if continuation of study cannot be preserved. Any tuition fee refunds and payment of compensation that come due under this Student Protection Plan does not affect: (i) any rights under the Terms and Conditions (available at: www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/); and (ii) any other legal rights.

A claim for a tuition fee refund and/or the payment of compensation can be made by email to fees@bil.ac.uk.

4. How we communicate this Student Protection Plan

We publish this plan on our website, share it in offer letters, present it at induction, reference it in the Student Handbooks, and make it available through staff and student systems.

Students are involved through academic committee representation, consultation during course changes, and regular student feedback in committees and forums.

5. Complaints

If you are unhappy with how the Student Protection Plan has been applied, you should use the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures (available at: www.bil.ac.uk/qem/section-3/).

If you remain dissatisfied after completing this process, you may refer your complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) (https://www.oiahe.org.uk/), the ombudsman for the higher education sector.

6. Annual Review

This Student Protection Plan is reviewed every year by senior management and approved by the Board of Directors. Students may be consulted as part of this process.