

University of Kent

Student Protection Plan for the period 2024/25

Name of Provider: University of Kent

UKPRN: 10007150

Legal Address: The Registry, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NZ, United Kingdom

Contact point for any queries about this Student Protection Plan: Deputy-Vice Chancellor – Education and Student Experience; Professor Richard Reece email: R.J.Reece@kent.ac.uk

Table of Contents

- 1. Executive Summary 2
- 2. Introduction and Scope 2
 - 2.1 What is the Student Protection Plan?..... 3
 - 2.2 Who is covered by the Student Protection Plan? 3
 - 2.3 What is covered by the Student Protection Plan? 3
 - 2.4 What are student protection measures? 4
- 3. Publication and Review of the Student Protection Plan..... 5
- 4. Risks to the continuity of your studies 6
 - 4.1 Education and Student Experience Risks 6
 - 4.1.1 Closure or suspension of a course of study 6
 - 4.1.2 Changes to a course of study 7
 - 4.1.3 Industrial Action 7
 - 4.1.4 Inability to undertake Year Abroad/Placement/Degree Apprenticeships..... 8
 - 4.1.5 Loss of specialist teaching &/or professional services staff 8
 - 4.1.6 Loss of Professional, Statutory, Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) Accreditation 8
 - 4.2 Regulatory and Compliance risks 9
 - 4.2.1 Withdrawal of our licence to recruit international students..... 9
 - 4.2.1 Withdrawal of OfS Conditions of Registration or degree awarding powers.... 9
 - 4.3 Infrastructure risks 9
 - 4.3.1 External incidents or factors outside of our control..... 9
 - 4.3.2 Cessation of a collaborative contract with a partner institution. 9
 - 4.3.3 Closure of a Partner.....10
 - 4.3.3 Closure of a Centre.....10
 - 4.3.4 Closure of a Campus10
 - 4.3.5 Closure of the University.....11
- 5. Risk, Probability and Impact statement11
- 6. Our commitment to you on refunds and compensation11
- 7. How we will communicate, consult and engage with you about the Plan.....12
 - 7.1 Information, advice and guidance13
 - 7.2 Student Support at the University of Kent13
- 8. How to make a complaint about our handling of student protection matters.....13

1. Executive Summary

The University's Student Protection Plan (Plan) 2024/25 sets out what we will do in order to protect your interests and ensure the continuity of your studies in the case of substantial changes to and/or closure of your course of study (both in terms of content and location).

In summary, the Student Protection Plan outlines:

- the type of changes that are covered (and not covered) by the Plan
- what might happen if any of these changes interrupt your studies, or place the continuity of your studies at risk
- our assessment of how likely the risk is to happen, which may vary depending on your course or where you are studying
- what we are doing to mitigate the likelihood of these risks occurring
- what actions the University will take if the Plan is triggered, in order to protect the continuity of your studies
- how we would communicate, consult and support you to continue or complete your studies, or how you can be refunded or compensated if this is not possible.

The mitigating actions are called student protection measures and are in addition to your statutory rights which are otherwise unaffected by this plan.

The Student Protection Plan does not extend to cover those who choose to withdraw from their studies or whose registration is terminated as a consequence of action taken in relation to individual student conduct, academic performance, fitness to practice, visa compliance or non-payment of fees.

This Student Protection Plan, approved by the Office for Students (OfS), encompasses, the 2024/2025 academic year. The Plan will be reviewed and renewed on an annual cycle to ensure students whose studies extend beyond 2024/2025 are protected appropriately across the entirety of their studies.

Student Protection Plans are a requirement of condition C3 of the OfS regulatory framework. The OfS will be notified in the event any of the risks outlined arise and the Plan needs to be triggered.

2. Introduction and Scope

The University of Kent is committed to ensuring that all registered and future students have the opportunity to succeed in their academic studies. We are committed to the delivery of an excellent education and the provision of an exceptional student experience. Your interests are paramount, and all efforts will be made to ensure continuity of study such that you are able to complete the course for which you are registered.

The University has a risk management framework to manage major business risks, as well as an internal control framework to manage University processes. The risk register, which includes interruption or termination of educational services and delivery, is reviewed regularly. These frameworks are overseen by University Council and are subject to audit. These risks additionally include monitoring the University's ability to meet quality and standards of its courses, the ability to recruit students, its financial sustainability and any financial improvement plans.

In addition to effective management of ongoing activities, a University-level business continuity framework is in place to ensure we manage unforeseen incidents and protect the student experience. This includes how we monitor and respond to major business risks, including the loss of premises, IT/communications failure, industrial action, major pandemics or any combination of the above. We test and review the business continuity framework on a regular basis.

2.1 What is the Student Protection Plan?

The Student Protection Plan tells you, as a student or applicant, what you can expect to happen should there be a risk to the continuation or completion of your studies through the closure of a course, centre, campus or the Institution. In short, it is a plan to enable you to understand what the risks are to your studies and how these would be managed, to ensure that your interests are protected through any significant changes in line with the regulatory framework set out by the Office for Students (OfS).

The Student Protection Plan links to our [Student Charter](#) and should be read in conjunction with the University's [Terms and Conditions of Offer](#).

2.2 Who is covered by the Student Protection Plan?

The Student Protection Plan covers all registered students of the University and includes:

- In-person and distance learning courses
- Undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research courses
- Degree apprenticeship courses
- Dual or Joint Award courses
- Access courses.

The University has a number of collaborative partners delivering University of Kent programmes and courses. Whilst recognising that those collaborative partner organisations regulated by the Office for Students will have their own Student Protection Plan in place, the University remains committed to supporting partner institutions and all students registered on courses leading to a Kent award. The University regularly monitors the performance of collaborative partners and, in the unlikely event of a partner being unable to meet its commitments, the University would put in place arrangements to enable continuation of study.

If you have accepted an offer to study at the University, but have not yet registered, you will be informed if the University is required to enact the Student Protection Plan. If this occurs, we will explain how you are affected and, if necessary, offer suitable alternative arrangements which may include deferral for a year, or advice and support regarding alternative courses or providers.

2.3 What is covered by the Student Protection Plan?

We are committed to being open and transparent with you regarding any risks to the continuity of your course and any actions we take to mitigate against such risk. The University's Student Protection Plan sets out what the University will do to support you if certain events trigger the Plan, and the actions that we will take to ensure your continuity of study. Table 1 provides an overview of the types of events that are covered by the plan as well as those that would not be considered.

Table 1

Covered (Material/ Major changes) <i>If the University:</i>	Not covered <i>If the University makes:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Implements changes to your specific course, for example the removal or addition of core modules	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor adjustments and improvements to your course. These may include minor adjustments to the course design and/or delivery in response to student feedback, external examiner reports
<input type="checkbox"/> Closes or suspends your specific course	

<input type="checkbox"/> Closes a University centre and campus - the location on which your course is taught	
<input type="checkbox"/> Can no longer provide the course to you for any other reason, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We cease operating and exit the market, a circumstance that could include partial or full merger of the University with another institution, or loss of degree awarding powers ○ We lose our student sponsor licence which allows us to recruit and register international students ○ We work with a partner to deliver your course (e.g., franchised courses, dual or joint awards or with a Degree Apprenticeship with a particular company) and they are unable to continue or discontinue delivering your specific course ○ You face changes or disruptions to services, resources or support essential to study that are permanently or temporarily unavailable (e.g., industrial action/IT infrastructure/ pandemic) that materially affects your education and student experience ○ We close or reorganise the School or Department which delivers your specific course and there is not the specialist subject knowledge to continue teaching your course. 	<p>and professional accreditation requirements. (This could include no longer accepting new students onto a particular version of the course, whilst teaching out those that are registered)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Minor adjustments to your module content or optional modules, assessment patterns or delivery modes (which are covered by the University's Code of Practice)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes to your timetable, including rooms, buildings or close-by locations.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes to supervision for research students (such changes are covered by the University's Code of Practice).

2.4 What are student protection measures?

Student Protection measures include supporting arrangements and procedures relating to:

- **Teach-out:** ensuring you are able to complete your intended course and achieve your expected qualification with little or no tangible difference between your expectations at the start of the course and your actual experience in light of the circumstances of the University, or complete your current academic year or term (and receive an exit award or credit to recognise your academic achievement at the University)
- **Student transfer:** ensuring you are able to transfer to another higher education provider to continue and complete your studies, including providing you with appropriate support to understand your options and make an informed choice, and to ensure that administrative arrangements are in place to facilitate such transfers
- **Exit awards and unit certification:** providing you with a formal record of your achievement at the University
- **Information, advice and guidance to support you:** ensuring all students (prospective and current) receive effective information, advice, guidance and support in relation to any likely market exit event

- **Year abroad/Placement students:** ensuring there are options to continue studies by deferring placements until the final year of study, continuing with alternative placement provision where possible or reverting to a 3-year course.

The University is committed to delivering its educational services as described, wherever possible. In order to have a dynamic curriculum that reflects the latest subject expertise, we retain the right to make adjustments and improvements to courses and modules that will enhance the quality of the educational experience to all our students enrolled on that course.

This may affect the content and syllabus of courses, including in relation to placements; the timetable, location and number of classes; the timing, content or method of delivery of courses; and the examination and assessment process. Changes to courses and modules are managed through our standard quality assurance processes course as specified in our [Codes of Practice for Quality Assurance](#).

In making any material changes, the University will aim to keep these to the minimum necessary to achieve the required quality of experience. If you are affected, we will notify and consult with you in advance about any changes required. If the University changes a course and you deem this to be unsatisfactory, you will be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the course, move to another course and, if required, advice, guidance and support to transfer to another provider. Where such changes are not significantly noteworthy to trigger the Student Protection Plan, but where you feel the course or your educational experience varies radically from that expected, you may seek recourse under the University's Student Complaints Procedure as well as current consumer &/or contract law.

In general, the approach to any change or withdrawal of service or closure will follow the same pattern:

- Communication with our applicants to cease recruitment to a course, Centre, Campus or the University
- Protection of your education and student experience as a registered student through the 'teaching-out' of courses to enable certification and exit award
- Where a location is compromised, sourcing alternative premises and/or facilities
- Where the University is not able to deliver a course to completion for currently registered students (*i.e.*, a teach-out), the University will source an alternative provider and support you to make the best transfer choices to suit your individual needs. This support will include providing exit award and certification to you if you have not completed your qualification and provision of academic reference to cover your studies to date
- Where a learning opportunity cannot be delivered in an appropriate and accessible manner, due consideration will be given to refund and compensation (see Section 6).

3. Publication and Review of the Student Protection Plan

Applicants, students and staff can access the [Student Protection Plan](#) on our University website. The website is the key on-line resource for current and future students, with links to the Plan provided alongside our Student Charter, Policies and Procedures relating to Applications and Admissions, and our Apprenticeships Business Continuity Plan.

The Plan is reviewed annually by the Education and Student Experience Board, chaired by the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) with membership from our students' union (Kent Union), academic divisions and key University directorates, including education and student services. We regularly seek views on the Plan from the students' union as part of our student engagement processes, and ensure that any revisions which arise from substantive changes to our risk position, sector requirements or significant new activities that should otherwise be included are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

The Plan is received by Senate and Council, the latter as governing body of the University, prior to submission to the OfS.

4. Risks to the continuity of your studies

The University is committed to ensuring all students are able to continue their studies with us wherever possible. Whilst we appreciate a number of risks may materialise which could affect continuity to your studies, we have plans in place to support you and to mitigate the impact. We categorise risks across three broad areas: risks to your education and student experience; regulatory and compliance risks; and infrastructure risks. In assessing the level of risk, we consider both the likelihood of an event occurring and the impact of that event on your studies.

4.1 Education and Student Experience Risks

4.1.1 *Closure or suspension of a course of study*

The risk that we would close or suspend a course of study is low.

The University recognises that the suspension or closure of any course of study will have an impact in terms of the interruption of your studies and may impact on your performance and career plans. Where, as a result of unforeseen circumstances, it proves necessary for the University to close or suspend a course within a foreshortened timescale (e.g., due to the loss of specialist staff, or the closure of a centre), we will trigger this Plan and communicate with you as quickly as possible to provide appropriate and timely advice and guidance to enable well-informed decisions about your future study options.

We review the portfolio of taught courses on an annual basis to ensure that they are up-to-date, fit-for-purpose and aligned to current and future expectations and student demand. Where a decision to close or suspend a course is taken, this is achieved within a defined timeframe in ways that ensure that both students and staff interests are fully considered to minimise disruption and mitigate the impact on your studies. A strategic portfolio review was undertaken in academic year 2023/24 to ensure viability and sustainability of current and future courses, resulting in the withdrawal of a small number of courses from academic year 2024/25. No further course closures are anticipated at this time.

It is the intention of the University to, where possible, apply the student protection measure of teach-out (*i.e.*, to continue to deliver the course of study for registered students whilst not admitting new students) so that you can complete the course of study and have the opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes as intended. This teach-out period will endeavour to cover the period required if you had intermitted your studies or were studying part-time. If teaching-out is not possible and you are no longer able to complete your course of study or achieve the intended learning outcomes, or where there is no suitable alternative course acceptable to you at the University, the University will look at suitable options and then assist you to find an alternative provider that you are happy with in order that the same, or similar, learning outcomes and education and student experience can be achieved. Part of this consideration of alternative providers will look for courses and providers with comparable student services, resources including specialist equipment and any professional accreditation where appropriate.

Where no alternative provider can be found, the University will refund all or relevant part of the fees and other reasonable costs incurred and record the volume and level of credit achieved to assist future transfer to another institution. Further information on our refund and compensation policy can be found in Section 6.

The University will take full responsibility for supporting you and ensuring that your interests are protected and that any course closure is completed in an orderly manner, to minimise the impact on you and your studies.

4.1.2 *Changes to a course of study*

The risk that we undertake significant and/or material changes to your course is low.

Whilst it is normal for the University to review the quality and content of courses on a regular basis to support and enhance standards and student outcomes, the University has established quality assurance processes to ensure the adherence to regulatory guidance, and the consideration of lead times for implementation of adaptations to courses and modules to ensure there is no detriment to your education and student experience. Where these changes are within our control, these will not be implemented without your prior consent. Where such changes are driven by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) requirements, these will be enacted alongside an appraisal of mitigation options where required.

4.1.2a *Course Changes Prior to Registration*

- Where material changes are made to the structure or content of courses (e.g., removal or addition of core modules – see Table 1), these will be communicated to applicants as soon as possible to advise you of your right to choose another University course or withdraw your application to seek entry to another institution
- Where you have already accepted an offer, advice and guidance will be provided by the University via our central Admissions team to help you make an informed decision about your options and possible course of action
- If you reasonably believe that the material change to your chosen course has adversely affected you, you can contact the Admissions team to ask to be released from your place which, in effect, cancels your contract with the University. In such circumstances, we will offer you advice and guidance and where possible, facilitate a transfer to another institution that offers a course for which you are suitably qualified.

4.1.2b *Course Changes After Registration*

- Following the commencement of a course and during the course of your studies, the University may make minor or material changes to courses for a variety of reasons: to improve the quality; to reflect changes to the theory in an area of research or practices around the subject and its delivery, to meet the latest requirements of the accrediting body; or in response to feedback from staff, students or external examiners
- Where such amendments or changes to the delivery of a course are necessary, the University will consult with and inform you and your representatives of these changes, as appropriate and in line with the University's quality assurance procedures
- The standards of courses and the quality of the student experience must be maintained throughout the period of registration. In particular, conditions must be maintained to ensure the achievement of all learning outcomes in the relevant course specification.

4.1.3 *Industrial Action*

The risk of industrial action over the duration of your course is high.

Industrial Action is a temporary show of dissatisfaction by employees that may include strike action or working to rule. The risk of Industrial Action impacting your studies and student services is currently high due to ongoing staff concerns relating to recent changes to our academic portfolio, course offer and continued reorganisation of the University. We are committed to effective working relationships with staff and addressing concerns within our control where possible in order to mitigate against the risk of Industrial Action.

The University is cognisant that disruption to students arising from Industrial Action can vary markedly. In the event of Industrial Action, the University has a well-developed governance and student communications framework that is activated to co-ordinate and manage the

response to, and our communications about, Industrial Action to ensure that we make every effort to mitigate and limit any disruption to our students. Our guiding principle is to undertake an assessment of the impact on a module-by-module basis and take actions to ensure that learning opportunities are not missed and to ensure you are able to meet your course and module learning outcomes. We also apply mechanisms to ensure that you would not be disadvantaged in your assessment or exam outcomes as a direct result of industrial action. Accordingly, the risk of you being unable to successfully complete your course of study is judged to be low.

4.1.4 Inability to undertake Year Abroad/Placement/Degree Apprenticeships

The risk to non-completion of Year Abroad, Placement &/or Apprenticeship courses is low.

The University offers a range of courses with the opportunity to undertake a Year Abroad or Year in industry as part of your academic study. Where a partner institution or placement provider withdraws such provision without prior notice, we will take reasonable steps to minimise the impact to you and seek alternative opportunities and/or provision where possible. In the event that an alternative provider cannot be secured, we will ensure that your student outcomes are not impacted adversely and transfer you to a suitable alternative 3-year course. In the event of a course closure, alternative arrangements may be considered to defer the Year Abroad or Year in Industry to the end of the degree course.

The University has a well-developed infrastructure for ensuring the quality and provision of its Apprenticeship portfolio and is therefore confident in meeting the requirements to remain on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR). All apprenticeships include contractual requirements regarding discontinuation, and each includes an agreement between the apprentices (students), employer and University, with the employer responsible for work-based learning opportunities and support. The University proactively engages with both employers and students but is not responsible where the employer fails to meet their apprenticeship obligations and/or ceases trading. Where a business fails, we will make all reasonable efforts to protect and support you to completion of your studies. In the unlikely event that the University were to lose its registration as a provider, we would seek alternative provision from other institutions to support you through to completion of your course.

4.1.5 Loss of specialist teaching &/or professional services staff

The risk that you are unable to complete your course due to loss of key staff is low.

The University regularly reviews the capability and capacity levels of its staff to ensure that teaching activities and support functions remain effective and any impact on the student's experience is minimal. Whilst a level of staff turnover is to be expected, we will seek to resolve vacancies as quickly as possible and to deploy other experienced members of staff to support delivery where required. The University has supporting policies in place to mitigate against the loss of key specialist teaching or professional service staff on both a temporary, or a permanent basis. Similar arrangements apply for postgraduate research supervision, including appointment of external research supervisors where specialist knowledge and/or expertise is not otherwise retained.

4.1.6 Loss of Professional, Statutory, Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) Accreditation

The risk of suspension or withdrawal of PSRB accreditation is low.

The University holds accreditation across a wide range of PSRBs and works rigorously and proactively to maintain accreditation where it supports professional standards, requirements and/or graduate outcomes. All accredited courses are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, with disciplinary and/or PSRB developments and/or issues of concern addressed in real time. In the event of any proposed suspension or withdrawal of accreditation, the University will work with the PSRB to put in place measures to protect the interests and experience of our students.

4.2 Regulatory and Compliance risks

The University has an adverse tolerance level to regulatory and compliance risks, meaning that we are only prepared to accept safe exposure to risk at this level. We are prepared to stop any risk-bearing activities immediately, and if deemed necessary to safeguard the student experience and the University's reputational and financial position.

4.2.1 Withdrawal of our licence to recruit international students

The risk of withdrawal of the Student Route for international Students is low.

The University is licenced by the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (Home Office) to sponsor international students. This allows the University to recruit, admit and register our international students who require visas for study purposes.

The University has in place a robust internal governance structure to ensure Schools and students understand their responsibilities and conditions of sponsorship. We undertake regular assurance activity to ensure conditions of the student sponsor license are met, the University remains subject to external scrutiny by the Home Office and Office for Students.

In the event that the University did lose its student sponsor license which would have a high impact on our international students and, if teaching-out was not possible, the University, in conjunction with the UKVI, would seek to facilitate the transfer of all our sponsored students to an appropriate, licenced, alternative provider. Where no suitable alternative institution is available or acceptable to the student, the University will refund all or relevant part of the fees and record the amount and level of credit achieved to assist transfer to another institution.

4.2.1 Withdrawal of OfS Conditions of Registration or degree awarding powers

The risk of withdrawal of OfS Conditions of Registration and/or removal of degree awarding powers is low.

The University achieved the initial conditions for registration with the OfS and complies with the general ongoing conditions. We have a rigorous and robust monitoring framework to identify and manage risks where they arise and submit regular financial reports to the OfS as part of our ongoing registration.

4.3 Infrastructure risks

4.3.1 External incidents or factors outside of our control

The risk of being unable to complete your studies due to external incidents or factors outside of our control is low.

The University may be exposed to external events, threats or major incidents, major pandemics and/or other force majeure which adversely impact the delivery of our services but which are otherwise beyond our control. We have robust mechanisms including incident management and business continuity plans to deal with and mitigate the impact of such incidents and risk at the institutional level. Activation of effective business recovery solutions and contingency measures and adaptations will assure continuity of your studies where such events arise.

4.3.2 Cessation of a collaborative contract with a partner institution.

The risk of cessation of collaborative provision is low.

The arrangements for partnership renewal and collaborative provision are set out in our Codes of Practice with all such provision subject to regular review and monitoring. The arrangements for ending any such provision is set out in legal contracts which include clauses that specify the timescale and arrangements for continuity or teaching out of courses where ended by either party. In such an event, the University will undertake all reasonable actions to ensure that you will be able to complete your course of study in the most suitable manner.

4.3.3 Closure of a Partner

The risk of closure of a Partner is low.

The University has a number of partners where the conditions for the termination of a partnership are specified in the Memorandum of Agreement. The University offers joint awards for the Medway School of Pharmacy and the Kent and Medway Medical School with the Universities of Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church respectively, plus awards and articulations with overseas institutions (itemised in the [Collaborative Provision Register](#)). The risk of the closure of these partner institutions is low.

For students registered with the University on Dual Awards or Joint Awards, where a partner may close, the University of Kent will seek to deliver the courses in their entirety to ensure the full delivery of learning outcomes and the opportunity for students to complete their intended qualification; where, for whatever reason this is not possible, the University will work with students to secure an alternative provider in order to complete their qualification. With respect to the Kent and Medway Medical School, as part of the General Medical Council validation process, there is a condition that if this were to happen prior to the School achieving full validation, our students would be automatically transferred to the Brighton and Sussex Medical School course.

4.3.3 Closure of a Centre

The risk to the permanent closure of our Paris Centre is medium.

The University currently operates one centre in continental Europe, in Paris, with the small number of courses offered owned by academic Schools at our Canterbury campus. Where, for whatever reason, a course can no longer be offered at the Centre, all affected students will be provided with the opportunity to receive such teaching at the main Canterbury Campus or entirely online.

If you are not able to attend the Canterbury Campus to complete your course, or where the University is unable to make provision to teach that course, you will be offered support, information, advice to find an alternative provider. This support will include the University reviewing potential alternative providers, discussing these with you in terms of your preferences and contacting them to ask about their capacity to inwardly accept our affected students subject to their entry requirements and acceptance of credit transfer.

Where an alternative and accessible provider cannot be identified, the University will refund all or relevant part of your fees and other relevant costs and record the volume and level of credit achieved to assist future transfer to another institution.

4.3.4 Closure of a Campus

The risk to the permanent closure of our Canterbury and/or Medway campus is low.

The University currently operates two Campuses: Canterbury and Medway. The Canterbury campus is the University's original and primary campus. The Medway campus has a number of dependencies on the Canterbury campus for the provision of a range of services. The campuses are 30 miles apart and there is a regular transport link provided by the University.

- The risk of the permanent closure of the Canterbury campus is low. Events that would trigger the closure of the Canterbury campus would likely result in the exit of the University of Kent from the UK Higher Education sector. Such an event is unlikely.
- The risk to the permanent closure of the Medway campus is low. The Campus estate and portfolio has recently been reconfigured with a number of courses phased out with new market-led digital and creative courses in development to support the digital production facilities offered by our £15m flagship creative industries hub and home of the Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries (iCCi), the Medway Docking Station.

4.3.5 Closure of the University

The risk of the University exiting the English Higher Education sector is low.

There are a number of risks that could impact on the University's ability to operate as it does now, including the loss or restriction of University status, a pandemic or other unforeseeable event or cancellation of our OfS registration. The University continues to face a number of financial challenges but has a Financial Improvement Plan in place to improve our financial position and ensure our future sustainability.

In the event that the University was forced to close or to merge with another institution, the University would certify all teaching and learning and negotiate the transfer of courses and/or individuals to appropriate alternative Higher Education providers in order that you have the opportunity to complete your learning as intended.

Where this is a full or partial merger with another HEI, the likelihood is that the affected courses would be delivered *via* the newly created institution arising from the merger. Where this is not possible, alternative providers would be identified and the transfer of all our registered students would be negotiated. We would ensure that all students would be communicated, consulted and engaged with to explain the situation with a Course Board established to manage this process. Where an alternative and accessible provider cannot be identified, the University will refund all or relevant part of your fees and other relevant costs and record the volume and level of credit achieved to assist future transfer to another institution.

5. Risk, Probability and Impact statement

The University has a responsible approach to risk management, seeking to recognise and manage its exposure to risks. In pursuit of achieving its strategic aims and academic mission, the University accepts a degree of risk as agreed by Council. This is the University's Governing body with overall responsibility and oversight for risk management within the University. Council has specific responsibility for setting the tone and influencing of the culture of risk management, which includes determining the appropriate risk appetite and tolerance levels, as well as providing the strategic focus to the management of significant and contingency risks at the University.

The University is committed to ensuring an appropriate balance between risk aversion and opportunity is maintained and managed to provide you with an excellent education and student experience. Risk appetite and tolerance levels are reviewed on an annual basis. The current University risks that apply in the specific context of the Student Protection Plan are outlined in Section 4 of this Plan as Education and Student Experience, Compliance and Regulatory and Infrastructure risks.

6. Our commitment to you on refunds and compensation

In the event that the University is unable to provide a course to completion, to some or all students, because of an event that has triggered the Student Protection Plan, and where all reasonable alternative teaching arrangements to enable continuation of study have been exhausted, the University, if fair and lawful, will aim to provide fair and comparable levels of refund or compensation to cohorts of students affected.

Where the University is unable to protect the continuation of study during the academic year, and unable to offer arrangements at the University or with an appropriate alternative provider, then the University will normally refund tuition fees (or a proportion thereof) and other costs (for example accommodation costs and other living costs) incurred in relation to the course on which you are registered. In such cases, fees will be refunded directly to you except where otherwise paid to the University by a Student Loans Company or a sponsor; in those circumstances, tuition fees will normally be refunded to the appropriate organisation.

The University will not normally refund any tuition or other fees, or offer compensation, where it is able to teach out a course except where reasonable adjustments may otherwise be required for individual students. Similarly, the University will not normally refund tuition or other fees where you are supported to transfer to alternative appropriate provision at another provider. If you wish to know more about our refund policy and information relating to tuition fee refunds, then see the [University's Refund Policy](#).

Requests for refund or compensation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the particular circumstances of the course closure, your personal circumstances and needs, and the degree of impact. Where it is necessary to consider your individual circumstances, you may be asked to produce documentation to evidence any additional costs that you may otherwise have incurred. In considering your case for refund &/or compensation, the university will include appropriate provision for:

- Tuition fee costs
- Maintenance costs
- Reasonably incurred accommodation costs
- Travel costs arising from a relocation of provision
- Bursary, scholarship or similar funding that would otherwise have remained available to you provided the terms and conditions applicable continue to apply and any eligibility criteria continue to be met
- Additional costs reasonably incurred as a result of non-continuation, relocation or change of course
- Archiving and enabling access to your academic achievement as required in the future.

In exceptional cases, the University may acknowledge and thereby also consider additional factors such as distress, inconvenience, disappointment and/or lost time

7. How we will communicate, consult and engage with you about the Plan

We will communicate our Student Protection Plan to you through:

- Email communications to applicants before and after you make an application. It will also be one of the items which, as a current student, you need to confirm you have read when you re-register at the beginning of each year
- We will provide a general update to you in the monthly student email newsletters when the Student Protection Plan is updated and revised each year.

We will also communicate our Student Protection Plan to staff:

- We will provide a general update to staff in all staff email updates when the Student Protection Plan is updated and revised each year
- The Plan will be part of the induction course for all new academic and professional services staff
- We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our Student Protection Plan when they propose course changes
- In the process for course changes, we will ensure that all Directors of Division, Heads of Subject and Heads of Operations are briefed on the Student Protection Plan.

In the event of proposed course changes, suspension or closures, we will inform our Students' Union and work with them to consult with you to gain a better understanding of how the proposed changes could affect you and what solutions may be appropriate.

Together with the Students' Union, we will provide individual information, advice and guidance to you on your options. A communications plan would be developed and all

consultations/communications with you will be authorised by the DVC Education and Student Experience or nominated authority.

7.1 Information, advice and guidance

If the Student Protection Plan was triggered, information, advice and guidance to support you will be provided on a case-by-case basis to take account of your particular circumstances and preferences in order to support you to continue or complete your studies. This is most likely to be provided by one or more of the below student services:

- Central and Division/School Admissions Offices
- Student Finance
- Engagement Support Office in your academic School or Division or the University's central Student Support and Wellbeing team
- Your Academic Adviser.

Students will also have access to independent advice from the Students' Unions through the Students' Union Advice Centre(s) if we need to implement the measures in our Student Protection Plan.

7.2 Student Support at the University of Kent

The University recognises that any period of uncertainty in relation to the future of a course is a stressful time and will ensure that additional support is provided to you. This will include availability of drop-in support sessions, delivered by Engagement Support Teams within the School/Division, if possible. You will also have priority access to the University's Student Support and Wellbeing Services to mitigate longer term emotional impact. If you are already receiving support in relation to known mental health conditions, additional support will be provided, if required (e.g., approval of additional hours with a mental health mentor). Dedicated support will also be offered for students with autism and different types of neurodiversity who are likely to find the period of change more challenging. Care experienced students and estranged students will also be provided with additional support.

If you have an Inclusive Learning Plan (ILP) and are transferring to a new course at the University of Kent, your ILP will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose. If you are transferring to another institution, your consent will be sought to transfer information about your support requirements, including any evidence, directly to that provider in order to ensure that you receive a new ILP as quickly as possible. If you are considering the option of taking an exit award and possibly entering the employment market earlier than previously planned, you will be given access to a Careers Adviser in the University's Careers and Employability Service to assist you with consideration of your options as well as providing you with the skills to prepare you for job application and recruitment processes (e.g., CV writing and interview practice).

8. How to make a complaint about our handling of student protection matters

If the Student Protection Plan is triggered and you wish to make a complaint about our handling of student protection, you should contact the Student Conduct and Complaints Office at sccoffice@kent.ac.uk. The information and guidance that you receive will ensure that you are made aware of the [student complaints procedure](#) that is updated by 1 September before the start of term, if required.

If a complaint is received, the University of Kent's Student Conduct and Complaints Office (SCCO) has a casework team that deals with all complaints submitted by students. The SCCO has trained Officers and, if required, trained members of staff that can be called upon to ensure the capacity to deal with an increased volume of complaints. If the University of Kent were to receive an increased volume of complaints, it has the capacity to recruit additional staff as required. This will ensure that all student complaints about the implementation of the Student Protection Plan, will be considered in an equal and timely way.

In terms of the complaints process itself, if it has not been possible for you to resolve your concerns through Early Resolution you are able to submit a formal complaint that will be investigated by the SCCO. If you have made a formal complaint, we will send you a report which includes the outcome of the complaint and an explanation of the decision. The Head of Student Conduct and Complaints will also ensure that we meet good practice in addressing your complaint. If you are dissatisfied however, you are able to request a review of the complaint (certain grounds for review apply). This review will be conducted by an appropriate senior member of staff.

Once the University's internal procedures are complete, you will receive a Completion of Procedures Letter from the University. This will allow you to raise your complaint to the OIA for review within 12 months of receiving your Completion of Procedures Letter.