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Summary available:	NO		

Student Protection Plan

2022-24

This document can be made available in other formats,
on request

Provider's name: Newbury College trading as the University Centre Newbury

Provider's UKPRN: 10004596

Legal address: Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury, Berkshire. RG14 7TD

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Student protection plan for the period [2021-22]

1.1 Introduction and Purpose

The University Centre Newbury operates delivery of Higher Education (HE) programmes for Newbury College. The 2017 Higher Education Research Act, requires all providers of Higher Education to provide and maintain a Student Protection Plan. The plan is intended to protect student interests should the provision of their programme be adversely affected by substantial change. This plan is in addition to the protection provided by consumer protection law. This plan tells you how we make sure we can continue to provide your programme, based on an assessment of the risks we have determined are relevant. This means that we have thought about situations that might stop or limit your ability to continue your studies (the risks); how likely it is that these situations will happen (the level of risk); and what we do to stop these situations occurring (mitigations). The document does not cover personal circumstances that might stop or limit your ability to continue your studies. Finally, this document tells you how we would support and refund you if, in the unlikely event, we could not maintain your studies.

The Student Protection Plan is not relevant if you decide to withdraw from your course or if you are required to withdraw for reasons detailed in your Student Agreement, including failing to comply with Student Disciplinary Regulations, failing to meet required academic performance standards or non-payment of fees.

The plan is made available to students on the College website and is referenced along with other key policies as part of student guidance for HE programmes at the University Centre Newbury and during induction to the College.

1.2 Identified Risks to a Student's Programme Covered by this Plan:

- **Risk of the UCN being unable to operate**
- **Inability to be able to deliver a specific course/ courses**
- **Inability to deliver material components of a course/ courses**
- **Inability to be able to deliver in a particular mode of study**
- **Risk of not being able to recruit or teach a particular type of student**

1.3. Commitment to protect student interests.

UCN/ Newbury College is committed to:

- Inform students in a timely manner of any risk to the continuity of their studies, providing a minimum of 20 working days of the closure of a course.

- Take action to protect student interests if a decision is made to discontinue the provision of a programme, change or close all or part of the delivery or cease operation as a provider.
- Involve students, partners and supporting employers in discussions of any proposed changes and the likely impacts on provision and the measures in place to protect the provision.
- Provide relevant advice, guidance and support to students if significant changes occur that affect the provision of their studies.
- Engage students in the discussion of this plan to ensure awareness and to obtain feedback to inform any future revision requirements.
- Make reference to the Student Protection Plan and its implications when programme changes are proposed and discussed.
- Inform the Office for Students of revisions made to the plan.

2. Risk Assessment

The Senior Leadership Team has assessed the likelihood of the following risks occurring and the outcomes are outlined in the table below:

Risk	Severity	Likelihood
Risk of the UCN being unable to operate	High	Low
Inability to be able to deliver a specific course/ courses	High for Students on that course Low for institution	Medium
Inability to deliver material components of a course/ courses	High for Students on that course Low for institution	Low
Inability to be able to deliver in a particular mode of study	Medium	High
Risk of not being able to recruit or teach a particular type of student	Medium	Low

The full risk assessment is included in Appendix A.

3. Risk Mitigations

3.1 Risk of the College being unable to operate:

The risk of Newbury College being unable to operate is low because the College has strong cash solvency and owns a site of 40 acres; which has the potential for further development if required. The College has a business continuity plan to deal with any incident that causes access to premises to be affected. The College has not identified any major risks to quality or provision through its governance and management or through reviews by regulatory bodies (ESFA Funding Audit 2020, Ofsted 2017 and QAA 2016). The College also seeks to maintain high standards by participating in quality standards such as Matrix where the standard of information, advice, guidance and support for students are considered. The College monitors reports from awarding body external examiners and takes action based upon their feedback to ensure that the quality of provision is sustained and improved where required. In addition to this the College maintains a range of internal quality assurance measures to maintain the quality of provision.

Strategies, policies and plans are reviewed by the College Corporation to ensure that they support the sustained operation of the College. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are reviewed routinely in College leadership meetings to manage any risks which may impact upon the financial viability of the College and its provision.

3.2 Inability to be able to deliver a specific course/ courses:

Factors that may affect the College running specific courses includes losing approval with an awarding organisation, losing approval with a validating University partner and the withdrawal of a programme from funding.

The risk of Newbury College losing approval to provide Higher Education programmes is moderate. Level 4 and 5 qualifications are run through approval agreements with awarding bodies. Annual monitoring processes are in place with each awarding body and periodic reviews check the validity and sustainability of provision. Agreements with all awarding bodies require the College to sustain provision for enrolled students until the planned completion if a decision is made to withdraw a programme of study. Internal quality reviews support these external processes to ensure that expected awarding body standards are met. The quality cycle includes awarding body quality reviews and external quality assessor visits. These work alongside annual Area Self Assessment Reviews, annual course Self Assessment reviews and action planning, termly internal quality assessment boards, standardisation reviews and half termly course reviews. Students feed into these processes through formal and informal surveys, the student council, staff student liaison committees and end of unit reviews. This quality cycle is designed to uphold the expected standards for each individual programme and mitigate the risk of losing approval.

Validation with University partners is contracted for a period of years. All validated provision is regularly monitored by University partners and there are termly meetings to ensure compliance is maintained.

The risk of a course being withdrawn from the curriculum is moderate. An Annual review of the curriculum plan is carried out and labour market intelligence is used to inform the planning to ensure that programmes are relevant to industry needs and potential student recruitment. A programme may be withdrawn on the basis of recruitment being too low to be financially sustainable or staff being unavailable to deliver the provision. Curriculum planning starts early in the academic year and includes resources and staffing plans to mitigate the risk of courses being cancelled.

3.3 Inability to deliver material components of a course/ courses

There is a low risk of a material component of a course being undeliverable due to its specialist nature. A unit or module may have been selected for delivery because of the expertise of an individual teacher or from a local employer. The risk occurs if the teacher becomes unavailable for an unforeseen reason. The College endeavours to plan and manage its programmes to reduce the risk associated with highly specialist provision. Where specialist delivery is identified in the curriculum plan existing staff will be trained or specialist staff recruited. Where there is demand for specialist provision from the employers who inform the development of programmes, the College would seek their support in training existing staff or to draw upon their expertise to manage the gap in recruiting a replacement member of staff.

3.4 Inability to be able to deliver in a particular mode of study:

In 2020/21 the global pandemic (Covid-19) has caused the risk of the usual mode of delivery to be changed, for example classroom delivery replaced with online remote lessons to be raised to high. When this occurs students are informed by letter. Initially the proposed delivery model is checked that it complies with guidance

from the government, Office for Students, awarding bodies and partner universities. The letter outlining the change of delivery mode is disseminated to Course Leaders, students, employers and partner universities; it is also posted on the VLE (Moodle and/or Teams). If the model involves online remote delivery students are able to loan laptops and other IT resources from the College, they can also apply for laptops or resources from the Hardship fund if eligible.

3.5 Risk of not being able to recruit or teach a particular type of student

The risk of not being able to teach a particular type of student is low because we aim to attract and retain a diverse student body within an inclusive learning environment, with appropriate safeguards in place. For students who disclose a disability, reasonable adjustments are made, as appropriate to teaching and assessment practices as well as the wider student experience, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Students who disclose additional learning needs are assessed by the Additional Learning Support Team and a support arrangement is agreed and implemented. Tutors support all students throughout their studies and there are a range of support services available to enable adjustments to be implemented on the basis of individual need. PASCs are the first point of contact for students with learning difficulties or personal issues. PASCs act as an advocate for students where necessary and provide academic support where required. Students may be signposted to other departments, either within college or outside agencies, that can support them.

4 Compensation and Refunds

Should there be a situation where a satisfactory arrangement for the continuation of a programme cannot be found, the College will refer to the Policy for the Refund of Fees (<https://www.newbury-college.ac.uk/info/policies.html>). If compensation is deemed necessary, the college holds professional indemnity and public liability insurances to support claims.

5 Dissatisfaction and Complaints

Newbury College recognises that students may be unhappy with any disruption to their planned programme of study and will only implement the Student Protection Plan where all possibilities for continuity have been exhausted. If the proposed actions and solutions derived from the plan fail to meet student satisfaction, students are able to make a complaint following the Newbury College Complaints Procedure. They may also raise their concerns with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Date: January 2021

Review date: January 2024

Appendix A

Risk Assessment

Risk	Severity	Likelihood	Mitigation
Risk of the UCN being unable to operate	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity Plan in place • Good financial reserves • Quality measures and monitoring in place • Strategies, policies, plans and KPIs monitored by SLT and where appropriate Corporation
Inability to be able to deliver a specific course/ courses	High for Students on that course Low for institution	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual monitoring processes in place with awarding bodies • Provision sustained for enrolled students until planned completion if a decision is made to withdraw a programme • Internal and External quality assurance ensures that awarding body requirements are met • Validated provision is monitored by University partners and termly meetings ensure compliance is maintained • Effective curriculum planning
Inability to deliver material components of a course/ courses	High for Students on that course Low for institution	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist staff recruited • Existing staff trained • Seeking support from employer partners
Inability to be able to deliver in a particular mode of study	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New delivery mode identified and checked for compliance with awarding body/ University requirements • Communication in writing and posted on VLE to notify students of the change of delivery in advance • Assessment made of whether the mode disadvantages any groups of students and actions taken to address this
Risk of not being able to recruit or teach a particular type of student	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from Additional Learning Support Team • Support from PASCs • Support from external agencies where required

