

# **The Bedford College Group Student Protection Plan 2023**

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## Introduction

The Bedford College Groups' Student Protection Plan is a document that is approved by the Office for Students (OfS) that every provider of Higher Education is required to have in place in the England. The purpose of the plan details the actions that would happen in the event that there is a risk to the continuation of your studies arose, as well as how we would communicate with you about this.

## Purpose of the Student Protection Plan

The Student Protection Plan (the Plan) sets out what measures we have in place to protect you, as a student at the Bedford College Group, in the event that a risk to the continuation of your studies arises. The measures contained in this Plan are in addition to the protections you have under consumer protection law and do not affect your consumer rights.

## ***Who does this Student Protection Plan cover?***

The Bedford College group operates a number of partnerships with Universities. The table below indicates if you are covered by this plan or the validating partners Student Protection Plan. This plan covers current students of the Bedford College Group. The Bedford College Group merged with Central Bedfordshire College in March 2023. This plan will cover all direct students from Central Bedfordshire College.

<b>Course Type</b>	<b>Which student protection plan covers your course?</b>
Top ups in the Arts – Graphics – Fashion - Business	University of Northampton Student Protection Plan
Foundation Degree or Top up awarded by the University of Bedfordshire Pearson Higher Nationals	University of Bedfordshire Student Protection Plan
Top ups in Computing and Engineering through the University of Northampton	Bedford College Group Student Protection Plan
Professional Graduate Certificate (PGCE), Certificate of Education.	Bedford College Group Student Protection Plan

## ***How is the Student Protection Plan triggered?***

The Student Protection Plan would only be triggered following a process of consultation with the HE Steering Group and the College's Executive. Any plan to trigger the implementation of the plan would be clearly communicated to you from the College. Firstly, we would write to notify you of this within ten full

working days of the Plan being triggered. Once you had been notified you would receive information on who you could contact to discuss your circumstances, especially if you had specialist needs, and where you would be able to access advice and support. The College's Student Services Team will be available to provide you with support during this period.

## **What are the risks?**

This plan provides an assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for students, how those risks may differ based on different needs of students', characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise for a student.

<b>Risk No</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood that risk will crystallise</b>
1	<i>The provider loses its validation for one or more of its courses</i>	<b>Low risk</b> <i>We work with 3 HEI partners and Pearson currently and have strong partnerships our HEI Partners with external reports that demonstrate our strong working relationships with awarding bodies.</i>
2	<i>One or more locations at which you deliver courses to students is no longer available because of closure</i>	<b>Low risk</b> <i>We own or have long term leases for all premises from which we deliver Higher Education and have no plans to close any of these premises.</i>
3	<i>One or more locations at which you deliver courses to students is no longer available because of a significant change in location</i>	<b>Medium risk</b> <i>Due to financial viability Departments may consider only offering courses from one location instead of from the published locations (eg just offering from Bedford campus rather than offering from Bedford and Kettering). Any proposed changes to delivery locations will require student consultation.</i>
4	<i>You are no longer able to deliver courses to your students in one or more subject areas and/or departments</i>	<b>Low risk</b> <i>We do not currently plan to close any large parts of our HE provision over the next 3 years.</i>
5	<i>You are no longer able to deliver courses to your students as you are considering course closure in the next three years</i>	<b>Low risk</b> <i>We do not currently plan to close any parts of our HE provision over the next 3 years</i>

6	<p><i>You are no longer able to deliver material elements of one or more courses e.g. due to single person dependencies for teaching</i></p>	<p><b>Medium Risk</b>  <i>This is a particular risk for the College and areas difficult to recruit to are</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Construction and Building Services</i></li> <li>• <i>Sustainable Construction</i></li> <li>• <i>Engineering</i></li> <li>• <i>Music Technology</i></li> </ul>
7	<p><i>You are no longer able to recruit a particular type of students eg internationals students</i></p>	<p><b>Low risk</b>  <i>The College no longer recruits international students.</i></p>
8	<p><i>You are no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to your students</i></p>	<p><b>Low risk</b>  <i>There is some risk for part time learners completing their programmes over a number of years if qualifications changes.</i></p>

## What are the measures in place to mitigate the risks for students?

1	<i>The provider loses validation for one or more of its courses</i>	<i>The College is increasing the range of partners it works with so that risk can be mitigated. Our existing contracts with HEI partners have agreed exit strategies which ensure continuation of learning for students.</i>
2	<i>One or more locations at which you deliver courses to students is no longer available because of closure.</i>	<i>No mitigation required</i>
3	<i>One or more locations at which you deliver courses to students is no longer available because of a significant change in location</i>	<i>Our HE Quality processes outline detailed course closure processes (with the decision to close only implemented if agreed by the HE steering group). The Closure of a course would only be agreed if it was in the academic interests of the learners. If a decision is made to change location compensation regarding the change in location will be provided</i>
4	<i>You are no longer able to deliver courses to your students in one or more subject areas and/or departments</i>	<i>No mitigation required</i>
5	<i>You are no longer able to deliver courses to your students as you are considering course closure in the next three years</i>	<i>No mitigation required</i>
6	<i>You are no longer able to deliver material elements of one or more courses eg due to single person dependencies for teaching</i>	<i>We will implement a recruitment drive to recruit staff in hard to recruit areas where there is risk of dependencies. We will ensure multiple lecturers are teaching each course cohort to ensure that any dependencies for teaching are minor. We will ensure our Staff development Plan requires the upskilling of staff to enable them to teach Levels 4/5/6. We will where possible ensure that the appointment of Heads of Department have higher level qualifications to enable cover any potential dependencies for teaching. At a last resort we would use consultants to deliver specialist units.</i>
7	<i>You are no longer able to recruit a particular type of students eg international students</i>	<i>No mitigation required</i>

8	<i>The provider loses validation for one or more of its courses</i>	<i>The College is increasing the range of partners it works with so that risk can be mitigated. Our existing contracts with HEI partners have agreed exit strategies which ensure continuation of learning for students.</i>
9	<i>You are no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to your students</i>	<i>No mitigation required</i>
10	<i>The Pandemic changes the way we need to deliver our courses.</i>	<p><i>Our plan is face to face learning on campus with social distancing in place. However, should the Government advice instruct the closure of the campuses, we will move to online teaching and learning, and we will inform students as soon as possible of any changes in delivery. Where possible, we will consult with students on the approach to ensure that decisions have a student experience viewpoint. Also, any partial lockdown, we would try to continue where possible with face to face. It may require that a blended approach is adopted. This would mean a blend of face to face and online learning. For students, this online learning would be delivered through Microsoft Teams and our VLEs. We will ensure that your timetable is provided as planned online where possible. However, there may be times that tutors set individual activities during sessions to help manage screen time for students. If this happens during your course your Course Manager can offer alternatives such as pausing your studies.</i></p> <p><i>As Government advice changes, we will provide you updates on our teaching and learning strategy for September. You will receive a further update in September to confirm your study arrangements.</i></p>