## Annex D: Template for a student protection plan

| Provider’s name: Royal Holloway, University of London  Provider’s UKPRN: 10005553  Legal address: Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX.  Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Robert Hall, Director of Academic Services |
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| **Student protection plan for the period [2018/19]** |
| **1. An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students,** **how those risks may differ based on your students’ needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise** |
| Royal Holloway, University of London, delivers degree programmes which lead to awards of the University of London and also diplomas and certificates that lead to awards of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The College is a UKVI Sponsor Licence holder (Tier 2, Tier 4 and Tier 5) with Tier 4 Sponsor status allowing the College to sponsor overseas students to study in the UK.  The five key risks to the College’s ability to deliver programmes are as follows:   * + - * + Significant failure to recruit students, which could lead to: * College Closure * Campus Closure (Central London) * Department Closure * Programme Closure * Unavailability of specialist space/ facilities that might arise as the result of a natural disaster, which could prevent the College from running one or more specialist programmes * Loss of UKVI Sponsor Licence * Closure of collaborative partners * University of London closure   The College also recognises that should any of these risks materialise they will not only impact on continuing students, but also applicants who have accepted a firm offer of a place and who are committed to studying at the College. The College would be committed to offer these applicants a place on an alternative programme at the College.  Significant failure to recruit students  With increased competition and demographic changes significant failure to recruit students to meet recruitment targets would impact on financial return and could lead to any/ all of the closures referred to above.  The College’s financial performance has, however, been and continues to be strong enabling it to provide confidence to students that the risk of the College as a whole closing is very low.  With respect to the other possible closures listed above the College carefully manages its recruitment and increased recruitment on new programmes generally mitigates falling recruitment on existing programmes. Should the College deem it necessary to close the central London campus (which is in the process of expanding with effect September 2018) and will offer only PGT programmes to between around 2 to 5% of the total student cohort) it would either endeavour to find a suitable venue in London for the programmes to be delivered or move delivery to the Egham campus. For programmes currently delivered on the Egham campus, the College would strive in the first instance to teach out the programme and already has in place an approved process for the College to discuss such closures with students:  <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/teaching/aqpo/academic-regulations-and-policies/academic-policies/programme-closure-withdrawal-and-suspension.aspx>  Unavailability of specialist space/ facilities  Should this happen, the College would implement the Business Continuity Plan and secure alternative accommodation in the local area.  Loss of UKVI Sponsor Licence  A second risk identified by the College, which might lead to College closure, is loss of the UKVI Sponsor Licence, which would impact on recruitment of students. The College has had Tier 4 Sponsor status since Tier 4 of the points based system was introduced in 2008 and has robust monitoring processes in place to continue to meet stipulated requirements. The College has an A rating for the Tier 2 and Tier 5 of the Sponsor Licence. Given the College’s track record, the risk of losing the UKVI Sponsor Licence is very low.  Closure of collaborative partners  Relative to other HEIs the College currently has relatively few collaborations with providers for franchised and validated programmes both in the UK and overseas. A robust due diligence process is followed before setting up such agreements, they are carefully monitored annually and collapse of the arrangement is covered in the legal contract. In the unlikely event that a collaboration were to collapse, the College would strive in the first instance to teach out the programme and already has in place an approved process for the College to discuss such closures with students: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/teaching/aqpo/academic-regulations-and-policies/academic-policies/programme-closure-withdrawal-and-suspension.aspx>  University of London closure  The risk that the College would no longer be able to award University of London awards is minimal. If this were to happen the College would be able to use its own degree awarding powers for taught and research degrees to award Royal Holloway and Bedford New College degrees to students who would have been eligible for a Royal Holloway, University of London award. |
| **2. The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise** |
| The College does not believe at this point that any of the risks identified in 1 are reasonably likely to materialise in the immediate future. As indicated above, in the unlikely event that recruitment fell to the extent that programmes and/ or individual departments had to be closed or a collaboration collapsed, the College would strive in the first instance to teach out the programmes to ensure that students are able to complete the degree programmes that they applied to at the College. |
| **3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study** |
| The College’s policy on refunds and compensation is encapsulated in the College’s *Student Fee Regulations.*  The current version of this document is available at:  <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/assets/docs/pdf/studentfeeregulations201718-april-2017.pdf>  The Regulations have been reviewed for the 2018-19 to contain additional information on the refunding of fees and circumstances under which compensation may be granted. The revised *‘Refund of Fees’* section is provided below. The College has cash reserves of £22 million, at 31 July 2018, which would be sufficient to provide refunds and compensation for students in all foreseeable circumstances.  **Refund of Fees**  59. Applicant tuition deposits will only be refunded in line with the College’s Admissions policy and procedures   * View the policy that applies to Undergraduates [here](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/undergraduate/applying/admissionspolicy.aspx) * View the policy that applies to Postgraduates [here](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/postgraduate/applying/admissionspolicy.aspx)   60. Fee refunds occurring following withdrawal or interruption of study will only be actioned once the appropriate form has been completed by the student and department and processed into the student records system by Student Administration.  61. Refunds will be made to the original payer (this includes sponsors) and via the original method of payment. Refunds will not be issued in cash or by cheque. Any payments originating from these methods will be refunded by direct bank transfer. Any payments originating from the Student Loans Company will be reimbursed directly to the SLC.  62. Overpayments of fees will, in all cases, be offset against future due invoices held on the student’s fee account before any refund will be considered.  63. Students may be asked for documentary evidence or confirmation of bank/payment card details to support a refund request. All refund requests should be made by email to the  [Student Fees Office](mailto:Student-Fees@RoyalHolloway.ac.uk)  The Student Fees Office aim to process all refund requests between 5- 15 working days.  64. If tuition fees paid initially by the student are subsequently paid in full (as cleared funds) by another person or body, the refund will normally be made to the student  65. Overpayment arising as a result of a Professional and Career Development Loan will be refunded to the student and not to the loan provider, unless the loan provider makes a direct request for settlement. It is recommended students consider using this refund towards repayment of this loan.  66. Any refund arising from a US Federal Loan will be administered in accordance within the US Department of Education or loan provider guidelines. View the guideline [here](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/documents/pdf/federalloansrefundpolicyupdatedmay2015.pdf)  67. At certain times, the Student Fees Office may initiate refunds on accounts where no further invoices fall due. Email notification will be sent to the ‘@royalholloway.ac.uk’ address following the refund.  68. Royal Holloway reserves the right to offset overpayments on the student account against invoices due in the subsequent academic year.  69. **Financial Effect of Course Closure**  Where the College closes a programme and moves students to an alternative campus or institution the College will consider reimbursing students This will be determined on a case by case basis and will depend on the circumstances and in line with any mitigation offerings which will allow students to complete their period of study.  Re-imbursement may be given in relation to the following:   * Additional travel/relocation costs to enable completion at an alternative College campus. * Additional travel/relocation costs to enable a student to transfer to complete at an alternative institution * Maintenance costs if a student is required to lengthen their period of study to enable them to complete the programme * Continuation of an expected bursary for the remainder of the academic year |
| **4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan** |
| The current Student Protection Plan has been drawn up in collaboration with the College’s Students’ Union. The College’s Executive team meets regularly with the key members of the Students’ Union to discuss matters such as those covered in this protection plan and how students’ interests might be protected in the event of a risk materialising.  It will be publicised to current and future students by posting a link to the plan on the relevant sections of the College website, including the admissions page (<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/postgraduate/applying/admissionspolicy.aspx>) and the Student Intranet (<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/home.aspx>).  The College has in place a *Policy for Programme Closure / Withdrawal and Suspension* (<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/teaching/aqpo/academic-regulations-and-policies/academic-policies/programme-closure-withdrawal-and-suspension.aspx>), which relevant staff are aware of. As outlined in the policy, the College will discuss programme withdrawals with students and will endeavour to teach out the programme to minimize the impact on registered students. There may, however, be cases where departments wish to withdraw programmes after they have been advertised and offers made. To minimize the impact on students the College has agreed the following deadlines in terms of making and communicating decisions about programme closures/ withdrawals and suspensions before students commence their studies:  *Decisions on programme closures and suspensions should ideally be made prior to the start of the recruitment cycle. For undergraduate programmes this is by 15 January each year in time for the Undergraduate Prospectus to go to print, 18 months prior to enrolment. For PGT programmes this is by June each year, 15 months prior to enrolment. However, if this proves to be impossible, the latest date by which decisions on closures and suspensions can be made is by the start of the contractual/offer making stage which starts on 1 October each year, one year in advance of enrolment. Only in exceptional cases will Academic Planning Committee approve the closure or suspension of a programme of study at a date later than that set out above and then normally no later than 20 March prior to the start of the academic year. This date would permit undergraduate students the opportunity to amend their final choices and would allow postgraduate students sufficient time to explore alternative study opportunities at the College or at other institutions.*  The College will ensure, going forward, that staff are made aware of the implications of the student protection plan when they propose programme changes and about their responsibilities in terms of consultation with students in the following ways: by posting a link to the plan on the Staff intranet, by relaying the implications to Heads of academic departments and relevant key departmental academic staff through, for example, monthly meetings of Heads of Departments, relevant Faculty Committees and through the weekly staff newsletter.  Going forward the plan will be reviewed annually by the Academic Board and Council, as the governing body of the College, both of which include student representation.  In the unlikely event that the any of the measures in the Student Protection plan need to be implemented, the College will ensure that students have ready access to the full range of services provided by the Student Services Centre, and internal support, health and welfare services, bringing in additional resources in times of increased demand.  The College will also make sure that students are aware of the support they can receive from the Students’ Union.  This information is readily available on the College website (<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx>). |