

Annex D: Template for a student protection plan

Provider's name: Easton and Otley College

Provider's UKPRN: 10037344

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Student protection plan for the period 2017-2019

- 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**

1. Risk	2. Assessment of Risk	3. Risk Mitigation
<p>A decision is taken to close the College due to financial performance.</p>	<p>Low risk</p>	<p>Although the College is currently facing financial challenges it is working closely with key stakeholders (ESFA, FE Commissioner and banks) to resolve these. The College continues to have the full support of its key stakeholders.</p> <p>The College is currently in a Structure and Prospects Appraisal (SPA) led by the FE Commissioner (FEC). This is a consequence of the Ofsted report published in November 2018. The SPA is assessing structural options to secure sustainable, high quality land based provision in the Norfolk and Suffolk. The options under consideration by the SPA are standalone, merger of both campuses with a single provider or disaggregation of the College and merger of each campus with a different provider. Closure of the College is not being considered by the review. The SPA process will conclude in April with recommendations by the FEC to the Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, the Easton and Otley corporation and the ESFA. It is anticipated that this will lead to some sort of structural change i.e. merger, that will take effect during 2020.</p>
<p>One of the College campuses is forced to close due to an incident</p>	<p>Low risk</p>	<p>Depending upon the nature of the incident, the College has business interruption insurance and insurance to cover an inability to occupy. Both of these products provide costs for additional working.</p>

Strategic decision to close a course	Low risk	The HE courses run by the College provide progression from its specialist FE provision and are not stand alone curriculum areas. In the event that the College does close a course it would expect to support existing cohorts to the end of their programme of study. In the event of moving delivery from one campus to another it would offer financial support for travel and/or accommodation for existing students in order that they may complete their course.
Infrastructure not adequate to meet the needs of the course	Low risk	The College has made substantial investment in facilities since the merger of Easton and Otley Colleges in 2012.
Unexpected departure of key members of staff / inability to fill vacancies	Medium risk	HE courses are designed to allow delivery that is not dependent upon staff specialisms. The majority of modules can be taught by more than one lecturer. In the event of existing staff being unable to take over module delivery, then temporary lecturers would be hired to undertake teaching and student support.
UEA Validation Arrangement Terminated	Low risk	<p>Easton and Otley College would actively seek to establish a validating arrangement with new partner. UEA would see out the current applicants and students on programme in line with the current validation agreement with the College. Easton and Otley College could also seek to support students by helping them transfer to another institution with appropriate financial support.</p> <p>The validation arrangement with University of Huddersfield has ended subject to completion of the year two cohort and there have been no new starts in 2018/19. Easton and Otley College does not envisage there being any students on University of Huddersfield validated courses beyond the completion of normal QA process in 2019. For this reason University of Huddersfield courses have not been identified as a risk.</p>

2. The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise

See table above

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 fee framework is available here <https://www.eastonotley.ac.uk/our-college/financial-information/fees/> and the Terms and Conditions for HE students can be found here https://www.eastonotley.ac.uk/assets/cms_page_media/258/Terms%20and%20Conditions%202018-19%20V2_1.pdf

Where the College cancels or substantially varies a course from the prospectus description and is unable to provide a suitable alternative or the alternative is not acceptable to a student a refund of tuition fees will be made. An appropriate refund of fees may also be made where a complaint is made in accordance with the College's complaints procedure and, on investigation, the complaint is upheld.

The College is currently developing a new refunds and compensation policy specifically for HE provision. It is anticipated that the policy will be approved before the end of February and will be published on the College's website and shared with the Office for Students on approval. Under the new policy the College will, in the event that a student seeks a transfer to a suitable alternative provider or location, put in place a compensation plan relevant to the particular circumstances that covers additional costs reasonably incurred. Additional travel costs would be within the scope of such a compensation plan.

As above the College will put in place a compensation plan relevant to the particular circumstances. The following items are within scope for consideration as part of the compensation plan: maintenance costs, lost time, additional tuition costs, travel costs as a result of relocation of provision. In preparing and assessing a compensation plan the College will consider relevant guidance from the Office for Students and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education. The College will not compensate for hypothetical or speculative financial losses or for lost opportunities.

Business interruption insurance does not cover costs where the College has implemented a decision to close or relocate a course. Obligations under the policy will be met from cash reserves.

From 19/20 all provision offered by EoC is UEA validated. The College does not envisage variation in the mitigating action for different groups of students.

4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan

The College will publicise our student protection plan to current and future students via the HE website.

The College will ensure staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose course changes via termly Performance Management meetings, HE forums and College Management Team meetings.

The development of the student protection plan will be in conjunction with the HE forum facilitated by the HE Development Manager.

Communication of any material changes to courses will be by the HE Development Manager via the student engagement process. The College will provide students with 90 days' notice of any material changes to their course.

If the College needs to implement any measures in our student protection plan this will be in accordance with the student engagement process.

