



MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Student protection plan for the period 2018/19

1. The provider as a whole is no longer able to operate or no longer intends to operate

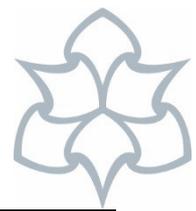
This risk is low. The financial performance of Manchester Metropolitan University is very strong. If, at any point in the future, the University had no option other than to close, it would undertake this in a managed way, over a sufficient period of time to allow current students to complete their studies at Manchester Met. During this time, the University would work with the Office for Students to ensure that students were aware of other appropriate providers and if any student wished to transfer their studies, the University would provide the necessary support for this to occur.

2. The provider is no longer able to award the qualifications for which its students are registered because the OfS has varied or revoked the provider's degree awarding powers

This risk is low. The University has well-established quality assurance processes and a history of successful quality review engagements. The QAA reports can be found at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/>. The University's processes for the ongoing monitoring of programmes enable the University to put in place timely action plans to address any areas of concern. If, at any point in the future, significant quality concerns were identified by the Quality Assurance Agency, the University would work with the OfS and the QAA to address any emerging problems and put the necessary actions in place.

3. One or more of the locations at which the provider delivers courses to students is no longer available

The University seeks to redevelop its estate in a planned manner that results in minimum disruption to students and other stakeholders. Normally, the University will not relocate courses during an academic year. For any new build or refurbishment, plans are put in place to relocate all students at an appropriate time. This planning takes into consideration the structure of the student timetable, any learning and assessment deadlines and the current and short-term future use of existing spaces. Temporary relocation will include the provision of any specialist spaces needed by students to secure positive learning outcomes.



Loss of Function to a Building or Service

The [University Services Security and Business Continuity Policy](#) provides clear objectives for business continuity in the case of any loss of function to the University's critical activities including teaching, research and knowledge exchange, consultancy, training and CPD, halls of residence, sports centres, catering and conferencing conducted in both the Manchester and Cheshire campuses.

Business Continuity Plans have been developed at Departmental / School level and identify impact criteria and recovery requirements to allow the University to put in place contingencies if the University is unable to deliver a service to students. Agreed recovery timeframes for the resumption of operations are identified thus minimising the impact on students and staff of the University.

If any building needs to be taken out of service, students will be advised of the closure of the building through Moodle, social media and the University website. Whilst ensuring that students continue to receive scheduled learning experiences, the University will:

- relocate students within the University by sourcing other general teaching space within its other buildings;
- open University buildings for longer periods of time;
- relocate students at an alternative venue local to the University through its mutual aid framework in place with the University of Salford.
- revise the scheduled teaching timetable to take into consideration the available facilities; and
- deliver courses through alternative means, using Moodle, on-line materials and through distance learning as a short or longer-term mechanism to deliver the curriculum.

As a result of these measures, the risk to the student experience is low.

Industrial Action

The University is committed to maintaining effective relationships with its employees. It will work with the recognised trade unions to achieve outcomes that minimise the impact on the student experience. Established arrangements are in place for consultation and negotiation. However, occasionally industrial action does occur. In such a situation, the Business Continuity Steering Group will convene to consider risks to the student experience and apply solutions to minimise those risks. The key focus is to:

- ensure that disruption is minimised;
- maintain normal operations where possible;
- ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the action; and
- reschedule teaching sessions and if necessary revise assessment submission dates.



The Use of Third Party Spaces for Teaching

The University makes use of third party spaces for teaching as part of its planned re-development work. It seeks to reduce the risks related to this use by ensuring that agreements / licences with landlords run for periods long enough to ensure that the space is available for as long as required and commits the landlord to an agreement without 'break clauses'. If for any reason there are delays to the scheduled programme for major building or refurbishment projects, the University will, in the first instance, negotiate a licence extension or utilise vacant space on the retained estate.

Very occasionally, third party spaces would need to be used if there were loss of function to a building. The risk to the student experience is low.

The teach-out of the Cheshire Campus

The University is structured around five faculties at its Manchester Campus and a Cheshire Campus. The University is currently managing the teach-out of students on its Cheshire Campus. The risk is moderate, but the detailed mitigation plans set out in section 2 lower this risk. Programmes related to some of the discipline areas currently located at the Cheshire Campus have been developed and will be delivered on the Manchester Campus in line with a phased approach starting from 2018/19.

4. The provider is no longer able to deliver courses to students in one or more subject areas and/or departments

The size of the institution, depth and breadth of provision on the Manchester Campus is such that the risk of the University being unable to deliver courses in one or more subject areas or departments is extremely low.

Amalgamation or Closure of Departments/Schools

It is possible that in coming years the University would make a strategic decision to amalgamate or close Departments / Schools but such a change would be administrative and undertaken in a planned way such that it would not impact upon the student experience. The risks to students is therefore low.

Staffing Vacancies

The University has in place robust procedures for the recruitment and replacement of teaching staff through its Human Resources Department. Whilst it is expected that there will be a gap between members of staff leaving and being replaced the University does:

- identify and fill vacancies as quickly as possible;
- where appropriate use other subject expert teaching staff to cover vacancies;
- if necessary use subject expert Associate Lecturers to cover vacancies;



- use other experienced members of staff with appropriate skills and experience to deliver teaching sessions.

These procedures mean that the University is normally able to continue to deliver courses if staff leave during an academic year and there is consequently a low risk to the student experience.

5. The provider is no longer able to deliver one or more courses to students, particularly if course closures are likely in the next three years

The University takes strategic decisions regarding the size and shape of its portfolio, either through strategic Portfolio Review at the Portfolio Review Board or through course redesign via Strategic Approval by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor. Where there is a market need, new courses are developed; and, periodically, existing courses are reviewed to ensure they remain contemporary, fit for purpose and comply with the requirements of the Designated Quality Body (QAA). This planned approach means that, normally, courses are approved, or material changes made to existing courses, in good time to ensure that prospective applicants and existing students are not affected by any change. Course closures are planned so they do not affect current students, and teach-out arrangements guide course closure to ensure that staffing and resources are in place to protect students with a focus on continuing to deliver a high quality experience for students. The risk is low.

There are also specific considerations in relation to Apprenticeship provision. The University has an extensive Apprenticeships portfolio and a well-developed infrastructure for ensuring the quality of its Apprenticeships. It therefore has a high level of confidence in its ability to meet the requirements for remaining on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). In the highly unlikely event that the University were removed from the RoATP, it would ensure that existing apprentices were able to complete their courses either within the University or at other institutions.

6. The provider is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, particularly if there are areas of vulnerability, such as single person dependencies for teaching

Whilst the University does have a number of specialist courses, the risks of not being able to deliver these are low as permanent teaching staff are in place and sufficient cover is available to deliver courses. Courses are designed with named unit leaders and, where necessary, with a unit team to support and therefore the risk of being unable to deliver material components is low.

7. The provider is no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to students, particularly if withdrawal of a mode of study is likely

The University offers a wide range of courses with varying modes of study. Most provision is offered on a full-time basis, but many courses offer part-time study or on-line / distanced learning. Frequently, courses use more than one mode of study and the University



successfully integrates students studying on either full or part-time modes. Such delivery protects the student experience and reduces the likelihood of the University having to suspend courses

8. The provider is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student

The University delivers courses to a wide variety of students, including home and international, those from widening participation groups, mature learners, apprentices (see 9. below), and learners studying full or part-time modes or studying at a distance. In all cases, the University is committed to supporting these students and the risk of being unable to recruit or teach a particular type of student is low.

Suspension or Removal of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence

In 2016/17, the University had a UKVI Compliance Visit with a successful outcome. It complies with UKVI requirements and tracks the engagement of its sponsored students diligently to ensure they continue to meet the requirements of their visa so the risk of suspension or removal of the Tier 4 Sponsor Licence is low. However, in the event of suspension or withdrawal of Tier 4 sponsor status, the University would proactively work with affected students and applicants to minimise disruption and to work with UKVI to allow enrolled students to complete their studies. Sponsored students would be contacted, to:

- advise them of whether they can continue their studies under existing sponsorship **OR**
- advise them that alternative arrangements will need to be put in place;
- where Tier 4 regulations permit, provide support to affected students to transfer to an appropriate course with an alternative sponsor.

Only in very exceptional circumstances should students be required to return home to make a new visa application.

Withdrawal of Designation for Student Support Purposes

The University is committed to adhering to the terms of its agreement regarding the financial support of students. If, at any point, it is judged there is a breach, the University would commit to work with the Office for Students to put in place steps to resolve such a breach to avoid de-designation. In the exceptional event of the withdrawal of designation, the University would minimise the disruption to students by:

- working with the Student Loans Company to allow enrolled students to complete their course; **OR**
- where this is not possible, supporting students to transfer to other HEIs where they can continue to gain financial support.

Collaborative Partner Students

The University has a number of collaborative partners delivering Manchester Metropolitan University courses. Whilst recognising that those collaborative partner organisations



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regulated by the Office for Students will be putting in place their own Student Protection Plans, the University remains committed to supporting its partner institutions to teach-out any course offering a Manchester Metropolitan University award. Teach out arrangements are considered as part of the governance process for the approval of collaborative partnerships. When a collaborative programme is discontinued, or a collaborative partnership terminated a detailed teach out plan is implemented, to ensure that: the academic standards and quality of the programme are protected; and appropriate support for any students still enrolled on the programme is maintained. As a result of these measures, the risk to the student experience is low.

9. Loss of Professional, Statutory, Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) Accreditation

The University has accreditation with a wide range of PSRBs and works proactively to maintain accreditation. The risk is low.

In the event of an adverse inspection or monitoring report, the University, through a dedicated working group, would work proactively with the PSRB to address all issues of concern. Ongoing communications with the PSRB would be maintained.

In the event of a PSRB suspending or removing accreditation of a course or courses, the University would put in place measures to protect the experience of existing students by working with the PSRB to achieve continued accreditation for all existing students. If this is unsuccessful, the University would offer existing students the choice of the following:

- where appropriate, deliver a modified version of the same course, i.e. without PSRB accreditation;
- offer alternative courses within the University;
- identify other HEIs who hold relevant accreditation and assist students to transfer their studies at the most appropriate point with the relevant transcript of studies – usually at the end of an academic year.

The University would update its website and any paper based communications.



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

Cheshire Campus

The planned closure of the Cheshire Campus is managed robustly through the Cheshire Transition Programme Board with structured student support to allow a positive student experience and student outcomes ensuring strong academic delivery continues on the campus until the withdrawal point in 2019. The Academic Board monitors the teach-out plan, receiving regular reports on the teach-out arrangements and the ongoing student experience. Students recruited to programmes at the Cheshire campus were informed of the review of the campus and the potential of closure during their application and offer process. Following the decision by the Board of Governors, all students at the Cheshire campus were made aware of the campus closure. From 2018/19, only those students studying the final year of their degree course will remain, along with some postgraduate students.

Risk related to any elements of the delivery of academic programmes to students are formally managed via this programme alongside any risk to the student experience.

The approach to mitigating risks to delivery on the campus differs per student group and if it is not possible to continue delivery on the campus, the University will consider specific mitigations which reflect both the nature of the risk and the scale of the impact. Scenarios which arise are grouped as follows:

Loss of Physical Access to Site

If the site itself is inaccessible, regardless of reason, the University will use a combination of locally-leased third-party spaces from partners identified in the local area (training sites, local FE providers) or commercial providers and specialist facilities in Manchester if required. Transport would be provided as appropriate. Spaces identified would meet the University's requirements for access, quality, and facilities.

The campus is significantly larger than the requirements of the current level of provision and as a result partial loss of the site would not impact delivery.

Student Group	Base Mitigation Approach
Students with similar provision or expertise on the Manchester campus (Business, Interdisciplinary Studies (majority), Film, Sport from 2018/19)	Use local third-party spaces supplemented by specialist spaces in Manchester to support delivery
Students without similar provision or expertise on the Manchester campus (Music, Drama, Interdisciplinary Studies (minority))	Use local third-party spaces. Note that most programmes do not require specialist facilities, with the exception of Music which will require the rental of local studios.

Loss of Staff Expertise

Staffing has been profiled to reduce the risk of loss of specific expertise. In addition, recruitment of replacement staff or use of sessional staff will be used to mitigate any specific issues that may emerge. If the staff related to a particular programme are no longer able to deliver that



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programme, and it is not possible to recruit alternative staff, then the approach would be as follows:

Student Group	Base Mitigation Approach
Students with similar provision or expertise on the Manchester campus (Business, Interdisciplinary Studies (majority), Film, Sport from 2018/19)	Delivery by Manchester-based staff remotely on the Cheshire campus.
Students without similar provision or expertise on the Manchester campus (Music, Drama, Interdisciplinary Studies (minority))	Bespoke support on a one-to-one or group basis with named subject tutors.

In all of these situations, students would be able to transfer to a similar programme in Manchester if they prefer. However, our commitment remains to deliver on the Cheshire campus.

If any student is unable to complete their studies at the Cheshire campus before it closes the student(s) will, where possible, transfer to study at a similar course in Manchester or, if this is not possible, the student(s) will be provided with an individual support plan which would include bespoke support on a one-to-one basis with named subject tutors.



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

If the University is unable to preserve continuation of study owing to one or more of the trigger events identified within this Plan, the University will, in accordance with its Terms and Conditions of study, provide as much notice as possible and work closely with the students concerned to minimise the disruption and impact on them. For example, by making an offer for, or transferring individuals to, an alternative course at the University, delivering a modified version of the course (where practicable to do so), or assisting affected students to transfer to a course at another provider.

In such circumstances, the University will ensure that the legal and contractual rights of students are respected. For those students who are enrolled at, and studying for a recognised award of, Manchester Metropolitan University, the University may identify circumstances in which financial compensation is appropriate. In most such instances, this will entail the offer of a full or partial refund of tuition fees in recognition of loss of service and the impact on the student.

Financial compensation beyond a full or partial refund of tuition fees will only be considered exceptionally, either where a student has experienced demonstrable loss, or to offset additional tuition or maintenance costs incurred by a student as a direct result of non-continuation of study. Students may be asked to produce evidence detailing any loss or other costs they have incurred or will incur, so the University can determine the appropriate form and level of compensation.

As a charity, the University can only provide financial compensation where it is legally obliged to do so, and any financial redress must therefore be proportionate and carefully considered. In making decisions about financial compensation that goes beyond a full or partial refund of tuition fees, the University will consider how students have met their own responsibility to minimize loss and whether they have taken up any alternative arrangements offered by the University.

The University may also make use of other forms of compensation where it is appropriate to do so. These may include an apology, a discount, or some other form of benefit. Where a refund or some other form of compensation is applicable, the University will treat students on a case-by-case basis, taking into account each individual student's specific circumstances. This may lead to individual students within a cohort receiving different forms or levels of refund or other compensation.

In all instances, claims for compensation are administered and considered through the University's Student Complaints Procedure, which provides for formal and transparent consideration, and robust mechanisms for escalation and review where a student is dissatisfied with the original outcome. Recommendations arising from the Procedure for financial compensation that goes beyond full or partial refund of tuition fees will require approval by the University's Chief Operating Officer.



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

We will publicise a 'student-friendly' version of our student protection plan to current and future students by:

- clearly displaying on Moodle and our student-facing websites;
- clearly displaying on our student enrolment pages;
- adding to the next iteration of our Information for Offer Holders document;
- informing the Students' Union so that they can provide guidance through their Advice Centre and student representative system.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan by:

- ensuring that the student protection plan is disseminated to faculties through our Academic Board and its sub-committees;
- ensuring through Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee that course teams adhere to its principles;
- including understanding of the implications of the student protection plan in our Programme Approval, Review and Amendment process.

The Board of Governors will approve this year's Plan; the Board includes Student Governors. On an annual basis, the Plan will be reviewed by the Education Committee before being approved by the Academic Board. Both the Education Committee and the Academic Board include student representatives.

Material changes to courses occur during the normal cycle of course development and consultation and communication with students is built in to the cycle for Programme Approval, Review and Amendment. The published [Terms and Conditions Applicable to the Provision of Educational Services](#) provide further information about when we may look to make such changes.

Should we require to make a material change of sufficient magnitude to implement the student protection plan, students would be notified at the earliest possible opportunity. This would be undertaken through all reasonable media, such as announcements in lectures and seminars, individual and group consultation, Moodle notices, direct e-mail and use of other Social Media, which many departments use to communicate with their students. Under such circumstances, our priority would be to ensure that our students are aware of the change, the potential impact on them, and the options available to them. Our [Terms and Conditions Applicable to the Provision of Educational Services](#) refers to the circumstances under which such notification may occur.

If we need to implement the measures in our student protection plan, we will do the following to support students collectively and individually:

- provide financial, academic and pastoral advice and guidance through our established network of trained advisors;
- work with other providers to identify courses which may be appropriate for students to transfer to;
- provide careers guidance to those students who may wish to access it at this point.

If we need to implement the measures in our student protection plan, we will work with the Students' Union to provide them with the details of the situation so that they can provide independent advice and guidance.

In the event that any aspect of the student protection plan needs to be implemented, the University will:



- establish a Task Group to monitor actions and report to the University Executive Group;
- communicate directly with affected students and staff; and
- inform the Office for Students.