

Student Protection Plan



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Programmes Validated by the Open University:

Foundation Degree in Digital Innovation

Foundation Degree in Data Analytics & Visualisation

BSc Apprenticeship Degree in Digital and Technology Solutions

CONTENT

1. Introduction	3
2. Range of risks to the continuation of study for students	4
3. Closure of part or all of the College's premises temporarily	4
4. Significant alteration to a programme during the academic year	4
5. Suspension or closure of a programme	6
6. Loss of key staff	6
7. Withdrawal of OU validation	6
8. Winding up of the College	7
9. Complaints Procedure	8

1. Introduction

Ada recognises that entering into higher education is a significant investment in terms of time and commitment. This student protection plan for students on Open University validated programmes sets out what measures the College has in place to protect students in the event that a risk to the continuation of their studies should arise. The College is required to complete this Student Protection Plan in order to meet the conditions of the regulatory framework published by the Office for Students (OfS) and to meet OfS approval. The Office for Students is the regulator for English Higher Education. The College will inform the OfS of any event that requires the implementation of the provisions of the plan, except for the closure of an individual programme of study. The measures in this plan are in addition to the protection's students have under consumer protection law and do not impinge on their consumer rights. The College commits to:

- o Be open and transparent with students should any risk to studies arise and will endeavour to inform students in a timely manner.
- o Take reasonable steps to protect studies should we discontinue a programme, close a building where a programme is taught or close the institution altogether.
- o Consider student and employer views before deciding to implement any substantial changes to a programme, discontinuing it, or closing a location.
- o Take into consideration the needs of all our students and the impact on them of any proposed changes and protective measures, this includes students with special disabilities and/or health conditions.
- o Communicate this plan and any revisions to it annually to the student and employer bodies. If there are any concerns or feedback in relation to this plan students are encouraged to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The type of event or changes that might cause such a risk are detailed below together with the protection measures put in place to set out how students' interests would be protected

in such an eventuality. It should be assumed that all elements apply to each of the Ada venues unless specifically stated.

2. Range of risks to the continuation of study for students

A non-exhaustive list of risks to the continuation of study for students is:

- o Closure of part or all of the College's premises
 - London Broad Lane: The landlord enacts the break clause in 2024
 - London Vallance Road: The landlord, Tower Hamlets Local Authority, enacts the break clause in 2022
 - Manchester: The landlord becomes insolvent. Other tenants flood or damage the Ada space
- o Significant alteration to a programme of study during the academic year
- o Suspension or closure of a programme of study
- o Loss of key staff
- o Withdrawal of course designation by OfS
- o Withdrawal of OU validation or change in validator

3. Closure of part or all of the College's premises temporarily

3.1 In the event that part of the site is considered unusable for the purposes of teaching, the College would endeavour to minimise the disruption to students and services by providing the teaching remotely whilst finding alternative teaching spaces on site and/or considering the revision of timetables to allow all teaching to take place in the areas that are unaffected.

3.2 If this were not possible or in the event that the whole site was considered unusable the College would look to temporarily relocate provision to an alternative location.

- o In London, staff and learners would look to be directed to the alternative site should one of the two spaces be unusable in the first instance. If that was unavailable then Ada would look to take on temporary space at one of our employer partners.
- o Upon issuance of the closure decision, the admission of new students to the relevant campus shall be suspended at the beginning of the following semester (intake). The tasks of the concerned campus shall be restricted to completing the learning and teaching of students enrolled in the relevant campus.
- o In Manchester there is only one building, so students' studies will be temporarily managed through distance learning, as Ada blended learning system provides a very high degree of flexibility through distance learning. However, if the Manchester space was unusable for a significant period of

time then Ada would approach the landlords, Bruntwood, to relocate Ada to an alternative building in their expansive property portfolio temporarily.

- Where possible and as a general rule, closing will be gradual to allow continuing students to complete their studies.

3.3 In all instances affected students would be consulted and appropriate measures would be taken to ensure that any protective measures are appropriate for staff and/or students with mobility considerations and/or special educational or accommodation requirements.

3.4 The College has Business Interruption insurance cover to help fund the costs of such a scenario.

3.5 We would always look for there to be minimal breaks in learning by providing all teaching, learning and assessment online if there are any issues with premises.

4. Significant alteration to a programme during the academic year

4.1 Ada is committed to deliver the programme as stated in the relevant programme and module specifications which are published on the website and the VLE. Major changes to a programme are usually made at the periodic revalidation proposals to the Open University. Such changes are made in consultation with the students, employers and the entire teaching team engages in discussion and the decision-making process. External examiners are consulted for their feedback on the changes.

4.2 The proposal and rationale for change are discussed at the Staff -Student Liaison committee (Student representatives from all levels attend), scrutinised by the Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TLA) committee, and to be approved by the Academic Board. Major changes require the formal approval of The Open University prior to implementation.

4.3 Based on the termly and annual feedback from students on any modules or the programme as a whole, changes may be done to enhance students' learning experience. This also applies to the feedback we receive from the external examiners. The feedback from students and external examiners would usually involve reviewing the workload such as readings, assignments, discussions and student presentations. Any proposals to adjust the above are done in consultation with the external examiners and discussed with the academic team. The action is reported to the Academic Board. The changes are reported to the Open University in our annual monitoring report.

4.4 The College reserves the right to make variations to the contents or methods of delivery of programmes, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary by the College, and after consultation with the students affected. Circumstances when this may occur include, but are not limited to, lack of demand, departure of key personnel, withdrawal or reduction in funding and/or change of law.

4.5 All the pathway modules which are listed in the programme may not be offered in any one year where the numbers recruited to a course are so low that it is not possible to deliver an appropriate quality of education for students enrolled on it. This is usually less than a certain number of students per module. Students potentially affected by the decision may join up with other cohorts.

5. Suspension or closure of a programme

The College reserves the right to cancel programmes due to circumstances such as insufficient enrolment numbers. In circumstances where a programme was being suspended or closed, the College would endeavour to minimise the disruption by:

Applicants:

- i. Notifying all applicants as soon as the decision is made to explain the decision.

- ii. Providing personalised options and support to all applicants affected by the suspension or closure, including the opportunity to receive advice both from Academic staff and from the Academic Administrators.
- iii. Offering applicant an alternative College programme of study, based on the applicant's area of interest,

Current students:

Entering a teach-out phase that would enable all students to complete their programme of studies at the College.

6. Loss of key staff

All College academic staff are contracted to a three-month notice period, thereby allowing sufficient time for the hiring of a replacement. However, in the event of an unplanned loss of a key member/s of staff, the College would move immediately to recruit externally, drawing upon current members of academic staff and/or the bank of approved visiting lecturers with the appropriate knowledge and experience during the interim period.

7. Withdrawal of OU validation

7.1 The College higher education programmes are validated by The Open University. The validation agreement between the College and the OU sets out clearly the provisions in place should either party wish to terminate the agreement. In the event that the agreement is terminated para 17.3 of the validation agreement stipulates that 'the Parties will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the students who are studying on the Validated Programmes are able to complete the Validated Programmes or to transfer to a suitable alternative programme elsewhere to complete their award.' This includes supporting current students, and applicants who have formally accepted an offer of a place, to find places on suitable programmes at other providers in the UK.

7.2 If termination of the agreement were to be triggered the College would immediately enter a teach-out phase that would enable all students to complete their programme of studies at the College.

7.3 The College would work closely with the OU to ensure that all reasonable measures were taken to ensure disruption to students is minimised.

8. Winding up of the College

If a series of extreme events - such as insolvency, withdrawal of course designation and/or validation, or falling demand - was to lead to the winding up of the College, the following steps would be initiated:

Applicants:

- o The College would work closely with the OU to ensure that all reasonable measures were taken to ensure disruption to applicants was minimised.
- o College would immediately suspend recruitment of students and initiate communications with all applicants to help and support in transferring their application to an alternative institution in the UK, if appropriate.

Current students:

- o Where possible, the College would immediately enter a teach-out phase that would enable all students to complete their programme of studies at College.
- o The College would work closely with the OU to ensure that all reasonable measures were taken to ensure disruption to students was minimised.
- o If a teach-out phase was not possible then the College would help, support and advice to help students transfer to another institution in the UK in order to complete their programme of studies.
- o The College would provide, in a timely manner, grades, award of credit, and transcripts of studies, attendance and all other documentation that would be required for an alternative provider to make an informed decision about admission.

9. Complaints Procedure

9.1 If a student wishes to raise a concern or express dissatisfaction about the action or lack of an action by the College, or about the service provided by or on our behalf, they may do so using the College Complaints and Appeals Policy.

9.2 They may also raise a concern with the OU if they are concerned about the Standards, Quality and/or information provided by the College.

9.3 The Complaints policy can be found in the College Handbooks and Policies section on the College website in the student section of the VLE.