

Student Protection Plan



Provider's name: Craven College

Provider's UKPRN: 10001743

Legal address: Craven College, Aireville Campus, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1US

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Stephanie Tinsley
Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality

Student protection plan for the period [2019-20]

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

RISK ASSESSMENT

The College has a Risk Policy and operates a Risk Register that is regularly updated four times per year. The risk that the provider as a whole is unable to operate is very low. The risk that we are no longer able to deliver programmes is very low. Once enrolled on a programme, students will complete that programme at the College and the tutors ensure there is a 'teach out' plan in place. In order to ensure that the quality of the academic experience remains, the students are supported to succeed and steps are taken to offer ongoing academic and pastoral support.

Student Information

The College aspires to provide full and transparent information for students in order to give the students the information they need and so that they know, from the beginning what to expect on their course. Measures include:

- Transparency of course information on the website including programme specifications; this sets out what the student is to expect from the programme
- Open days and applicant days for prospective students; to ensure that students enrol on a programme most suitable to them
- Terms and conditions document available on the website, and from 2016/17, sent as a PDF document to prospective students
- The HE Officer visits all first-year groups to explain the regulations for their course
- Help and advice about finance or issues concerning loans is available from Student Support Services staff
- Consultation with students as appropriate regarding any course changes

Ensuring that policies and practices for course closures and changes are transparent, fair and accessible

The College aims to ensure that all information is available to enable students to make informed decisions suited to their own needs. Information on specific policies and procedures regarding students are available on the College website.

Communicating with students when changes occur

Students are consulted when changes are made. The College is committed to consultation with students during the process both in writing and through participation in meetings with College representatives.

Following validation or re-validation of a course, the College will contact all applicants to advise them that the course has been approved by the validating university and includes a copy of the approved programme specification. Changes to a programme **do not** affect current students who will remain on the originally validated programme.

Informing and consulting with students about material changes to continuing courses

Higher Education students at College remain on the same fee structure throughout their course: their fees do not increase.

Changes to programmes following review or revalidation from external partners only impact on new entrants to those programmes. This entails the College having clear regulations that match to specific programmes.

Arrangements for ensuring continuity of provision for students when a course is closed

In the event of a programme failing to recruit sufficient students, applicants will be informed of the situation and if appropriate, they may be offered an alternative programme. Courses are reviewed carefully before the enrolment period to ensure that they are viable. Should a programme fail to reach its target numbers the case is assessed to ascertain if there is flexibility to share delivery of some modules with other programmes. The Business suite, for example shares many common modules. Should it be necessary to close a programme the College does this in a timely fashion and the Central Admissions Team will assist applicants to apply elsewhere. This process is undertaken within the UCAS required guidelines for course closures.

The College does not close a programme once it commences and will support existing students to the completion of their studies. Students will complete their chosen programme at the College and the tutors ensure there is a 'teach out' plan in place. In order to ensure that the quality of the academic experience remains, the students are supported to succeed and steps are taken to offer ongoing academic and pastoral support.

All emerging issues and concerns will be discussed with the office for students and the Awarding Body.

In the twenty-seven years of HE delivery at the College no courses have closed mid-programme. However, the College does understand that there may be certain and unforeseen circumstances that necessitate planning for course closure. In this case, the table below is likely to answer more specific risks.

Potential risks to a Higher Education student at the College

Risk	Risk Level
a. The College is no longer able to operate, or has decided to cease operating	Low risk. The College is financially secure, OFSTED have recently (2018) graded the College as Grade 2 and QAA have completed an HE Review and given the College full confidence. (2017).
b. The College has lost the validation for one or more of its courses	Low risk. The College has never failed to have a programme revalidated and has been with its current university partner (the Open University) for six years.
c. The provider is, or expects to be, operating with probationary degree awarding powers	This is not applicable as the College does not have and has no intention of applying for degree awarding powers.
d. One or more of the locations at which the College delivers is no longer available.	Low to medium risk. The College owns its main site and the majority of courses are delivered there. The aviation programmes use a building owned by Multi Flight at Leeds/Bradford Airport and this is on a long lease. One year of the Garden Design programme is delivered at York Gate Gardens and the contract is renewed annually.
e. The College is no longer able to deliver a specific course in one or more study areas.	Low risk. Staff turnover is low, quality is acceptable to both QAA and the Open University.
f. The College is unable to deliver a course due to course closures planned in the next three years	Low risk for students on programmes as the college commits to teach-out. Applicants may be advised of course closures. Information in Section 2.
g. The College is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, for example where there are particular areas of vulnerability, such as a dependency on a single person for teaching.	Low to medium risk.
h. The College is unable to offer a mode of study (for example part time or full time)	Low risk.
i. The College is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student, such as international students	Not applicable.

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

Responses to potential risks to the continuation of study for a student at the College

Risk	Risk Level
<p>a. The College is no longer able to operate, or has decided to cease operating</p>	<p>The College commits to 'teaching out' programmes. The College's partner university has committed to help in this process and has other partners at nearby institutions who have agreed to help should a student wish to transfer. However, should a student wish to leave at this point the College can offer advice and guidance to help the student transfer credit to another provider of their choice.</p>
<p>b. The College has lost the validation for one or more of its courses</p>	<p>The loss of validation with current university partners is not a risk as revalidations only affect future students. The Open University's validation agreement commits to supporting any remaining students on programme.</p>
<p>c. The provider is, or expects to be, operating with probationary degree awarding powers</p>	<p>This is not applicable as the College does not and has no intention of applying for degree awarding powers.</p>
<p>d. One or more of the locations at which the College delivers is no longer available.</p>	<p>This is unlikely to happen. However, should this occur the student body will be consulted at the earliest opportunity. There are two options, firstly that the programme will be accommodated at the College's main site, this is owned by the College. The second option would be that suitable accommodation will be identified as close to the original site as possible. Consultations with the student body will identify which of these two options is most suitable and aspects such as travel time will be considered.</p>
<p>e. The College is no longer able to deliver a specific course in one or more study areas.</p>	<p>There will always be a commitment to teach out in these circumstances as mentioned above. In the case of</p>

	<p>sudden staff loss which affects a specific course or subject, the College will work with its commercial branch (Tyro Training), its validating partner, or local flight schools (for CAA components) to find a solution suitable to the course requirements. Solutions may involve a timetable change, for example moving a module or part of a module to Semester 2. No changes will be made to the curriculum which change the nature of the programme. All changes will be discussed with the student body.</p> <p>Should the loss of a particular tutor mean that students wish to leave the programme, help and advice will be available from the College.</p>
<p>f. The College is unable to deliver a course due to course closures planned in the next three years</p>	<p>There is a commitment to teach out all courses once students have started studying. Future course closures will only affect applicants, not enrolled students. For new students and in the event of a programme failing to recruit sufficient students, applicants will be informed of the situation and if appropriate, they may be offered an alternative programme. Applicants will be advised of potential closure by May 31st (for full time applicants) and at least a month before the start date (for part time students).</p>
<p>g. The College is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, for example where there are particular areas of vulnerability, such as a dependency on a single person for teaching.</p>	<p>There will always be a commitment to teach out in these circumstances as mentioned above. In the case of sudden staff loss which affects a specific course or subject, the College will work with its commercial branch (Tyro Training), its validating partner, or local flight schools (for CAA components) to find a solution suitable to the course requirements. Solutions may involve a timetable change, for example moving a module or part of a module to Semester 2. No changes will be made to the curriculum which change the nature of the programme. All changes will be discussed with the student body.</p> <p>Should the loss of a particular tutor mean that students wish to leave the</p>

	programme, help and advice will be available from the College.
h. The College is unable to offer a mode of study (for example part time or full time)	This is very unlikely as part time students are currently taught alongside full time students creating a very flexible approach. However, if for some unknown reason it is impossible to offer a particular route then the processes in place for section a (above) will apply.
i. The College is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student, such as international students	The College is not licensed to teach international students. No other 'particular type of student' is identified amongst the College's student body.

Measures put in place to ensure that courses with lower numbers offer a good student experience include:

- Timetabling to suit student working patterns
- Timetabling part time and full-time routes together
- A review of numbers and proposed nesting or sharing modules if appropriate
- Offering additional tutorial support where necessary
- A series of guest speakers shared with other programmes or modules.

Once enrolled on a programme, students will complete that programme at the College and the tutors ensure there is a 'teach out' plan in place. This will be supported by validating partners to ensure a good student experience and details how the quality of the student experience will be retained during the teach out period. In order to ensure that the quality of the academic experience remains, the students are supported to succeed and steps are taken to offer ongoing academic and pastoral support.

3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students

DELIVERY OF REFUND POLICY

Craven College is able to deliver the financial implications of our refund policy. We have cash reserves of £1.154m which would be sufficient to provide refunds. Our cash reserves are sufficient to support this policy.

COURSE FEES

The Governing Board is responsible for agreeing the College's Fee and Refunds Policy.

The fee policy shall comply with Office for Students rules and regulations including those relating to fee levels. Any publication containing information on course fees will identify tuition fees, and any other course related costs. Where a course has additional resource fees, these will be indicated in published materials.

Course fee levels shall be set with the aim of recovering the costs of all of the elements making up the total course costs. In setting the tuition fee element of the course fees,

reference will be made to the assumed fee income level set by the Office for Students (OfS) and take account of:

- Impact on recruitment, retention and achievement
- Market conditions
- Widening participation
- Funding available from other sources

The tuition fee structure set for each academic year will apply throughout that year and the remainder of the students' chosen programme. All students accept responsibility for payment in full of course fees by signing a College Student Enrolment Form.

REFUND OF FEES

Higher Education students pay for their courses in two distinct ways.

1. Through a Student Loan

Refunds through this route will consider the release of funds from Student Finance England. This may involve discussion between the MIS manager and SFE. Monthly payments made to the College by the Student Loans Company cease when a student leaves their course. In accordance with guidance from Government, HE students would not be liable for the amount outstanding in these circumstances.

2. Self/or employer financed:

Refunds through this route will be in installments the payment plan agreed at enrolment. The refund will consider the time the student has already been on the course and in receipt of teaching and learning.

The circumstances where refunds / credits may be made include:

- Where a course has been closed by the College or the time and / or day changed such that the student can no longer attend or the student has notified his / her withdrawal from the course at least 5 working days prior to the course start date.
- If the College changes the time and day of a course / class after it has started and the student is no longer able to attend, the amount of fees refunded will take into account the time the student has already been on the course. In every case the College will endeavour to offer a suitably acceptable alternative course.
- If the College's initial fee assessment is incorrect, resulting in an overcharge, it will refund the difference of fees charged to the student.
- Other exceptional circumstances which show that an offer has changed or that incorrect information has been given

Refunds will normally be made within 15 working days. In all other circumstances, fees will not normally be refunded.

The College can help with the completion of loan applications to Student Finance England. All responsibility for the initial application, the progress of the application and approval of the loan remains with the student / applicant.

Where fees are to be paid wholly, or in part, by an employer / sponsor, confirmation in writing must be provided at enrolment. Without this confirmation, students will be expected to pay directly at enrolment or will not be enrolled onto the course.

Students shall be liable for payment in the event that employers / sponsors withdraw their commitment to pay.

Higher Education Loans should be in place at the point of enrolment. Students shall be liable for payment in the event that the loan application does not proceed or is unsuccessful. Any unsecured loans will be billed directly to the students at the end of the first half term. If a student pays the course fee and subsequently successfully applies for a student loan, the fee paid by the student will be refunded. Where students provide proof that they have a loan application with Student Finance England, any fees / charges over and above the amount in the application must be paid on enrolment.

All students accept responsibility for payment in full of course fees and examination / registration fees by signing a College Student Enrolment Form

In addition to refunds, usually to Student Finance England and made when a student has withdrawn from a programme but Student Finance has made a payment or in rare cases where a self-funded student has withdrawn from the programme, the College has in place financial contingencies to enable compensation in some and more exceptional circumstances.

SITUATIONS WHERE STUDENTS MAY SEEK COMPENSATION

The College considers refunds and compensation to be a remedy of last resort and is committed to using its best endeavours to ensure all students are able to continue and complete their studies at the University. It is however important to explain how the University will refund or compensate students if the University is unable to preserve that continuity of study.

An unexpected programme termination occurs when an unexpected and catastrophic risk to continuation of study which means that the College has no alternative but to terminate during the course of an academic year

If such circumstances arise, the College will consult with the students registered on the programme as a priority.

As a minimum, the College will:

- i. ensure all students on the programme receive the award (for example, certificate or diploma) that recognises the stage they have reached;
- ii. offer those students advice and support to help them decide whether or not to transfer to a different programme at the College or seek transfer to a suitable alternative provider to complete the programme which is to be terminated. This will be done in liaison with the University partner;
- iii. offer to pay reasonable travel costs to cover at least one visit per student to such an alternative provider;
- iv. put in place, in consultation with the students and the University Partner, a refund and compensation plan relevant to the circumstances of the particular termination that includes provision for a refund of tuition fees and compensation in respect of additional costs reasonably incurred by students as a result of the termination, any change of programme and any relocation.

The compensation will consider appropriate provision for:

- i. fee costs;
- ii. lost time;
- iii. additional tuition costs;
- iv. travel costs as a result of relocation of provision

APPEAL MECHANISM

If the student is not satisfied with the decision taken in his / her case, he / she can submit an appeal setting out additional information in support of the case. The appeal must be in writing and within 15 working days of receiving the initial decision. Appeals will only be considered where relevant additional information is provided.

Responses to appeals will normally be given within 15 working days. An administration charge of £10 will generally be made for processing any refunds, but may be waived in certain circumstances if considered appropriate.

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

We will publicise our student protection plan to current and future students by publishing on the website and sending it to them along with their offer letter.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose course changes by discussion at internal meetings, most importantly the HE Operational Meeting and the Scheme Management Board.

We will review our student protection plan at HE Operational Meetings on an annual basis. We will involve students in the process by sending to Course Representatives for comments and discussing at Scheme Management Board.