

University of Salford Student Protection Plan



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

At Salford, we strive to provide you with a stimulating and rewarding university experience. Sometimes, however, there may be circumstances in which changes need to be made that could substantially affect your studies. Such cases are very rare and, should they occur, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that you are fully supported to complete your studies.

This Student Protection Plan (referred to in this document as “the Plan”) is published on our website. Every higher education provider is required by the Office for Students to have a Student Protection Plan in place.

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1. What is a Student Protection Plan?

This Student Protection Plan explains what measures we will take to protect you if the plan is “triggered” by a risk to the continuation of your programme of study. Potential risks to study could be, for example, a strategic decision to close a programme or a subject, the University losing the power to award degrees or no longer being able to deliver programmes in a particular mode of study, such as distance learning. The Plan sets out the potential risks we have identified, the measures we will take if the Plan is triggered and also how we will communicate with you if there is a risk to your studies.

In addition to this Plan, we describe what you can expect from your time at the University of Salford in the following ways:

- [Student Charter](#) – produced jointly with the University of Salford Students’ Union, the Charter outlines the mutual commitments and expectations between the University and students;
- [Terms and conditions](#) – these form part of the legally binding contract you enter into with us when you accept the offer of a place to study. They explain the range of

policies and procedures you are expected to follow, such as payment of tuition fees, academic regulations and rules relating to use of the University's IT facilities;

- [Student Handbook](#) – all students have a Student Handbook which provides detailed information about how their programme is taught and assessed, how to access support, and guidance on different aspects of student life. Undergraduates and postgraduate taught students share the same handbook which is available on the [Student Hub](#). Postgraduate research students are provided with a handbook which is tailored to the academic school in which they are studying.
- [Student Refund and Compensation Policy](#) - is intended to provide a clear and simple framework so you can understand when you may be entitled to a refund, compensation or another type of remedy, and how to make a claim.

2. Who is covered by the Plan?

Registered students

If you are registered for a University of Salford taught or research award, you are covered by the Plan and we will contact you if it is triggered and will affect your studies. This includes:

- Studying at the Salford campus on a full- or part-time basis;
- Being employed and following a higher or degree apprenticeship with us;
- Studying with one of our UK or international partners;
- Being on placement as part of your programme;
- Studying with us via distance or blended learning;
- Studying a Salford programme taught by Salford staff at another location ("off-site delivery");
- Being on an interruption of study or being suspended from your studies.

You are not covered by the Plan when your registration has been terminated for the following reasons:

- You have requested to withdraw from your programme of study;
- You have completed your programme in the normal way;
- You have been required to withdraw as a result of student disciplinary matters, non-payment of tuition fees, academic failure or similar matters.

Applicants

If you have applied to study at the University of Salford, we will contact you if the Plan is triggered and will affect your future studies. In such cases, we will inform you of any changes and will offer alternative arrangements wherever possible. This could include, for example, offering you an alternative programme at Salford or helping you find a place at another university.

We follow Competition and Markets Authority guidance to protect your consumer rights, both when you are an applicant and following your registration with us.

3. What type of events are covered by the Plan?

This section provides some examples of the types of events that would trigger the Plan, alongside events that would not be covered. Section 4 sets out in greater detail the events and the likelihood of them occurring. Section 5 has details of the measures we will take to protect your studies.

What is covered?

- Closing your programme of study;
- Changing your location of study;
- Other reasons, such as:
 - no longer being able to operate as a university;
 - losing the power to award degrees;
 - no longer being able to deliver your mode of study, such as part-time learning.

The University's circumstantial and environmental risks are the same as those of any major institution. These include events that could not be anticipated and/or are beyond our control, such as fire and flood (often referred to as "force majeure"). Should a major event occur, our academic schools and support services have in place business continuity plans which address potential issues and detail mitigation, such as ongoing safety inspections, risk assessments and having appropriate insurance in place.

What is not covered?

- Planned programme or module amendments.
We have an established [procedure](#) for making changes to existing programmes and modules. We communicate with students as part of this procedure, in line with the Competition and Markets Authority guidance.
- Planned suspension or withdrawal of programmes.
We have a [procedure](#) in place for the planned suspension or withdrawal of existing programmes as part of the ongoing refreshment of our portfolio. We comply with Consumer Protection Laws and work with students when programmes are withdrawn or suspended, ensuring "teach out", offering alternative programmes or arranging transfers where appropriate.
- Change of research supervisor.
All postgraduate research students are allocated two supervisors to ensure continuity in the event that the primary supervisor leaves or is unable to complete their supervision responsibilities. In certain circumstances, considered on a case-by-case basis, it may be possible for the research student to transfer their studies to the new employer of the primary supervisor.

4. How likely is it that the Plan will be triggered?

The table below describes the types of event that could happen, resulting in there being a risk to you being able to complete your studies. We have assessed each of these events against the likelihood of it occurring. We explain what evidence we have used in our assessment so you can understand the way in which we have identified each risk. Section 5 details the measures we will take if the Plan is triggered.

| Event | Likelihood | Evidence |
|---|-------------------|---|
| (a) We decide to cease to operate as a university. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a long established university and trace our roots back to the 19th century. • Our financial position is strong and we have recorded a trading surplus for each successive year since 2013/14. The University cash flow is sufficient to pay existing borrowings and to continue to invest in the University estate and we operate prudent financial management and budgeting processes. • In the event we decide to cease to operate, programme teams will draw up and implement a teach out plan that shows how students currently on the programme will be able to complete their studies and be supported to the very end. This includes contingency plans should students need to take reassessments or retake modules. |
| (b) We lose the power to award degrees. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University gained degree awarding powers in 1967, when the institution was established by Royal Charter. • Since then we have met the requirements of successive quality reviews. Our most recent reviews were carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency in 2007/08 and in 2012/13. In both cases it was confirmed that the University met national standards for higher education provision. • We have robust internal processes to assure the academic quality and standards of the programmes we deliver. |
| (c) We are no longer able to deliver programmes in one or | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our business case approval process for programmes of |

| Event | Likelihood | Evidence |
|--|------------|--|
| more locations. | | <p>study and partnerships ensures that perceived risks are identified and contingency arrangements are confirmed prior to approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal agreements with our partner organisations also identify risks and contingency measures. |
| (d) We decide to cease to deliver or to suspend programmes in one or more subject areas. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is very rare for us to close whole subject areas or departments. In the last 10 years we have closed only two subject areas, due to significant decline in demand for programmes in those disciplines. All of the affected programmes were taught out by us and all students were able to complete the programme for which they originally registered. • We are not currently planning to close any subject areas. |
| (e) We decide to cease or to suspend recruitment to a programme in one or more subject areas. | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We keep our portfolio of programmes under review as part of our normal operating practice. As part of this review we will at times decide to cease or suspend recruitment. In such circumstances, we will contact applicants in a timely way, notify them of the changes and support them to find an alternative programme at Salford or elsewhere, as appropriate. |
| (f) We are no longer able to deliver material components of our programmes due to the unanticipated departure of members of staff. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We design our programmes to be taught by integrated teams of academic staff, recognising and mitigating the higher risk in specialist areas. Should we need to make changes to material components of your programme, we will give you as much notice as reasonably practicable. Programme teams will ensure that the impact on you is mitigated wherever possible. |
| (g) We decide to cease delivery in one or more mode of study. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of our programmes involve face-to-face contact time with staff. A very small number of programmes are delivered wholly by other means such as |

| Event | Likelihood | Evidence |
|--|------------|--|
| | | <p>distance or online learning. For all modes of study, we have plans in place should changes need to be made to delivery. These include consultation with students on the programme and providing information to applicants.</p> |
| (h) We are no longer able to recruit international students. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have held a Tier 4 licence from the Home Office since the scheme was introduced in 2008. This allows us to recruit students from outside the UK and European Union. • We actively manage our compliance with Tier 4 rules through a dedicated team and we monitor performance through our Home Office Compliance Assurance Group. • Two audits of our Tier 4 compliance have found that we have suitably designed and consistently applied controls in place to safeguard our licence. |
| (i) We lose professional accreditation for a programme. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have long-standing and stable relationships with the professional bodies that accredit a number of our programmes. • Accreditations are reviewed periodically in line with the accreditors' requirements. • Relationships with accreditors are managed by our academic schools as an integral part of our quality assurance framework. |
| (j) We lose specialist facilities. | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our specialist facilities are managed by technical experts, and we review and update facilities on a rolling basis. • We have in place a Mutual Aid Agreement with a nearby university. This enables us to request their assistance, such as resources or the 'loan' of specialist staff or provision of a certain facility or building. • The approval process for academic programmes takes due regard of any agreements with third parties providing specialist facilities and ensures that contingency plans are |

| Event | Likelihood | Evidence |
|-------|------------|--|
| | | <p>in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The stability of our estate is very high: we have no short-term leases for buildings.• We have made, and continue to make, significant investments including, in the last three years, a new £55M arts centre, incorporating cutting-edge technology and facilities; a £1.1M simulation suite for nursing and midwifery; and a state-of-the-art megalab for environment and life sciences. |

5. How will we protect your studies?

This section sets out what actions we will take to protect your studies if any of the events listed occur. Normally this Plan will not be triggered for planned changes (e.g. curriculum amendments). Similarly, the Plan will not be triggered for circumstances that apply to specific students (e.g. change in research supervisor). Section 3 above provides details on these points.

In the unlikely event of the Plan being triggered, we will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that the needs of different groups of students are appropriately taken into account. We recognise that the events listed below could affect our students in different ways depending on their personal circumstances. For example, disabled students or those with caring commitments may need individual advice and support. We undertake to work with individual students on a case-by-case basis where our usual protection measures may not be suitable or require modification. This may include the exploration of reimbursement of any reasonable costs that might be incurred.

Measures

- Teach out: this is our normal first choice of measure. Where teach out is in place, we undertake to ensure that you can complete your programme of study. During teach out, programmes remain subject to our normal quality assurance processes.
- Alternative Salford programme: alongside teach out, we may also offer you to option of transferring to an alternative programme at Salford.
- Alternative programme with another provider: if we are unable to offer teach out or an alternative programme at Salford, we will aim to work with partners and other UK institutions to facilitate your transfer or direct entry to a programme at another provider, subject to their entry requirements.
- Alternative premises: if we are unable to teach in our normal premises, we will source other suitable locations nearby. In the case of specialist facilities, we have a mutual aid agreement with a local university which allows us to access their facilities should the need arise.

Type of provision

- On campus: refers to programmes taught by University of Salford staff at our campus in Peel Park or in MediaCityUK.
- Off-site: refers to programmes taught by University of Salford staff on premises other than our campus.
- Distance/blended: refers to programmes taught by University of Salford staff either wholly online or through a combination of online and face-to-face tuition.
- Collaborative: refers to programmes taught by a partner institution of the University of Salford, either in the UK or overseas.

| Event | Type of provision | Range of available measures | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | Teach out | Alternative Salford programme | Alternative programme with another provider | Alternative premises |
| (a) (i) We decide to cease to operate as a university but are able to provide teach out. | On campus | ✓ | | | |
| | Off-site | ✓ | | | |
| | Distance/blended | ✓ | | | |
| | Collaborative | ✓ | | | |
| (a) (ii) We decide to cease to operate as a university and are not able to provide teach out. | On campus | | | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | | ✓ | |
| (b) We lose the power to award degrees. | On campus | | | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | | ✓ | |

| Event | Type of provision | Range of available measures | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | Teach out | Alternative Salford programme | Alternative programme with another provider | Alternative premises |
| (c) We are no longer able to deliver programmes in one or more locations. | On campus | | | | ✓ |
| | Off-site | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Distance/blended | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Collaborative | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| (d) We decide to cease to deliver or to suspend programmes in one or more subject areas. | On campus | ✓ | | | |
| | Off-site | ✓ | | | |
| | Distance/blended | ✓ | | | |
| | Collaborative | ✓ | | | |
| (e) We decide to cease or to suspend recruitment to programmes in one or more subject areas. | On campus | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | ✓ | ✓ | |

| Event | Type of provision | Range of available measures | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | Teach out | Alternative Salford programme | Alternative programme with another provider | Alternative premises |
| (f) We are no longer able to deliver material components of our programmes due to the unanticipated departure of members of staff. | On campus | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| (g) We decide to cease delivery in one or more mode of study. | On campus | ✓ | | | |
| | Off-site | ✓ | | | |
| | Distance/blended | ✓ | | | |
| | Collaborative | ✓ | | | |
| (h) We are no longer able to recruit international students. | On campus | | | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | | ✓ | |

| Event | Type of provision | Range of available measures | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | Teach out | Alternative Salford programme | Alternative programme with another provider | Alternative premises |
| (i) We lose professional accreditation for a programme. | On campus | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Off-site | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Distance/blended | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Collaborative | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| (j) We lose specialist facilities. | On campus | | | | ✓ |
| | Off-site | | | | ✓ |
| | Distance/blended | | | | ✓ |
| | Collaborative | | | | ✓ |

6. Triggering the Plan

Should any of the events set out in sections 4 and 5 occur, and where they are not covered by established processes, a group convened by the University Registrar will consider whether they should trigger the Plan or whether it should be referred to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team for triggering. This will depend on the particular circumstances of the event. The Registrar's group will include senior officers of the University and representatives of the University of Salford Students' Union.

7. Refunds

The protection measures we have outlined in this Plan will result in you being able to complete your studies with us or transfer to a suitable programme at another provider, should a triggering event occur and depending on the nature of that event. This means that you would not be entitled to a refund of any [tuition fees](#) paid. If a triggering event causes you to incur additional costs we will consider refunds on an individual basis. If we cancel your programme, we will give you a full refund of the tuition fees you have paid, including any deposit. [Student Refund and Compensation Policy](#) provides a clear and simple framework so you can understand when you may be entitled to a refund, compensation or another type of remedy, and how to make a claim.

8. How will we communicate with you about the Plan?

The Plan is published on the dedicated [terms and conditions](#) webpage that contains links to student-related information. If we need to implement the measures in our Student Protection Plan we will undertake formal consultation and provide tutorial sessions to support you collectively and individually.

We will consult with you if material changes are proposed to your programme through the formal [programme and module amendment process](#).

We will also refer you to the [University of Salford Students' Union Advice Centre](#) to ensure that you have access to independent advice if we need to implement any of the measures in the Plan.

9. How often will the Plan be reviewed?

Since the Plan is a new element of our relationship with you, initially it will be reviewed once a year. The review will be carried out jointly by senior staff and representatives of the University of Salford Students' Union. The Plan will then be considered by the appropriate committees before being publicised to you and members of staff.

10. Concerns and complaints

If you have any concerns about how we implement the Plan, should a triggering event occur, you should follow the [Student Complaints Procedure](#). Full details about how to do this can be found on the Student Hub: <https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/academic-support/complaints>