



# Middlesex University - Student Protection Plan for the period from December 2023

## Introduction

The Student Protection Plan (SPP) assesses the risk to the continuation of your studies and sets out the actions we have in place to protect you as our student should that risk arise and details how we would communicate with you about this. All universities are required to have a SPP which is approved by the Office for Students (OfS), who are the independent regulator of higher education in England.

This SPP applies to all students registered with Middlesex University across all of its campuses in London, Dubai, and Mauritius, including students on postgraduate research (PGR) programmes, apprentices and students studying one of our awards through an academic partner institution. This SPP does not cover learners undertaking Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training or those undertaking a training programme with another provider which we have accredited

## Assessment of risks

Middlesex University is a global institution which is united by a shared purpose: creating knowledge and putting it into action. Our main campus is in Hendon, London, home to c19,000 students. We also have campuses in Mauritius and Dubai and deliver programmes through our partners across the world.

We provide transforming learning through innovative, flexible and highly accessible practices-led education, with excellent outcomes for students. Our students learn through activities and through experience, by doing, making and analysing. We foster innovation, encouraging our students to be creative and curious. They apply their advanced knowledge and skills to real-world and work-based projects that benefit society, the professions and business. Learning this way, our students develop the skills, behaviours and attitudes that they will use as change makers and which employers want and need. We take our responsibilities to our students seriously, and involve our students in our decision-making through co-leadership.

Our regulatory framework relating to continuation of

- strong budget setting and management processes and regular reporting
- active student representation and requirements for student engagement in key programme matters
- a clear Complaints Procedure that complies with the OIA Good Practice Framework
- a governance structure that meets good practice standards and ensures decision-making is evidence-based and transparent

Our SPP is written within this context, and is based on our assessment of our risk profile in relation to the continuation of study for our students as at **0 December 2023**, the date that this plan was approved by Assurance Committee. As a dynamic institution there will be changes to our programme portfolio or other aspects of our learning and teaching environment and we are committed to ensuring we continue to keep our students (and applicants) informed. How we keep students informed of these changes is set out in our academic policy [Making Changes to Published Programme Related Information](#).

Risk is assessed on basis of how likely an event is to occur and what the impact of that event would be, there are five levels of assessed risk from the lowest level of negligible then to low then medium then high and finally very high.

## Risk profile

The risk that the University will no longer be able to deliver programmes is negligible since the University is in a strong and robust financial position. The University engages in business continuity planning which provides for continuity of delivery and access to resources in the event of a major incident at the University. The campuses in Dubai and Mauritius are in a similarly robust financial position and there is negligible risk to delivery of programmes.

The risk that the University loses its degree awarding powers, or they are restricted is negligible as there is a robust governance structure in place which oversees both the University fulfilling the OfS Conditions of Registration and the expectations of the UK Quality Code. The risk of our programmes being de-designated for 'Student Support' purposes (so students were unable to access statutory student finance) is also assessed as negligible for the same reasons.

The University complies with UKVI requirements and tracks the engagement of its sponsored students diligently to ensure they continue to meet the requirements of their visas so the risk of suspension or removal of the Student Visa Sponsor Licence is low. However, in the event of suspension or withdrawal of Student Visa 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, either with the University or alternative sponsor where regulations permit.

The University has a large number of professionally accredited programmes (e.g. nursing, law, engineering). Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies undertake regular reviews/renewals

of accreditation. The University has a very strong track record of maintaining course accreditation. The loss of accreditation is low.

The University has no current plans to close departments or subject areas and there is no current risk that departments will close since the University remains in a strong and robust position. If this was to change we would commit to ensuring that sufficient time would be allowed for student to complete their programme.

The University keeps its portfolio of programmes under review and makes decisions about the future of programmes based on demand and currency of content. If the University closes a programme during the recruitment cycle, we inform applicants as early as possible in order to minimise the potential disruption to the application process. Current students will be consulted and provided with the opportunity to complete the programme or transfer to an equivalent alternative, as set out in this plan. We design our programmes to be delivered by integrated teams of academic staff and will secure access to specific subject experts as required to ensure that students can complete their programme.

The risk that only one subject expert/lecturer can deliver a specific core module on a programme, or research supervisor supervise a research programme, is low. We design our programmes to be taught by integrated teams of academic staff and have access to specialist part-time staff. We appoint teams of supervisors to supervise research students.

It is possible unforeseeable events and/or circumstances that are beyond the University's reasonable control, have a disruptive effect on the University's ability to deliver academic or other services could occur. These are also known as "Force Majeure Event"<sup>1</sup>. If these occur the University will give students as much advance warning of the changes occurring to any aspects of their course, including content delivery, placements, assessment and where and how the course will be delivered in different circumstances.

We recognise that there may be risks associated with apprenticeship programmes, such as the risk that we need to ensure continuity for students should the employer be unable to continue to support them. We continue to develop our approach to assessing and mitigating risks on apprenticeship programmes, and to ensure that our contracts for apprenticeships, and our quality assurance processes as monitored by Ofsted, are appropriate and help protect the interests of students as apprentices.

The risk that we close a programme at our Hendon campus that is delivered at one of our overseas campuses, or the risk of changes to overseas regulatory requirements, is low. We ensure that our overseas campuses are well supported and that we have a strong track record of maintaining course accreditation. The loss of accreditation is low.

quality. Many programmes use modules shared with other programmes, which enables us to keep programmes open for recruitment on another campus; or we may localise or tailor module content using our programme change processes to ensure that students have the opportunity to complete.

The risk that students at a collaborative partner organisation are no longer able to study a Middlesex University programme because of closure or financial failure of the collaborative partner organisation is low. We manage a programme of ongoing financial and quality due diligence for all our collaborative partners that includes registration status should they be registered with the Office for Students so that we are aware at all times of the financial and quality standing of collaborative partners and their continuing ability to deliver Middlesex University collaborative provision. The Collaborations sub-Committee has oversight of this process.

-

to date and makes provision for continuity of delivery and access to specialist resources in the event of a major incident.

If a programme closure is proposed, we implement our programme closure process which requires approval from the Portfolio Development Committee, which scrutinises teach-out plans to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for students to complete their qualification. Our programme closure form

(<https://www.mdx.ac.uk/data/a>.



## Communication

If the University closes a programme during the recruitment cycle, or makes changes to the programme, we inform applicants as early as possible in order to minimise the potential disruption to the application process. Where possible, we will offer an alternative programme in a similar subject area or offer the intended programme of study at another entry year. If an alternative programme is unavailable or unsuitable then for undergraduate applicants we will support their substitution of choice to another institution via UCAS.

Where we make major changes to programmes, or make a decision to close a programme, students are notified by the programme leader, and provided with the information required to