

Condition C3 - Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: Goldsmiths College

Provider's UKPRN: 10002718

Legal address: Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, London, SE14 6NW

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Louisa Green
(l.green@gold.ac.uk).

Student protection plan for the period: 2018-19

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

Goldsmiths College is a medium-sized member of the University of London. It runs programmes across the creative arts, creative industries, social sciences, psychology, management and computing. These programmes include delivery at pre-degree (foundation), undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research level. This means that the majority of risks that are posed to students relate to our ability to continue to provide degree level teaching on our single site campus in South East London.

The risk that the institution as a whole will cease to operate is low. We operate with a small financial surplus each year and at 2017-18 have cash reserves of circa £25million. The 2017-18 budget forecast plans for a further small surplus. The institution's Strategic Plan has financial sustainability at the core of its mission. Further, our student population is diverse: We welcome 18% of our students from outside of the EU and so we are not overexposed and therefore over-reliant on international fee income to keep the institution sustainable. The remainder of the student population is drawn from the wider EU with approximately 40% being drawn from the Greater London area which is an area that continues to see demand. We have seen an increase in all categories of students for the past 4 years and we continue to be attractive as a destination for study.

The risk that the Office for Students would be minded to take actions that would affect our ability to award degrees is low. We operate within the regulatory frameworks prescribed to us. As a member of the University of London degrees are currently awarded using their degree awarding powers and this institution is also bound by the same stringent regulation. Goldsmiths does have our own degree awarding powers for taught programmes and so in the event that the University of London, or the federation, failed we would be able to continue to deliver and award degrees to our students. Should Goldsmiths have degree awarding powers revoked then we would be able to rely on our relationship with the University of London. Goldsmiths does not offer any degrees that are validated by an external partner thus mitigating the risk that would be attracted by validation.

The risk that individual modules of study do not run is low because we design our modules to be taught by integrated teams of academic staff. Where this is impossible we seek to bring in expertise to deliver these modules.

There is a low risk to us not being able to deliver teaching in the case of significant failure to buildings or a part of the campus. Due to our single site campus students come to the campus in New Cross for teaching. This mitigates the risk of satellite campuses in distant locations becoming inoperable. In the events of low level failure on our estate or significant incident we are able to rearrange teaching and learning across the site with limited impact for students and staff. In addition, we have comprehensive Business Continuity plans in place which mitigate these risks.

The risk that programmes cannot run as a result of failure of equipment is low. Goldsmiths offers no programmes that have a high requirement for specialist resources of facilities.

The risk that a programme loses recognition by a professional body is low. We have very few PRSB regulated programmes in our departments of Psychology and Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies. We have robust quality assurance processes in place to monitor our compliance with these programmes.

The risk that individual modules or programmes of study may close is moderate. Programmes close for a variety of reasons including: staff departure, staff secondment and low interest from the market. We have a range of processes in place to manage this in a timely manner and to ensure no detriment to students.

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

We have a number of policies in place that allow us to mitigate the risks that may be posed by the closure of modules or programmes of study these include:

- Course Closure Policy: www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/about-us/governance/quality-office/Policy-and-Procedure-for-the-closure-of-programmes.pdf
- Admissions Policy: www.gold.ac.uk/media/study-section/how-to-apply/Approved-Admissions-Policy-Academic-Board.pdf

These policies, which have been developed in line with CMA guidance and also the Quality Code for Higher Education, lay out the steps and actions that we will take should a become unsustainable or, which are unable to run due to factors such as key staff leaving the institution.

Should a programme be identified in this category then we would:

1. Inform any applicants and offer holders of the situation and allow them to reselect an alternative programme or decline their offer of a place of study;
2. Inform current students of our intention to terminate this programme from the end of the academic year;
3. Ensure we can deliver teach out each year of the programme for the remainder of the academic year by sourcing alternative staff if necessary.

Our Student Transfer Policy details the credit that will be awarded to student should they wish to leave the College. In the case of a programme of study being terminated we would automatically award credit to students and provide them with information, advice and guidance about the process of using this credit to secure advance standing with another university.

Our relationship with the University of London Colleges is beneficial in this regard and should a programme, department or the institution become unsustainable we would seek to identify suitable transfer options for our students.

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

Our Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy can be found: www.gold.ac.uk.

This Policy is written in line with the College's Regulations on tuition fees which can be viewed at: www.gold.ac.uk/governance/generalregulations/6-fees/

As noted in our analysis of risk, we do not anticipate any category of student to be at risk at present. However, should we be in the position whereby we need to make refunds to students we currently operate with cash reserves of circa £25million which could be used to make refunds, honour bursary and scholarship payments and, if appropriate, award compensation.

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

We will publicise our student protection plan in the following ways:

- On our website www.gold.ac.uk as an externally facing document.
- We will make clear reference to the Student Protection Plan in our terms and conditions, shared with applicants prior to them accepting their offer of a place of study.
- We will ensure the Student Protection Plan is made part of the enrolment process.

- We will share this information with all of our Departmental Student Representatives and Programme Level Representatives as part of their ongoing training.
- We will ensure this is clearly identifiable on the student facing webpages of our website.

The Student Protection Plan will form part of our core quality assurance processes. As such we will ensure that staff are asked to demonstrably measure any changes to modules, programmes or their departments with reference to the document. This will be monitored through our governance structure at Programme Scrutiny Sub Committee and our Quality and Standards Committee.

Student engagement is critical to the ongoing development of this plan. We will work with our Students' Union and the Departmental Student Representatives to ensure that this plan is developed. This will be monitored in our governance structure by our Student Experience Sub Committee.

Should we need to enact any element of this plan we will:

- Ensure applicants are informed of changes or cancellations of their programme as soon as this decision is made in writing;
- Work individually with students within one week of the announcement of module/programme/departmental closure to discuss their options to change programme, select alternative content or transfer out of the College;
- We will ensure that students are aware of the rights as stipulated in this plan, CMA guidance and within the terms and conditions as identified at the point they accepted their contract with the institution.
- We will ensure students have access to independent advice delivered through Goldsmiths Students' Union Advice Centre and are signposted to external sources of advice should they require this support. This may include signposting students on programmes of study with professional recognition to this body for further advice.