

Name of Provider: Derby College
UKPRN: 10001919
Address: Roundhouse, Pride Park, Derby. DE24 8JE

Student Protection Plan – Information to Students

Introduction

Derby College is a large Further Education College and has a long track recording in offering Higher Education courses. It does so with a range of partners and it has a robust way of developing curriculum. This ensures that there is access to subject expertise, resources and development. Therefore, should there be any challenge in offering any programme there are a range of actions to mitigate any impact on the student experience that the College can take to ensure that the student experience remains robust.

The College assesses risk on its ability to deliver programmes each year through its self-evaluation cycle and through the development, review and governance of its risk-registers. Currently, the College has assessed that there are few risks associated with its HE provision and its strong financial position means that it can continue to resource and develop HE activity. The College remains committed to work with students to ensure that the student experience remains positive at the College.

The College's general approach is to ensure that students have a high quality experience that meets their needs and to form good relationships with students. Therefore, if there is any type of mitigation ever needed students are spoken to individually and support is offered on a case by case, learner by learner basis.

In order to ensure that proactive approach is maintained the College continues to work through a number of scenarios which may affect students' ability to complete, and mitigation is constantly considered and available should an unlikely situation occur. Such mitigation would be put into action in circumstances, including:

Ceasing to offer a course

The College always publish the minimum numbers needed to run a course in our course information sheets. If it were to happen that a course could not be offered because it was not economically viable or the low numbers would lead to a poor academic experience there are a number of steps the College would take.

Firstly, all applicants would be contacted to explain the situation. As we work with validating partners we would at first seek to see if a place on a similar or equivalent programme at a partner institution was possible for each applicant. Secondly, we would meet with all students and discuss a place on a programme at a partner, followed by arranging a visit to them. Thirdly, if that was not an option for an applicant we would spend time with the applicant finding a suitable alternative. We would remain committed to this until a satisfactory resolution had been found. The College has a controlled approach to curriculum development and HE Academic Board ensures that the ability to protect students from such situations is in place before curriculum development happens and that partners can offer any solution to such situations.

Once the College has made the commitment to start a course the commitment remains throughout the life of the course for that cohort even if non-continuation meant that the course fell below minimum numbers after it had started.

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The Closure of a Building or Campus

In the highly unlikely event of a disaster (such as a fire, roof collapse or something similar) taking place the College's Disaster Management Programme would fall into place. This detailed system ensures that classrooms, and learning spaces would either be put back online or alternatives sourced within two weeks. The College would work with its awarding partners to ensure that access to resources could be granted with them, and to extend any necessary assignment deadlines to ensure that students were not disadvantaged by the situation. The College would make contact with students as early as possible to detail the situation and would stay in constant contact with students to ensure that everyone was fully informed about everything going on.

As the College is a multi-site institution all students can access other campuses and this would be the initial starting point for other points of research and learning to direct students to. Access to any specialist facilities would be brought back on line as quickly as possible.

The College recognises that, should any such situation occur, it could lead to undue stress for students, and that it may affect timetables. In such situations students would be spoken to as a group and individually to discuss options for additional bursary funds, and for additional funding for things like nursery placements, and for any other challenges students may have. The College would make provision to support as many students as possible in such situations.

Students all have an Office 365 account and are encouraged to store work in the cloud as it is safer should there be an IT mal-function. However, there is a back up of the College's IT data taken every 24 hours.

Refunds and Teaching Contact

The College's fee policy can be found at <https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/documents/he/Tuition-Fees-Policy-18-19-HE-Tuition-Fees-Supplement.pdf>

The Policy states:

9.1 Derby College will not raise further charges from the month following a learner leaving a course.

9.2 Where a learner leaves a course and seeks a refund of charges, the College will offer a rebate of any charges levied in the month following the last attendance.

Therefore, no student would be charged for more of the tuition fee than the tuition they take.

If a member of staff could not be in College due to personal circumstances (such as illness or family bereavement) the College would seek to cover the lesson (as far as it practically possible) and cover all relevant content in line with the scheme of work (this is a document all teachers have to produce for each group they teach). If the absence is prolonged the Team Manager and Faculty Head for the course would work with the Director of Higher Education and the Executive Director of HR to ensure that more permanent cover was established quickly. The aim would be to ensure that the impact on students is minimal. Any calls for refunds at this time would be taken on a group by group basis and the College would seek to compromise a refund with students. Likewise, should there be any event that affects the College (such as strike action) the leadership of the College would seek to work

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with students to mitigate the impact of this and, if strike action happened for a prolonged period of time, discuss any refund with students.

Communication

This document will be made available on the College's HE Moodle Pages and shared with student reps. Any update to it will be agreed by HE Academic Board.

Questions and Concerns

The College's HE Student Voice Procedure details how feedback on any issue can be given. Additionally, all students are encouraged to contact Robin.Webber-Jones@Derby-College.ac.uk should there be any aspect of this document they would like further clarification on.