**Student Protection Policy**

**2023 – 2024**

The contacts for all matters relating to this policy are:

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This Student Protection Plan sets out what measures we have in place to protect you as our students in the event that a risk to the continuation of your studies should arise. The type of event or changes, which might cause such a risk, are also detailed below.

This plan is available to all current and potential students and the measures contained are in addition to the protections you have under consumer protection law and do not impinge on your consumer rights.

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| **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** |

West Midlands Consortium is a modern, relevant and vocationally inspired teacher training provider, working in partnership with Thomas Telford School and Staffordshire University to support regional need and to provide opportunities for a diverse student body.

Over time, we have built on our reputation and vision as we continue to deliver innovative programmes, an up-to-date curriculum and develop talented people. Underpinned by a connected curriculum approach, West Midlands Consortium is working in partnership with students to be active, digital, global citizens and has a diverse student population with a significant proportion of local and regional students.

We have no students from outside of the UK and are, therefore, not exposed to the withdrawal from the European Union nor changes in Home Office immigration regulations.

West Midlands Consortium’s strategic plan is underpinned by a clear set of Key Performance Indicators, so that the achievement of the plan can be evaluated and managed and which are monitored through Strategic Reviews. The achievement of the KPIs is monitored through the Board of Governors and financial performance of the Consortium is also managed through the same process.

**Risk that the institution will cease to operate is low**:

From a financial perspective, the risk that the Consortium will cease to operate is very low. We prepare a detailed annual budget, with appropriate stress testing and scenario planning to ensure that it can respond to the changing market. In addition, the Governors have agreed some key financial indicators that must be met annually and throughout our strategic plan including surplus delivery and improvement, minimum cash balances and adherence to regulator and bank covenants. Risk management is part of the Business Planning and Strategic Review process which is led and managed by the Director of Finance, supported by the Director of ITT, and is overseen by the Board of Governors. These plans are updated on an annual basis, or as the need arises.

**Risk that the institution will close a building and cannot find a suitable location is low:**

The business continuity and student experience risk of a school closure is low at West Midlands Consortium. With further education partners located closely to Thomas Telford School, relocation of activities will be feasible if individual buildings are impacted.

**Risk of discontinuing a specific subject or programme is managed:**

The West Midlands Consortium approval process, in partnership with Staffordshire University, ensures that we design and develop provision that is cognisant of the external market including the skills and knowledge requirement of a future work force. We monitor subject and programme performance and changes to the portfolio are planned to minimise disruption to the student body. The risk that we are no longer able to deliver material components of our courses is low because we design our modules to be taught by teams of staff.

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

The Student Protection Plan will be triggered if West Midlands Consortium decides to:

* discontinue a specific programme of study and cannot offer a reasonable alternative
* stop teaching this subject
* close the location in which the course is taught and cannot find suitable premises at a nearby location
* cease operating altogether

or

* we can no longer provide the programme for any other reason
* we cease operating through no choice of our own
* we lose the right to provide the course or qualification

We retain the right to make minor adjustments and improvements to course, programme and module content year on year but these in themselves do not warrant the triggering of student protection measures. However, if a student feels the course as delivered varies significantly from what they expected, they may be able to seek recourse under consumer or contract law.

It should be noted that we will make arrangements to ‘teach out’ current students where we have voluntarily decided to leave the market or close a programme. This means that we commit to ensuring the course of study can be completed by all currently enrolled students even though the course is being discontinued and we will not be taking on new student cohorts.

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| **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** |

The Fee, Refund and Compensation policy can be found at <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/legal/policies/refundand-compensation-policy.jsp>

The policy is written in line with Staffordshire University regulations and approved through the Quality Committee and Academic Board.

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| **Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan** |

This Student Protection Plan will be publicised and communicated in the following ways:

* On our website <https://wmc.ttsonline.net> as an externally facing document and on student facing webpages
* Within our terms and conditions, shared will applicants prior to accepting an offer
* As part of the enrolment process
* With student representatives as part of the training programme

The plan will form part of our quality assurance processes, aligned to our programme and module approval, review and amendment procedure and monitored through the Management Committee.

Should we need to enact any element of the plan, students will be notified within one week of the decision being formally approved and made aware of their rights as stipulated in the plan.

We will work with students to discuss their options to change programmes, select alternative content or transfer out of the Consortium.

We will ensure that students have access to independent advice through the Staffordshire University Students’ Union and are signposted to external sources of advice should you require this support.

Student engagement is critical to the ongoing development plan and we will continue to work with Student Representatives in its implementation.

**Data will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.**