



UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE  
STOCKPORT COLLEGE

Part of The Trafford College Group

# STUDENT PROTECTION PLAN

# INTRODUCTION

As an education provider that delivers Higher Education, our student protection plan is designed to inform you what you can expect in the unlikely event that a course, campus or college closes. In developing this Plan, the College has considered how Students can continue and achieve on their course.

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The Trafford College Group (TCG) was created in April 2018 as a result of the Merger of Trafford College and Stockport College. Both Colleges have been providing technical and professional education for over 100 years. The Trafford

College Groups operates over 10 miles of South Manchester and are based at 3 sites, Altrincham, Stockport and Streford. The College Group is now the 13th Largest College to provide Higher Education.

## 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

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The risk that the College is unable to operate is assessed as very low. This is because the College's financial position is good. The Trafford College Group serves a diverse population in Further and Adult Education, Apprenticeships, Commercial and Higher Education. By having this diverse income streams ensures that the College is financially resilient.

The Trafford College Group offer a range of Higher Education courses from Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Foundation Degrees to Honours degrees which are informed by employers ensuring courses are fit for purposes and meeting the needs of local industries. This allows students to progress into long-term sustained employment.

Stage 1 of the College's HE Programme Design, Development and Review is the Programme Approval Committee which ensures that the intention for any new programme is adequately resourced and matched against curriculum need, both at an institutional and programme level, enabling the programme to be delivered effectively. This is followed by a stage 2 internal moderation stage which ensures that courses are keeping with the College's strategy, have sufficient market intelligence that assumes that the programme would recruit and sustain adequate student numbers and can be expected to operate economically are

approved. The final stage of the approval process is external approval, this includes formal approval from our validating partner. The College's HE Programme Design Development and Review also takes into consideration risks associated with course or campus closures.

The risks that the College will not be able to deliver material components is assessed as low because our Programme Design and Development process takes staff allocation into account and programmes are designed to be taught by integrated academic teams, mitigating the risk of dependency on individual members. In the event there is a gap for a specific specialism in a module, the college would look at training the wider team, recruit a new staff member or draw upon visiting lectures.

The risk that the College is unable to deliver a course is assessed as moderate. The factors that the College has taken into consideration include none to low student intake which would lead to a negative impact on the student experience, withdrawal to and from a validating partner or the programme being superseded by newer provision. The College arrangements for course closures are comprehensive and ensure continuity of provision for students when a course is closed.

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

The College has 3 campuses bases in Altrincham, Stockport and Stretford all within a 20 minute commute of each other. In the unlikely event that a course could not be delivered at a specified campus, the most positive outcome would be to move the provision to one of the College's other campuses and provide transport to those students affected.

Our programme design and development procedure and processes ensure that our curriculum is reviewed on a 5 year cycle, to ensure that programmes remains current and relevant. It may be that from time to time programmes are modified to ensure programmes keep their relativity or may be phased out to allow newer provision. In the event of phasing out the College has a commitment to 'teach out' the existing programme. This is to assure students that we are committed to ensure you can complete your programme within the time scale specified at enrolment. These details are confirmed in the HE terms and Conditions.

The majority of our HE provisions within their own curriculum areas have been designed with shared pathways and modules. The School of Health, Children and Care Professions for example, our Foundation Degrees in Working with Children and Young People and Early Years Practice both share five common modules at Level 4 and 5 and articulate into the final year of our BA (Hons) Childhood Studies. Students not only benefit from the synergies between the courses but it provides enhancement to the student experience where perhaps low student numbers may have caused a negative impact.

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.

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The Trafford College Group financial health is good. This means the College has sufficient robust finances to fulfil its contractual obligations, and to respond successfully to most opportunities or adverse circumstances.

Our HE Terms and Conditions articulate to students the Terms and Conditions about their studies which include fee information, details of course closures, changes and cancellation, and refund rights. The College's Terms and Conditions were reviewed by the UK's Quality Body for Higher Education who concluded that there can be confidence that the quality of the student academic experience meets baseline regulatory requirements which include policies and procedures are in place to ensure consumer protection obligations are met.

In the event that we would move provision from one campus to another, the College where possible would give 28 days' notice of the intention to move location. The College will work with the cohort of students to ensure that their study is not negatively impacted. This may include offering transport between sites or offering additional financial support to those students who would be traveling further than their original destination.

In the event, a course is closed prior to enrolment, the College endeavours to inform potential applicants 28 working days prior to the start of the Course. In the first instance applicants are offered an alternative course at the College, if the applicant feels this is not appropriate, the College student advisors will support them in locating course at a different provider, preferably within the Greater Manchester Area, of which we work collaboratively with on many projects.

The College's terms and Condition are made available on the website.

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

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The College's website is the primary source of information, where students can find information on courses, fees and finance, policies and procedures and the Student Protection Plan. The Student Protection Plan will be sent to all successful applicants by email with their offer letter.

Existing students who are on course at the time of writing this document will be able to obtain a copy from their virtual learning environment; Stockport Blended for those students at University Centre Stockport and Trafford Blended for students at Stretford and Altrincham.

Any changes to a course content, course closure or campus change that may result in the Student Protection Plan being triggered must be approved by the College's Higher Education Committee of which student representatives hold full membership.

The Student Engagement lead is responsible for ensuring effective partnership working with students which will include reviewing documentation such as the Student Protection Plan. The Colleges' course committees, where staff and students come together will create a forum for discussion and deliberation. This committee feeds into the HE curriculum groups that are sub groups of the College's HE Committee.

Should any material changes occur to a course, The Dean of Higher Education and Academic Registrar will convene a transitional period of 28 working days; this is to allow a consultation period with students to ensure effective support is in place. The College has a holistic network of support including academic teams, disability and support services, employability officers, student services and learning resources which will provide support to ensure academic progression is not negatively affected.

The College's HE Student Body, led by lead student representatives from all three campuses are responsible for developing the annual quality report (AQR), and through this quality mechanism, students will independently review the College's key regulations including the Student Protection Plan and make recommendations where necessary and present at the HE Committee

# CAMPUS LOCATIONS

- 1 ..... Stockport Campus
- 2 ..... Altrincham Campus
- 3 ..... Stretford Campus





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