Provider's name: North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Provider's UKPRN: 10004718

Legal address: Hinckley Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV116BH

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan:

Vice Principal for Higher Education and Adult Programmes

Carrie-Anne Abdulai

carrie-anne.abdulai@nwslc.ac.uk

Student protection plan for the period [2026-2027]

- **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**

  The following risks have been identified:

  Risk 1 - **The College is in financial difficulty - LOW RISK**

  The risk that the College as a whole will be unable to operate due to financial instability is low. For 2024-25 the College has been officially graded as 'requires improvement' financial health, based on the formulae issued by the ESFA. The College's most recent three-year plan (which extends to 2026-27) shows it is moving to "good" financial health in 2026-27 with a surplus forecast to be generated each year. Accordingly, the College has a reasonable expectation that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future

  Risk 2 - **The College is unable to deliver Higher Education Courses - LOW RISK**

  The risk that we will no longer deliver Higher Education (HE) courses at the College in the next three years is low. The College has long standing success in delivering higher level qualifications and continues to review and develop it's HE offer to meet the needs of the local community and to support economic growth. With effect on and from 9 November 2018, the Office for Students (OfS) has registered NWSLC in the Approved (Fee Cap) category of the register of English HE providers with no specific ongoing conditions of registration at this time. NWSLC remains compliant with all OfS ongoing conditions of registration.

  Risk 3 - **The College will close a campus - LOW RISK**

  The risk that the College will close one or more of its campuses in the foreseeable future is highly unlikely. We are currently updating the facilities at our Nuneaton campus (our oldest campus) to make sure that we continue to provide a high-quality student experience that is fit for future skills developments.

  Risk 4 - **The College will suspend or close a programme - MODERATE RISK**

  The risk that we may suspend or close a programme from our portfolio is moderate as recruitment patterns on individual programmes are variable each year and consideration has to be given to financial viability.

  Risk 5 - The College will not be able to deliver specific requirements of BTEC Higher National Programmes and associated Modules - LOW RISK

  The risk that we will not be able to deliver specific requirements of BTEC Higher National/Technical Qualifications and associated is low. NWSLC have long standing experience of successful delivery of BTEC Higher National Qualifications and robust mechanisms in place to monitor quality and standards. BTEC Higher National programmes are delivered collaboratively by teams of staff with relevant qualifications, skills and expertise and do not rely on individual members of staff to deliver.

  There is also flexibility in the selection of units for programme design to meet the changing demands of students and industry.

Risk 6 - **The College will suspend, or close programmes validated with partner universities – MODERATE RISK**

The risk that we will not be able to deliver specific requirements of our validated provision with partner universities is moderate because we are dependent on a relatively small number of staff who are familiar with the specifics of the programme specification, quality assurance processes and university regulations.

Risk 7 - **Termination of contract with Partner Universities – LOW RISK**

We value our long-standing relationships with Coventry University and The University of West London, however we recognise that there is always a risk of termination of contract by mutual agreement, or for reasons that are beyond our control. Due to contractual agreements and due diligence this risk is low.

Risk 8 - Campus Closure due to Matters beyond our control (Force Majeure) – LOW RISK

The College remains alert to events that are beyond the institution's reasonable control ('Force Majeure' events') that may result in the closure of one or more campuses. Events include but are not limited to:

- Acts of God, flood, earthquake, wind, storm, or other natural disaster.
- Epidemics, pandemics, quarantine, widespread illness and mandatory responses to Governmental advice (whether affecting our staff and/or students or otherwise);
- National emergencies, common commotion war, act of terrorism (including actual, suspected or threatened act of terrorism), explosion, protests, riots;
- Fire, explosion or accidental damage
- Collapse of building structures, failure of machinery, computers or vehicles
- Labour disputes, including strikes and industrial and other action
- Interruption or failure of utility service, including but not limited to electric power, gas or water
- The acts, decrees, legislation, or restriction of any government

Should a force majeure event result in any reduction or suspension of on campus face to face delivery, the College will take all reasonable steps to protect the continuation of teaching, learning and assessment for all HE students.

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

Appropriate mitigations for the higher-level risks are as listed below:

Risk 4 - If for reasons of low recruitment, we plan to suspend or close a programme from our portfolio of qualifications, this decision would be made through our curriculum planning process, with the overall consent of the Vice Principal. Final decisions to suspend or close a programme rest with the Deputy Principal. In normal circumstances this decision will be made ahead of applications and the programme will be withdrawn from our website and publications. Where this is unavoidable, for example where the projected applications do not convert to enrolments, students and their representatives shall be consulted at the earliest opportunity on the changes and they shall be furnished with all necessary information, advice and guidance by the College to help them make an informed decision on their future course of action. We would also engage with any other external stakeholders who may be impacted by the closure e.g. employer partners.

The College will endeavour to deliver programmes in accordance with the course description on our website and in our prospectus however in the event of unavoidable changes to the course content in-year, the College will ensure that changes are implemented through consultation with students and that changes are restricted to the minimum to maintain quality of delivery and experience.

In the unlikely event that the College makes a strategic decision to close a programme on which students are already enrolled the College will, wherever possible, 'teach out' allowing affected

students to complete their studies before the closure occurs. Where the circumstances are exceptional and 'teach out' is not possible the College will seek to support students in transferring to a similar programme and / or provide information, support and guidance to transfer to an alternative provider. This will include providing an interim certification of achievement.

Risk 6 - To mitigate the risk of the College not being able to deliver specific requirements of our validated provision with partner universities, the Vice Principal for Higher Education and Adult Provision has developed appropriate contingency and sustainability strategies which include the widening of the range and depth of knowledge across delivery teams and the identification and development of individuals into deputising roles. The College also maintains regular review and monitoring of programmes in line with the quality assurance processes of our partner universities to identify risks and implement specific mitigation to avoid any long-term negative impact.

In the unlikely event that the College is not able to fulfil delivery, as set out in a partnership agreement, we will be compliant with the partner universities plans and procedures and agree to work in cooperation with the partner institution to ensure all applicants and students are consulted on any impact on the continuation of study and the alternative options available including, where suitable, the transfer of students to the partner institution.

In the event of a termination of contract with a partner University NWSLC will;

- Consult with all relevant stakeholders at the earliest opportunity.
- Maintain academic standards in the ‘teach out’ period of enrolled students.
- Ensure all necessary amendments to marketing communications.

The College's risk management policy recognises that risk management is an essential element of any large business’ corporate management and governance arrangements and sets out the following responsibilities:

- The Corporation of the College has responsibility for the oversight of all activity in the organisation but has identified that its audit committee should have specific oversight over the risk management arrangements.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has responsibility for ensuring that management of risk is properly addressed in all areas within their operational control.
- The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation has a robust and effective risk management framework.
- For practical purposes, each identified risk owner shall update their portion of the relevant risk report in time for the content to be reviewed prior to relevant Corporation or audit committee meetings. A separate schedule of times shall be issued, ideally monthly.
- There will be a College level risk report owned and reviewed by the Executive, a curriculum risk report owned and reviewed by the Vice Principal and the curriculum senior management team, a support risk report owned and reviewed by the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Executive and the corporate services senior management team, and a governor risk report owned and reviewed by the Corporation and its committees.
- Internal audits will monitor the risk management arrangements to ensure that they are adequate and effective in practice.

- **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**

As per our Tuition Price Policy 2026-2027 the College sets out the following refund and waiver to fee policies**:**

Refund Policy - Full refunds will only be made if the College cancels the course, it is over-subscribed, or the student withdraws within the 7-day cooling-off period. The 7-day cooling-off period begins on the date of the first registered teaching event on the course. This enables the student to ensure they are happy with the course and also for the College to cancel the course if

it becomes unviable. In these circumstances the College will make a full refund, and no administration fee will be charged.

After the 7-day cooling-off period fees will be liable as follows.

- Term 1 - Students are liable for 25% of the Tuition Fee from day 8 of the start of the course.
- Term 2 - Students are liable for 50% of the Tuition Fee from day 1 of the first day of the second term.
- Term 3 - Students are liable for 100% of the Tuition Fee from day 1 of the first day of the third term.

Where learners wish to apply for a refund due to exceptional circumstances they must write to the Chief Operating Officer.

Withdrawals are processed from the last date of student engagement with the College, or the date on which a student confirms their decision to withdraw, whichever is the latter.

The NWSLC HE refund and compensation policy outlines the circumstances in which the College will refund tuition fees and provide compensation to students in the unlikely event that we are no longer able to protect continuation of study as a result of the risks outlined in this student protection plan. The policy outlines the provision for refunds and compensation for the impact that any risks detailed within this plan has on affected students' tuition fees, bursaries, travel costs, maintenance costs and loss of time.

The College has a reserves policy which recognises the importance of reserves in the financial stability of the organisation. The College ensures that there are adequate reserves to support the College's core activities including sufficient reserves to provide refunds and compensation for those students who are affected as a direct result of the risks identified within this plan.

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

We will publish our student protection plan to current and future students on our website and will reference the plan within HE student handbooks, student induction and student forum meetings.

The College will ensure that all staff are aware of the content and implications of the student protection plan through termly meetings and through HE staff forums. The plan will also be made available to all staff through our Higher Education Staff Extranet.

The College will review and republish the student protection plan on an annual basis to ensure that it continues to be relevant and reflect the College's risk register.

The College is committed to involving students in its strategic decision making and operational management processes and firmly believes that embracing student views and offering an opportunity to have direct involvement in assessing and shaping their own learning experience will have a significant and effective impact on developing the College's quality improvement processes and increasing student success. Our student involvement policy facilitates student input not only as a customer of the College but by ensuring students act as co-producers of their educational experiences and outcomes, both individually and collectively, via the College's decision-making processes.

The College's admissions policy sets out the following framework to inform students of any material changes to their course.

- The College endeavours to inform applicants at the earliest opportunity of any significant changes to the content or format of a course that are made between application and enrolment.
- The College aims to provide all the courses that are advertised in the prospectus, on the College website and on the UCAS website when applicable. However, if it becomes necessary to withdraw a course, the College will inform applicants to the course at the earliest opportunity and will give applicants the chance to be considered for an alternative course where possible. Where it is not possible to offer an alternative, or where an applicant does not wish to be

considered for an alternative course at the College, applicants are able to request a substitute choice through UCAS or the College. The College will support the applicant in this process and provide the appropriate direction in order to achieve this.

If any of the risks identified in this plan crystallise, we will implement the plan and begin consultation with affected students at the earliest opportunity. We will establish the appropriate advice and support through consultation with the Students Union and will provide as much information around the circumstances, and what action will be taken and when. We will actively engage in discussion with all affected students, collectively and individually, and will provide regular updates via the most appropriate method of communication.