



Student Protection Plan

Policy Title	Student Protection Plan			
Course type	HE	x	Practical	
School	London	x	Online	x
Approved by	Managing Director and Executive Committee			
Owner	Head of Quality			
Date Approved	May 2018			
Date of Review	May 2022	Date of next review:	August 2023	
Version	2.3			
Publication	Staff Access			x
	Student Access			x
	Public Access via Point Blank website			x

1 Overview

Point Blank has a responsibility to publish a Student Protection Plan which outlines imagined scenarios in which risks materialise and disrupt the delivery of our courses. In this document we declare our commitments and plans to ensure continuity, the protection of student interests and quality of provision. Widely known and acknowledged in the sector for our successful provision of specialist, industry-focused education, Point Blank has a proven history of dependable and steady business continuity for over 20 years. As such, our Student Protection Plan has been developed using our experience of careful financial sustainability, risk management and industry expertise.

The purpose of this plan is to provide assurance for prospective and current students about how we operate, the contingency plans we have in place and our sustainability should risks materialise. It should be noted that the following scenarios and risks outlined are highly unlikely to occur and are only included to show our contingency-planning and risk-management efforts, which would enable you to continue your studies.

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the risks, triggers and likely actions taken by the School, we are conscious that sometimes, planned actions may not suit all students and circumstances. In keeping with this, our plan has been written to include flexibility and availability to accommodate the variety of student needs and circumstances, even if outside of predicted outcomes. This plan should be viewed as a non-exhaustive list, as some situations may occur unpredictably, which we have also made accommodations for within the adaptability of the plan.

We are confident that the following scenarios clearly illustrate our actions and commitment towards ensuring our students will be supported throughout, however, if you have any questions, you are welcome to contact us at anwar@pointblankmusicschool.com with the subject line "Student Protection Plan". This document will be reviewed at the end of every academic year and updated in line with Point Blank's risk management procedures. Your statutory rights remain unaffected.

2 Our Commitment to Students and Prospective Students

Point Blank is committed to making every effort to ensure all students studying on a Point Blank qualification are given the opportunity to complete their desired award. What follows is a clear list of commitments Point Blank makes to our students, followed by our plans and actions tailored to specific scenarios.

- We will consult our students, include student representation, and represent student interests whenever possible in our decision-making process. This includes the consultation of a student panel before we implement any substantial changes to a course, discontinuation, or the closure of a location.
- We commit to contacting all affected students as soon as possible when a risk materialises.
- We commit to being open and transparent with all our students should any risk to the continuity of your studies arise.
- We commit to working with students and the maintenance of regular updates throughout the implementation of this plan to ensure a smooth transition or resolution. We will notify you of any changes which may affect your studies in a timely manner.

- Should the Student Protection Plan be triggered, you will be notified by the Education Team within 5 working days.
- We commit to the provision of continual advice and support throughout the resolution of all risk management through to the conclusion. This will be available from our Education Team.
- We commit to contacting you at least 6 months prior to the intended dates of any planned course change or course closure.
- In the result of any course closure, every effort will be made to ‘teach out’ any students still registered on the award at time of closure. The definition of ‘teach out’ and further details are available in the following section.
- We commit to carrying out this Student Protection Plan and protecting your studies should we find it necessary to close a location (building or campus), a risk materialises, or if we are unable to continue our provision of education.
- We will keep all sources of student information updated and maintain the accuracy of our provision of information.
- We commit to taking into consideration the needs of all our students and the impact on them of any proposed changes and protective measures;
- We will inform the OfS of any changes that may necessitate a review of the plan or any of the measures contained within it.

Current status:

The School’s assessment of risks to the continuation of course delivery for the current year is “low” as the status. The risk that the School will be unable to operate due to financial risk is “very low” due to resilient financial performance and non-existent debt.

3 Student Protection Plan Triggers and Measures

Below we have outlined risks, triggers and the actions we will take to protect your interests and the continuation of your studies whenever possible.

- a) We find it necessary to make changes to course content, regulations, policies and operational procedures

We may make enhancements to course and module content year on year based on feedback from students, staff and the analysis of performance data. This is part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining the relevance and currency of our course content, and quality assurance and enhancement as outlined in our Higher Education Strategy with Middlesex University. These changes in themselves do not warrant the triggering of student protection measures. All changes are logged and recorded for historical reference and risk management.

When updates are made, these will be evidence based and subject to feedback from students. Changes to course content or provision are also subject to proposal to the Programme Development Committee and Academic Board and approval. Major and minor changes (please refer to the Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook (LQEH), Middlesex University) are also subject to approval by our validating partner, Middlesex University.

Where a change is made to a regulation, policy or operational procedure, all changes will be subject to approval by the Academic Board and to start from the next academic term. All relevant sources of student information will be updated to accurately reflect the change, and all regulations, policies and procedures are version logged. Measures will be taken to ensure no students will be treated disadvantageously because of the changes.

b) We decide to discontinue your specific course

In the unlikely event that the School should find it strategically necessary to discontinue a course, all existing students will be informed of an intended discontinuation at least 6 months before the date. Where the School is confident that this is a viable option, taking into consideration academic provision and the student experience, plans will be in place to “teach out” current students. All prospective students who have already expressed interest will be notified as soon as the School is aware of the plans.

The process of teaching out refers to a HE sector method of phasing out the provision of a course. This method allows affected, existing students on the course to complete their studies, whilst not enrolling any new students onto the course.

We commit to working with any affected students during the teach out process and ensuring that the quality of the continual provision of education during the remainder of their time on the course will not be compromised.

Should a student express a desire to not continue their studies if that specific course is discontinued, other options will be provided and discussed with them. If possible, students will be given the alternatives of:

- Transferring to a similar programme at Point Blank Music School
- As your course is validated by Middlesex University there are arrangements in place that, should our campus close, or we cease to operate through no choice of our own, you will be able to transfer to Middlesex University, or to one of their suitable collaborative partners to complete your studies.

c) De-designation for student support purposes

In the unlikely event that the School is notified that designation will be withdrawn or suspended, and the School considers appealing a viable option, the School will appeal the decision with the intention of restoration of designation in time for the next academic year.

The School may, should this be necessary, apply for “teach out designation” to enable eligible existing students to continue to access funding for the remainder of their studies. This will allow existing students to continue their studies unaffected.

Should the application for teach out designation not be approved, the School will arrange for the transfer of existing and affected students to another provider with funding access. All options will be provided and discussed with affected students. As our courses are validated by Middlesex University there are arrangements in place for you to transfer to Middlesex University, or to one of their suitable collaborative partners to complete your studies.

During the transition period, Point Blank will make every effort to ensure that the quality of educational provision and student experience remains unaffected. Student advice and welfare support will also be available.

- d) We decide in the best interest of students or are obligated to close a location (building or campus) in which the course is taught and cannot find suitable premises at a nearby location; Significant changes to facility and estates; We are unable to deliver your course due to damage to one of our buildings, facilities or online delivery systems due to circumstances beyond our control.

Every effort will be made to acquire and arrange appropriate alternative means of delivery or premises whilst maintaining the student experience to the highest standard possible within our means. As an example, if we were obligated to close a building to ensure the safety of our students or staff, we would endeavour to ensure we could continue the provision of the course via online delivery to an equal or higher standard. However, if the School is unable to have confidence in the ongoing quality of provision and student experience via an alternative means of delivery or premises, the School will arrange for students who are or may be affected to be transferred.

All options will be provided and discussed with students, including the deferral of studies should there be temporary damage to one of our buildings or systems caused by unexpected circumstances (e.g. act of terror). If possible, students will be given the alternatives of:

- Transferring to another programme at Point Blank Music School which may not require the use of the damaged facilities, temporary interruption/deferred entry or the closest equivalent alternative delivery mode to the original delivery mode.
- As your course is validated by Middlesex University there are also arrangements in place that, should our campus close, or we cease to operate through no choice of our own, you will be able to transfer to Middlesex University, or to one of their suitable collaborative partners to complete your studies.

During the transition period, Point Blank will make every effort to ensure that the quality of educational provision and student experience remains unaffected. Student advice, wellbeing and welfare support will be available to assist all students who are or may be affected.

- e) We are unable to deliver your course due to loss of our university partner; We decide to cease operating altogether.

In accordance with our validation agreement, should our validation agreement be planned to cease, we will ensure that all current students will be able to continue their studies to completion before the partnership comes to an end.

In the unlikely event that our validating partner should decide to no longer validate a programme, we will work to seek a resolution with our validation partner before seeking an alternate validating partner before this affects current students. In the unlikely event that this is not achieved, all options will be provided and discussed with students. If possible, students will be given the alternatives of:

- Transferring to another validated programme at Point Blank Music School
- As your course is validated by Middlesex University there are arrangements in place that you will be able to transfer to Middlesex University, or to one of their suitable collaborative partners to complete your studies.

If you decide to move your attained credits externally, we will ensure the provision of all relevant academic documentation and support you in seeking another provider and continuing your studies with them, utilising student transfer arrangements.

If due to an extreme combination of events the School faces the prospect of closure through no choice of our own, the School will always make every effort to ensure that sufficient funds are available to teach out all current students. We have always maintained financial sustainability and factored in sufficient finance in our audits and reviews to be able to ensure business continuity, and refund or compensate students when appropriate and justified. As a contingency plan the School may seek a buyer to ensure continuity should this not be a viable option or transfer students as above.

f) If we were to lose our Student Sponsor license.

Prospective students will be contacted as soon as possible, and the School will liaise with all relevant organisations and affected prospective students to ensure that applicants are supported in securing an alternative provider to study with.

All current students will be contacted as soon as possible and within 3 working days at the latest, with support and advice. All current students will be able to access support and advice, and they will be liaised with throughout on whether they will be able to continue. Should they be unable to continue their studies with us, we will support them with the appropriate documentation to enable them to transfer to another approved provider with a Student Sponsor (previously known as Tier 4) license.

Should the School consider appealing a viable option, the School will appeal the decision with the intention of restoration of our Student Sponsor license in time for the next academic year.

If any of these changes and risks occur, every effort will be made to ensure student equality of opportunity is maintained, students are supported, and that student development and achievement is not compromised as a result of the circumstances. Measures will be in place to monitor progress, student engagement and feedback to ensure students are not adversely affected.

Furthermore, every effort will be made to provide clear, timely information and updates throughout the implementation of student protection measures, with the availability of advice and support.

We are committed to maintaining transparency and informing you as soon as we are aware of the materialization of any risks. We will assure and inform you of the mitigation of any risks and measures taken to protect your student experience and the quality of education provision.

If for any reason a resolution cannot be found for your case, and a refund is appropriate, Point Blank will consider grounds for a refund on a case by case basis according to our Point Blank Finance & Refund Policy. We have always made every effort to maintain financial sustainability and factor in

sufficient finance in our audits and reviews to be able to refund or compensate students when appropriate and justified.

All these measures have been reviewed by senior management and we are confident they are viable. We will take into consideration the needs of all our students, including those with mobility considerations or special educational requirements. Measures contained in the plan may be brought into play at any time, if, for example, doing so would reduce the impact or likelihood of any interruption to your studies.

4 Where can I find more information? How do I submit a complaint?

If you require any further information on the proposed outcomes, you are welcome to contact us at anwar@pointblankmusicschool.com with the subject line "Student Protection Plan".

Should you wish to raise a complaint, please refer to our Complaints Policy and raise a complaint with the School according to our internal procedure. We will carefully consider all evidence and issues with the aim of resolving complaints at the informal stage first, before appropriate escalation.