



THE LIVERPOOL INSTITUTE
FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Student Protection Plan (SPP) 2024-25

Responsible for Policy	Mike Mercer, Director of Students
Relevant to	All applicants and all students
Approved by	Senior Management Team
Date Approved/Last Approval	18 December 2023
Next review date	September 2024
Relevant Documents	
The Institute's Quality Framework	
Related Policies and Documents	
Terms and Conditions (Appendix A)	

Applicable OfS Condition (s) of registration

Applicable	Code	Condition
✓	A1	Have in force an access and participation plan approved by the OfS in accordance with the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA); Take all reasonable steps to comply with the provision of the plan
	B1	the provider must ensure that the students registered on each higher education course receive a high-quality academic experience.
	B2	the provider must take all reasonable steps to ensure that each cohort of students registered on each higher education course receives resources and support which are sufficient for the purpose of ensuring a high quality academic experience for those students; and those students succeeding in and beyond higher education; and effective engagement with each cohort of students to ensure: a high quality academic experience for those students; and those students succeeding in and beyond higher education.
	B3	The provider must deliver successful outcomes for all of its students, which are recognised and valued by employers, and/or enable further study.
	B4	the provider must ensure that students are assessed effectively; each assessment is valid and reliable; academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible; academic regulations are designed to ensure the effective assessment of technical proficiency in the English language in a manner which appropriately reflects the level and content of the applicable higher education course; and relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and when compared to those granted previously.
	B5	the provider must ensure that, in respect of any relevant awards granted to students who complete a higher education course provided by, or on behalf of, the provider (whether or not the provider is the awarding body): any standards set appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards; and awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards.
	B6	The provider must participate in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework.
✓	C1	The provider must demonstrate that in developing and implementing its policies, procedures and terms and conditions, it has given due regards to relevant guidance about how to comply with consumer protection law.
	C2	The provider must co-operate with the requirements of the student complaints scheme run by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, including the subscriptions requirements; make students aware of their ability to use the scheme.
✓	C3	The provider must have in force and publish a student protection plan which has been approved by the OfS as appropriate for its assessment of regulatory risk presented by the provider and for the risk to continuation of study of all of its students; take all reasonable steps to implements the provisions of the plan if the events set out in the plan take place; inform the OfS of events, except for the closure of an individual course, that require the implementation of the provisions of the plan.
	C4	The provider must comply with any Student Protection Direction in circumstances where the OfS reasonably considers that there is a material risk that the provider will or will be required by the operation of law to, fully or substantially cease the provision of higher education in England ("Market Exit Risk").

1. Introduction

The Student Protection Plan explains how study opportunities and course provision for students is protected in circumstances in which the viability of a programme is at risk.

2. Types of risk

We recognise there may be circumstances in which course provision may need to cease, that students may have to curtail their study or continue their study elsewhere or study under changed circumstances. The following circumstances have been identified where this may be the case:

a. Decline in student numbers or other changes to business viability of a course

Where applications and admissions to a course or programme decline or costs of a course rise (due to specialist facilities or materials), viability of a course may no longer be possible where resource needs exceed income.

b. Institutional insolvency

Where the longer-term financial performance of the institution in terms of income and cash reserves appeared to threaten the overall institutional operation.

c. Loss of facilities

Loss of or change to facilities which would compromise course delivery.

d. Loss of specialist teaching or expertise

Some areas of highly specialist study can be affected by staff departures and the difficulty of recruiting replacement staff.

e. Loss of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) trusted status and loss of international students

Failure to comply with UKVI regulations or meet key performance indicators as a trusted provider can lead to loss of status. Where this would be the case, failure to recruit international students would affect the viability of courses which have significant numbers of international students studying on them.

f. Student withdrawal or failure to progress

High levels of student withdrawal or failure to progress can be indicative of inappropriate admissions or student dissatisfaction or problems with teaching and could ultimately lead to course closure.

g. Global Pandemic

A pandemic such as COVID 19 that requires national and local lockdowns, national and international travel restrictions, and the ability to work and learn in close proximity to others severely restricted. If the highest level of restrictions was in place for a prolonged period, the ability to deliver our programmes would be a risk.

h. Failure to gain Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs) after probationary period

This would be when after undergoing a three-year probationary period with probationary DAPs that the OfS does not award full powers and the Institute would have to source a validating partner.

3. Our assessment of risk

Overall, we regard the likelihood of these risks materialising as **LOW** for the following reasons:

a. Decline in student numbers or other changes to business viability of a course

Application rates and recruitment of students are subject to a range of influences and it is reasonable to plan for changes to existing patterns. However, we continuously monitor application rates and patterns and would usually cease to offer or modify provision in advance of soliciting applications and the commencement of study.

b. Institutional insolvency

Financial health is monitored as part of funding arrangements and associated business planning and scrutiny and is externally audited. The Institute has a history of financial prudence and the reporting of operating surpluses.

c. Loss of facilities

Whilst we have specialist facilities, they are concentrated on a single campus and not subject, therefore to higher split site costs. We either own, or are the beneficial owner of, all of our buildings, and therefore cannot be subject to increased lease or rental costs or loss of buildings because of termination of contract. The maintenance of the facilities to the appropriate industry

standards is ensured through a rolling renewal and maintenance programme. Flexibility in the nature and delivery of the core skills associated with the facilities means risk is limited.

d. Loss of specialist teaching or expertise.

None of our areas are high level niche or specialist such that they cannot be managed by usual departure and recruitment patterns. Our provision in the Performing Arts has a relatively large community of practitioners and educators on whom we can draw for staff recruitment.

e. Loss of UKVI trusted status and loss of international students

We have had trusted status since its inception and have always met appropriate standards. Whilst the proportion of international students as part of the whole student community is high, the actual numbers involved (given our small specialist scale) means that we are able to offer a personalised service supporting international students and visa failure rates are low.

f. Student withdrawal or failure to progress

We have rigorous admissions processes and high levels of application to limited places on several programmes which means that in most cases successful applicants are capable and motivated students and this means that our progression and retention rates are very good. Where students are at risk of withdrawal or failure our Learning Guidance Tutor system and Student Support Service is effective in recovering students' positions. We have good performance indicators in this area as demonstrated by our TEF Silver status (Gold Outcomes). We have a rigorous annual monitoring process (see 4b below) which would highlight at the earliest opportunity issues relating to course quality and remedial action would be taken before an issue became critical and threaten course continuity.

g. Global Pandemic

Like all UK HEI's the Institute has the capability to deliver blended learning to a certain degree. The COVID 19 pandemic demonstrated that the Institute could deliver programmes effectively.

h. Failure to gain Degree Awarding Powers after probationary period

We hope to be granted probationary degree awarding powers in Academic Year 2025-26. It is highly unlikely that these will be later revoked or not extended beyond the probationary period. We note that this is extremely unlikely to happen without warning, giving us time either to avoid loss of the powers by

working to an action plan agreed with the Office for Students, or to put in place alternative arrangements.

The Institute would be committed to finding a mitigating solution which does not disadvantage students.

The Institute has already been in discussion with another provider who in the unlikely event of us not achieving DAPs would agree to validating our full portfolio of awards. It must be noted that the Institute assesses this risk to be minimal.

4. Other reasons for the assessment of risk being LOW

4.1 Risk assessment, value for money policies and business reviews

The Senior management Team and delegated Council bodies review a HE risk register which includes business critical areas such as student recruitment and UKVI trusted status and attention to its conclusions and progress on risk mitigation are audited externally. We review cost centre analysis annually and regularly consider value for money in all areas of operation. The risks identified in this plan are attached in the Institute Risk Assessment at appendix B.

4.2 Annual monitoring

An Institute Annual Monitoring Report (IAMR) is produced following individual reports produced by each discipline and reviews progress against key indicators and approved strategies such as the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. The report is produced by the Head of Quality and reviewed by the Principal and CEO and the Teaching and Learning Board.

4.3 Quality Indicators

Our strong performance in the following areas supports our overall risk assessment rating:

- **HEFCE Provider Review**

Our 2016-17 outcome:

Financial sustainability (good management and governance matters):

Not at higher risk - No action required

Quality and standards matters:

Meets requirements - No action required

- **QAA Higher Education Review**

Our 2015 review outcome concluded that:

The quality and enhancement of its student learning opportunities, and the quality of information about its learning opportunities all meet UK expectations.

The review identified a number of examples of good practice. These included:

- *The comprehensive range of individually tailored and flexible support provided for students; and*
- *The strategic approach to the use of deliberate and collaborative interdisciplinary practice, which prepares students for long term employability.*

- **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)**

Our 2023 outcome:

Gold for Student Outcomes

Silver for Student Experience

Silver Overall

The TEF evaluation panel considered our submission in relation to the TEF criteria and its judgement reflects, in particular, evidence of:

- *Outstanding levels of challenge and stretch attained through collective and cross disciplinary learning;*
- *An exemplary culture of personalised provision and attainment for ensuring that all students actively commit to their learning, including community learning, small-group teaching, and clearly defined and strategic approaches to induction and pastoral support;*
- *A strategic focus on vocational and professional education, demonstrated by a rigorous approach for ensuring that students attain the skills most highly valued by the Creative Industries;*
- *An exemplary simulated employment environment in which masterclasses, mock auditions, placements and public performances ensure students are frequently and consistently stretched to achieve highly;*
- *The strategic use of teacher-practitioners to frequently engage students with developments from the forefront of scholarship and professional practice, including collaborative work between students and professionals on projects throughout programmes; and*

- *Consistent use of substantial physical and digital resources of the highest quality, including the development of online learning platforms and broadcast and event platforms for showcasing student work.*

- **CDMT and James PSRB accreditation**

During academic year 2022-23 the Institute revalidated all the programmes of study and alongside this revalidation sought reaccreditation from two professional bodies. CDMT and James both undertook reviews and produced favourable reports resulting in successful reaccreditation.

5. Actions to be taken and protection for students in the event of a risk materialising

In the rare event of us discontinuing a course we have a commitment to teach out affected courses or as appropriate (and by agreement) students would be transferred to another appropriate course within the Institute portfolio.

We have terms and conditions for the acceptance of offers (see Appendix A) which lay out the specifics of refunds, reimbursements and timescales.

The provision of funds to cover the protections of the terms and conditions as detailed in Appendix A will be from cash reserves (which were £3.9m as at 31st July 2023) and contingency allowances in annual budgets.

As we are a collaborative partner of and our degrees are awarded by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), students are also covered by the LJMU Student Protection Plan which states:

Section 1

The risk that the University will no longer be able to deliver programmes to students at partners is low. The University enters into partnerships following extensive due diligence, and with binding agreements on the governance and operation of the partnerships. These agreements include provision for teach-out and student protection (see section 2 below).

Section 2

The University's Collaborative Provision Agreements state that in the event of termination of Agreement between the University and a Partner, the parties would ensure that students already enrolled on the course would be given the opportunity to complete it within the expected timeframe. The University and the Partner will work together to ensure that any such students are able to complete the course.

In circumstances in which teach out is not possible (following mitigation so far described) we would facilitate transfer to other providers, including support and advice, and the transfer of credit.

6. How the plan works in practice and how it is communicated

We feel that the student protection plan should be made available early in the application process and reinforced at the different stages of the process up to and including enrolment. The following actions will be:

- The student protection plan will be made available as part of the application information (alongside the application on LIPA's online portal and course information).
- Students would be reminded and offered a further opportunity to review the information when offer letters are sent out.
- Pre-enrolment information, our Spring Pack, will then also carry the information for students who have accepted places.
- At enrolment students will be asked to declare that they have read and understand both the provision for protection and wider terms and conditions.
- The Student Protection Plan will be presented and reviewed with staff as part of our staff development programme. Documentation will be made available on our HE Staff intranet page.
- Student formal consideration will occur at the Student Voice Forum (*formerly Institute Student Advisory Board*) which is comprised of student representatives.
- The plan will be reviewed annually at the May Institute Quality Committee and Student Voice Forum and comments subsequently reviewed by the Senior Management Team.

In the event of the Student Protection Plan needing to be implemented, affected students would in the first instance be communicated to through an extraordinary meeting of the Programme Board. Following the Programme Board meeting a formal letter would be sent to affected students with a specified timescale for comment and feedback with information on proposed arrangements for changes to provision. Students would be notified usually 60 days ahead of change and a minimum of 28 days would apply.

7. Complaints and Appeals

In the event of student dissatisfaction at the implementation of the Student Protection Plan, we have a Student Complaints Procedure which is made available to students via the student intranet and quality team.

The Student Complaints Procedure has been reviewed and enhanced in light of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) Good Practice Framework and in consultation with our Student Representatives and Heads of Disciplines.

Appendix A: LIPA terms and conditions

Terms and Conditions

We will endeavour to deliver courses in accordance with the descriptions set out in the prospectus and fact files. Any course charts are indicative and may be subject to change. We are largely dependent on funds that need to be managed in a way that is efficient and cost effective. We therefore reserve the right to make variations to the content of courses and/or method of delivery; to discontinue, merge or combine courses if we consider that such action is necessary in the context of our wider purpose. We also make changes to our programmes to reflect the changing needs of the arts and entertainment industries.

In the rare event of us discontinuing a course we will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative, failing which, we will usually give four weeks' notice prior to the start date for the course and any fees paid will be refunded in full.

Fees paid by an individual, through a loan from the Student Loans Company, or by a sponsor will be treated in the same way and fully reimbursed.

Where other costs such as travel and accommodation have been unavoidably and irreversibly incurred, these will be reimbursed, subject to appropriate documentation being supplied.

Where a bursary has been paid this will be honoured in full with no repayment necessary.

In addition to refunds, compensation will be paid for disruption and inconvenience caused by withdrawal or suspension which will be no less than 10% of costs (excluding tuition fees).

Abiding by our rules and regulations

A condition of enrolment is that you abide by, and submit to, our rules and regulations as contained in our student handbook. These rules and regulations are subject to amendment from time to time. Extracts from the current Student Handbook can be obtained on request from our admissions team.

Payment of fees

Tuition and registration fees are, in general, due for payment in full by the student on or before enrolment. First year International and Foundation Certificate Course students are required to pay a deposit amounting to £2,000 on or before 31 May each year.

UK students who do not take up their Student Loan entitlements are required to pay their fees in full on or before enrolment.

Students in receipt of UK or overseas Government loans, Federal Aid or sponsorship from a recognised source, may pay their fees in accordance with the terms of the receipt of their funding arrangements. Written confirmation of this funding must be provided on or before enrolment.

Other students who cannot or do not access the public funding sources available to them may pay their fees in two equal instalments only if they provide a letter of guarantee from a party acceptable to the Institute.

Postgraduate students are typically required to pay a £2,000 deposit payable by 31 May or within three weeks of their offer letter, whichever is later. This may not apply if they are receiving an authorised student loan, in which case they may be eligible to pay a reduced deposit.

Fees may be paid using debit or credit cards via our authorised electronic payment platforms (Flywire and WPM).

Exceptions to the fees policy must be approved by the Head of Accounting in advance of any discussions with the student concerned.

Withdrawals

We reserve the right to retain up to 50% of any deposit paid where a withdrawal of acceptance of an offer is received after 31 July in the year of entry.

All first year and postgraduate students are allowed a four week cooling off period from the date of enrolment in which to decide if they wish to continue with their studies or withdraw from their course. There is no cooling off period for second and third year undergraduate students.

For those enrolling before the start of term, the Institute considers the cooling off period to be induction week and the first three weeks of teaching.

All withdrawing students will be charged an administration fee, currently £100 plus a proportion of the fee payable by the student calculated on a pro-rata basis on the number of weeks of study undertaken.

Students who are receiving US Federal Financial Aid will be refunded as per US Department of Education R2T4 regulations.

For students in receipt of a SLC tuition fee loan we will restrict the amount we require you to pay to us to the amount the SLC will loan you.

Students who require a student visa should note that the Institute is obliged to notify UKVI if a student has multiple unauthorised absences, fails to enrol on their course or terminates their studies.

Please retain a copy of these terms and conditions for your records.

Appendix B Risk and Impact Assessment

Risk No.	Key Risk	High-Level Causes and Effects	Controls / mitigations	Impact / severity (I)	Likelihood (L)	Rating (I x L)	Action / context
a	Decline in student numbers or other changes to business viability of a course	Where applications and admissions to a course or programme decline or costs of a course rise (due to specialist facilities or materials), viability of a course may no longer be possible where resource needs exceed income.	Application rates and recruitment of students are subject to a range of influences and it is reasonable to plan for changes to existing patterns. However, we continuously monitor application rates and patterns and would usually cease to offer or modify provision in advance of soliciting applications and the commencement of study.	3 (Moderate)	2 (Low)	6 (Low)	If a course is paused during recruitment the institute would endeavour to help applicants find suitable alternatives at LIPA or within the sector.
b	Institutional insolvency	Where the longer-term financial performance of the institution in terms of income and cash reserves appeared to threaten the overall institutional operation.	Financial health is monitored as part of funding arrangements and associated business planning and scrutiny and is externally audited. The Institute has a history of financial prudence and the reporting of operating surpluses.	5 (Very Serious)	1 (Very Low)	5 (Low)	Sound financial management means that the Institute is in a good position and has a history of reporting of operating surpluses. We would rely upon reserves or lending if needed but this is highly unlikely.

Risk No.	Key Risk	High-Level Causes and Effects	Controls / mitigations	Impact / severity (I)	Likelihood (L)	Rating (I x L)	Action / context
c	Loss of facilities	Loss of or change to facilities which would compromise course delivery.	Whilst we have specialist facilities, they are concentrated on a single campus and not subject, therefore, to higher split site costs. We either own, or are the beneficial owner of, all of our buildings, and therefore cannot be subject to increased lease or rental costs or loss of buildings because of termination of contract. The maintenance of the facilities to the appropriate industry standards is ensured through a rolling renewal and maintenance programme. Flexibility in the nature and delivery of the core skills associated with the facilities means risk is limited.	4 (Serious)	1 (Very Low)	4 (Low)	We have a solid estates management plan and invest in our estate. In addition, we have good relationships with local performing arts spaces and would in the short term be able to facilitate activities off site.
d	Loss of specialist teaching or expertise	Some areas of highly specialist study can be affected by staff departures and the difficulty of recruiting replacement staff.	None of our areas are high level niche or specialist such that they cannot be managed by usual departure and recruitment patterns. Our provision in the Performing Arts has a relatively large community of practitioners and educators on whom we can draw for staff recruitment.	3 (Moderate)	2 (Low)	6 (Low)	We maintain good contacts and networking within the industry and the sector and are confident we could recruit if this ever became necessary.

Risk No.	Key Risk	High-Level Causes and Effects	Controls / mitigations	Impact / severity (I)	Likelihood (L)	Rating (I x L)	Action / context
e	Loss of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) trusted status and loss of international students	Failure to comply with UKVI regulations or meet key performance indicators as a trusted provider can lead to loss of status. Where this would be the case, failure to recruit international students would affect the viability of courses which have significant numbers of international students studying on them.	We have had trusted status since its inception and have always met appropriate standards. Whilst the proportion of international students as part of the whole student community is high, the actual numbers involved (given our small specialist scale) means that we are able to offer a personalised service supporting international students and visa failure rates are low. We have a strong presence recruiting internationally and good results from UKVI audits therefore we are confident our processes are strong and robust.	4 (Serious)	1 (Very Low)	4 (Low)	There may be some Student Experience issues for students not getting the experience of working with international students, but their own studies would not be impacted.
f	Student withdrawal or failure to progress	High levels of student withdrawal or failure to progress can be indicative of inappropriate admissions or student dissatisfaction or problems with teaching and could ultimately lead to course closure.	We have rigorous admissions processes and high levels of application to limited places on several programmes which means that in most cases successful applicants are capable and motivated students and this means that our progression and retention rates are very good. Where students are at risk of withdrawal or failure our Learning Guidance Tutor system and Student Support Service is effective in recovering students' positions. We have good performance indicators in this area as demonstrated by our TEF Silver status (Gold Outcomes). We have a rigorous annual monitoring process which would highlight at the earliest opportunity issues relating to course quality and remedial action would be taken before an issue became critical and threaten course continuity.	4 (Serious)	1 (Very Low)	4 (Low)	We have rigorous and robust processes to support students both personally and academically. Investment in a Mental Health Adviser Post has strengthened our commitment to student wellbeing.

Risk No.	Key Risk	High-Level Causes and Effects	Controls / mitigations	Impact / severity (I)	Likelihood (L)	Rating (I x L)	Action / context
g	Global pandemic	A pandemic such as COVID 19 that requires national and local lockdowns, national and international travel restrictions, and the ability to work and learn in close proximity to others severely restricted. If the highest level of restrictions was in place for a prolonged period, the ability to deliver our programmes would be a risk.	Like all UK HEI's the Institute has the capability to deliver blended learning to a certain degree. The COVID 19 pandemic demonstrated that the Institute could deliver programmes effectively.	3 (Moderate)	2 (Low)	6 (Low)	The Institute has in place the technology to deliver the Programmes remotely should the need arise and is confident in that capability.
h	Failure to gain Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs) after probationary period	This would be when after undergoing a three-year probationary period with probationary DAPs that the OfS does not award full powers and the Institute would have to source a validating partner.	We hope to be granted probationary degree awarding powers in Academic Year 2025-26. It is highly unlikely that these will be later revoked or not extended beyond the probationary period. We note that this is extremely unlikely to happen without warning, giving us time either to avoid loss of the powers by working to an action plan agreed with the Office for Students, or to put in place alternative arrangements. The Institute would be committed to finding a mitigating solution which does not disadvantage students. The Institute has already been in discussion with another provider who in the unlikely event of us not achieving DAPs would agree to validating our full portfolio of awards. It must be noted that the Institute assesses this risk to be minimal.	4 (Serious)	1 (Very Low)	4 (Low)	The Institute has a track record of almost 30years successful provision with its current validating partner. We are confident in our DAPs application but equally have no concerns should we need to move to another validating partner.

RAG Rating	Scores	Context
Green	1-7	Risk area under control and represents no immediate threat or impact.
Amber	8-14	Risk area contains potentially serious risks and needs managing and monitoring, but there is no immediate threat which would have a significant impact.
Red	15 and over	Risk area requires active management as there are risks within it which are potentially very serious and whose impact would be significant.

Score	Impact / severity (I)	Likelihood (L)
1	Insignificant	Very low
2	Minor	Low
3	Moderate	Medium
4	Serious	High
5	Very serious	Very high