

## **Hult Student Protection Plan**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Through the UK's Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) 2017, the Office for Students requires institutions to have in place a Student Protection Plan (SPP) to protect students in the event of their program being closed or other changes that may lead to their inability to graduate from their program.
- 1.2. When you start your journey with Hult we are committed to you being able to complete your studies. We therefore want to assure you that Hult has policies and procedures in place to ensure that you will be given every reasonable opportunity to complete your degree program.
- 1.3. The information in this plan should be read in conjunction with our terms and conditions and the policies within your Student Handbook.

### **2. The purpose of this plan**

- 2.1. Every institution will be aware of the need to ensure that its students are able to complete their program. Hult takes into consideration the risks that impact upon its mission, strategic goals, and student outcomes, both as a UK provider and as an international provider of higher education.
- 2.2. Listed below are some scenarios that are typically considered in regard to the risk of our students being unable to complete their degree program. As noted throughout this document, we consider each and every scenario to be highly unlikely:
  - Loss of our US and UK degree awarding powers
  - Permanent closure of the London campuses
  - Loss of our Tier 4 license from the UK Home Office
  - Our decision to close a program
  - Events that are beyond Hult's control
- 2.3. The purpose of this Plan is, therefore, to ensure transparency in explaining these scenarios, the level of risk related to completion of an enrolled student's degree program, and to highlight mitigating scenarios should any of them need to be invoked.
- 2.4. To visualize the levels of risk identified we have used the RAG (red, amber, green) rating system of low, medium or high risk.

### **3. Loss of our US and UK Degree Awarding Powers**

Low Risk

- 3.1. Hult International Business School undergoes cyclical reviews to assure public confidence in the quality and standards of our provision and ensure that we are operating effectively.
- 3.2. The school was last reviewed for continuing accreditation by both of its primary accrediting bodies in 2017. The UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) conducted its six-year institutional review, and the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) conducted its ten-year institutional review. Both reviews resulted in continuing accreditation, for further periods of six years and ten years respectively.

#### **4. Permanent closure of the London campuses**

Low Risk

- 4.1. Hult International Business School Ltd. (Hult UK) has operated as a UK charity since 2002. It is well financed and student numbers are stable and sustainable.
- 4.2. The school's financial stability and educational quality has been reviewed through its multiple accreditation processes and by our external auditors. There are no plans to close the London campuses.
- 4.3. Should the decision to close a campus arise, we must inform our US accrediting body (NECHE) who may then require us to follow its substantive change process<sup>1</sup> where we would have to justify any proposed changes and seek approval before they could be implemented. Such approval would be contingent on us teaching out all current students or ensuring alternative routes to completion of their degree programs. We are therefore obliged by our US regulator to "*take the steps necessary to assure an orderly transition consistent with the policies and procedures of the Commission.*"<sup>2</sup>

#### **5. Loss of our Tier IV license from the UK Home Office**

Low Risk

- 5.1. Since introduction of the Tier IV sponsorship license, Hult has consistently been above benchmark in complying with maintenance requirements. However, we are mindful of changes to UK legislation that govern allocation of the license. We work closely with UKVI to ensure we maintain our excellent compliance record.
- 5.2. In the unlikely event that Hult is no longer able to sponsor Tier IV visa students to our London campuses, alternative arrangements would be discussed with applicants, where they would be given the opportunity to study a degree program at another Hult campus outside the UK.

#### **6. Decision to close a program**

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<sup>1</sup> NECHE Substantive Change Policy - [https://www.neche.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Pp72\\_Substantive\\_Change.pdf](https://www.neche.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Pp72_Substantive_Change.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> NECHE Standards for Accreditation - [https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation/#standard\\_five](https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation/#standard_five)

Low Risk

- 6.1. Hult is a successful global business school with strong corporate links, and our programs are specifically designed and developed to meet the needs of the business environment.
- 6.2. As a leading provider, we constantly review our provision to ensure it remains current and innovative to the demands of the sector. We may, therefore, close a program where it is deemed no longer relevant to the industry, beneficial to the student, or for other reasons deemed too low in demand.
- 6.3. Where a decision is taken to cease delivery of a program, it is a US accreditation requirement to teach out all students currently on the program or provide alternative means for students to graduate, as well as to reach out to any applicants in our pipeline for future years to offer an alternative program.

## 7. Events that are beyond Hult's control

Low Risk

- 7.1. Events that are beyond the control of Hult, for example a terrorist attack, earthquake, fire, flood, or other force majeure situations will be handled on a case by case basis.
- 7.2. The school operates multiple global campuses allowing us to support students by providing alternative locations to continue their program should any such events occur in London.

## 8. Mitigation Options

- 8.1. If any of the above circumstances arise, students would be offered one or more of the following options through which to complete their degree program (required by our US accrediting body, NECHE).
- 8.2. Completion of the degree program at the London campus is the first and preferred option whenever this is possible.
- 8.3. Completion of the degree program at another Hult campus is the second option.
- 8.4. A third option is that Hult would ensure students are able to transfer to another institution to complete their degree.

## 9. Our refund policy

- 9.1. Our refund policy is listed in the terms and conditions available online<sup>3</sup> and the process to withdraw from a program outlined in our Student Handbook.

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<sup>3</sup> Refund Policy (see under Terms and Conditions) - <https://www.hult.edu/en/legal-privacy/>

## **10. Our Compensation Policy**

- 10.1. Students matriculated in the UK who are unable to complete their degree due to any of the above reasons that are within the school's control, and who have exhausted all mitigation options offered to them as listed above, are entitled to seek reasonable compensation.
- 10.2. In the circumstances described above, the School will consider reimbursement of a student's reasonable costs on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.3. In resolving an appeal for compensation based on the risks highlighted above, consideration will be given to:
  - Whether sufficient action was taken by the school to ensure students had a fair and reasonable opportunity to complete the program.
  - Whether the school's actions have led to a demonstrable loss to the student.
  - Whether the student has met their own responsibility to minimise losses.
  - Whether the school followed its own processes.
  - Alternative arrangements (mitigation options) that were offered to students to minimise loss and whether students took advantage of them.
  - Whether the school communicated with students effectively throughout the process.
  - Whether a compensation payment is the most appropriate way to deal with the issue.

## **11. Implementing the plan**

- 11.1. The Academic Board ensures that the Student Protection Plan is observed.
- 11.2. The Board of Trustees reviews the Student Protection Plan.
- 11.3. Once developed, Hult will work with student representatives to review and maintain its Student Protection Plan.
- 11.4. The Student Protection Plan will be shared with students alongside their Student Handbook prior to commencing the program, with opportunities for discussion during student orientation.
- 11.5. If Hult needs to implement any items in its Student Protection Plan, it will write to students within 14 days with further advice and guidance.