

Ashridge 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 students start their journey with Ashridge, which is strategically aligned to Hult International Business School, the school is committed to them being able to complete their studies. We therefore want to assure you that policies and procedures are in place to ensure that you will be given every reasonable opportunity to complete your degree program with us.
- 1.3. The information in this plan should be read in conjunction with our terms and conditions and the policies within the respective Student Handbook.

2. The purpose of this plan

- 2.1. Every institution will be aware of the risks associated to ensuring a successful outcome of their students on a given program. Ashridge takes into consideration the risks that impact upon the school's mission, strategic goals, and student outcomes, both as a UK and international provider of higher education.
- 2.2. Listed below are some scenarios that are typically considered regarding 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 degree awarding powers
 - Permanent closure of the Ashridge campus
 - Our decision to close a program
 - Events that are beyond Ashridge'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 Degree Awarding Powers

Low Risk

- 3.1. The 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 its primary US accrediting body in 2017, when the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) conducted its ten-year institutional review, resulting in continuation of US accreditation for a further ten years.

- 3.3. The school's UK degree awarding powers are regulated by the Office for Students (OfS).

4. Permanent Closure of the Ashridge Campus

Low Risk

- 4.1. Ashridge Business School has operated as a charity since 1959.
- 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 Ashridge campus.

5. Our decision to close a program

Low Risk

- 5.1. We are 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.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. Where a decision is taken to cease delivery of a program, we commit 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.

6. Events that are beyond Ashridge's control

Low Risk

- 6.1. Events that are beyond the control of the Ashridge, for example a terrorist attack, earthquake, fire, flood, or other force majeure situation, will be handled on a case by case basis.

7. Mitigation Options

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. Completion of the degree program at the Ashridge campus is the first and preferred option whenever this is possible.
- 7.3. Completion of the degree program at another facility is the second option.

8. Our refund policy

- 8.1. Our refund policy is contained within the Student Handbook under the terms and conditions, along with the process for withdrawing from a program.

9. Our Compensation Policy

- 9.1. Students matriculated 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.
- 9.2. In the circumstances described above, the School will consider reimbursement of a student's reasonable costs on a case-by-case basis.
- 9.3. 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.

10. Implementing the plan

- 10.1. The Academic Board will ensure that the student protection plan is observed.
- 10.2. The Ashridge CT Ltd will review the student protection plan.
- 10.3. Once developed, we will work with our student representatives to review our student protection plan.
- 10.4. 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.
- 10.5. If Ashridge needs to implement any items in its Student Protection Plan, it will write to students within 14 days with further advice and guidance.