



Student Protection Plan

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Related Policies and Documents

- Student Refund and Compensation Policy (C3.2)
- Admissions Policy (C1.2)
- Complaints Handling Policy (C1.4)
- Risk Management Policy (E1E2.10)
- OfS Regulatory Framework and Guidance (Condition C3)

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Student Protection Plan

Section 1. Policy Summary

1. This Student Protection Plan (SPP) outlines the measures Mortha Halls of Ivy (MHI) will take to protect students if a risk materialises which could affect the continuation of their studies. It forms part of the College's wider student support and quality assurance framework and demonstrates our commitment to minimising disruption to students' education under all foreseeable circumstances.
2. The Plan identifies key institutional and academic risks, describes mitigation strategies, and sets out how students will be supported and informed if risks become realities. It includes procedures for early communication, transition support, and access to refunds or compensation where appropriate.
3. This document aligns with Condition C3 of the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework, which requires all registered higher education providers to maintain a credible, published student protection plan that can be relied upon by current and prospective students.

Section 2. About This Policy

4. The Student Protection Plan is designed to ensure that Mortha Halls of Ivy (MHI) is prepared to respond effectively to a range of potential risks that may affect the continuation or quality of study for its students. These risks may include, but are not limited to:
 - Programme or campus closure.
 - Loss of key teaching or support staff.
 - Changes to validation or awarding body arrangements.
 - Institutional financial failure.
 - Inability to deliver services to specific groups of students (e.g. international students or students with additional needs).
5. This policy ensures that students are treated fairly and transparently, and that appropriate steps are taken to communicate, consult, and support students during periods of change or disruption.
6. It applies to all higher education students enrolled at MHI and covers all relevant qualifications delivered by or on behalf of the institution, regardless of mode or level of study. The plan is developed in accordance with OfS regulatory requirements and reflects MHI's broader duty of care to its students.

Section 3. Scope and Application

7. This Student Protection Plan applies to:

- All current and prospective students enrolled on higher education programmes delivered by Mortha Halls of Ivy (MHI), including those awarded or validated by external awarding bodies.
- All modes of study (full-time, part-time, on-campus, or blended) and levels of provision (foundation, undergraduate, and any future postgraduate awards).
- All teaching locations, learning centres, or partner-delivered programmes that fall under MHI's responsibility as a provider.

8. The Plan applies in situations where the ability of MHI to deliver a programme or service is at risk, either temporarily or permanently, due to internal or external factors. It applies equally to risks affecting individuals, cohorts, or the wider student body.

9. This policy is not a substitute for other institutional policies such as the Complaints Handling Policy, the Admissions Policy, or the Refund and Compensation Policy, but it should be read in conjunction with them.

Section 4. Definitions

10. To ensure clarity and consistency, the following terms are used throughout this Student Protection Plan:

- **Student Protection Plan (SPP):**
A regulatory requirement set out by the Office for Students (OfS) under Condition C3, requiring all registered providers to set out credible, published arrangements to protect students' continuity of study.
- **Disruption:**
Any unplanned event or circumstance that may affect a student's ability to continue or complete their studies in the expected manner. This may be temporary or permanent, and may affect individual students, cohorts, or the entire student body.
- **Teach-out Arrangements:**
Provision made to allow current students to complete their programme if it is withdrawn or altered significantly, typically using existing staff and resources.
- **Alternative Provider:**
A separate institution or partner organisation to which students may be transferred if MHI is unable to deliver their programme or qualification.
- **Refund and Compensation:**
Financial remedies available to students in the event of material disruption or institutional failure, as set out in the College's Refund and Compensation Policy (C3.2).

Part 1: Legal and Regulatory Framework

11. Mortha Halls of Ivy (MHI) is committed to meeting the expectations of the Office for Students (OfS) under **Condition C3: Student Protection** of the OfS Regulatory Framework. This condition requires all registered providers to have in place and publish a credible Student Protection Plan that:

- Identifies and assesses risks to students' continuation of study.
- Sets out clear, reasonable measures to mitigate those risks.
- Demonstrates how students will be informed, supported, and where appropriate, compensated.
- Is approved by the Governing Council and reviewed regularly.

12. This policy is also informed by the following guidance and principles:

- OfS Regulatory Advice 11: Student Protection Directions.
- Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance on consumer protection law.
- The Higher Education and Research Act 2017.
- The OIA's Good Practice Framework on student complaints and academic disruption.

13. MHI recognises its duty of care to all enrolled students and aims to go beyond minimum regulatory requirements by ensuring that risk management, student communication, and support structures are integrated across institutional operations. The Student Protection Plan is therefore embedded within the College's risk management, quality assurance, and governance frameworks.

Part 2: Operational Framework

Section 5. Risk Identification and Assessment

14. Mortha Halls of Ivy maintains a proactive approach to identifying and mitigating risks that may affect the continuation of study for its students. Risks are reviewed quarterly as part of the institutional risk management process and annually through the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and the Governing Council.

15. The following table summarises the most significant risks and MHI's current assessment of their likelihood and potential impact:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
Permanent closure of the institution	Low	High	Medium	Strong financial planning and monitoring; ongoing compliance with OfS Condition D; full teach-out commitments; partner teach-out options where applicable
Closure of a programme, site, or delivery location	Medium	Moderate	Medium	Regular programme reviews; strategic planning for new provision; contingency planning for relocation or teach-out
Loss of validation or awarding body agreement	Low	High	Medium	Diversified awarding arrangements; regular liaison with awarding bodies; contingency plans for transfer of students or teach-out
Loss of key academic staff or support staff	Medium	Moderate	Medium	Succession planning; cross-training of teams; emergency recruitment pool; third-party service agreements for non-academic roles
Inability to recruit or teach a particular group of students (e.g. SEND or international students)	Low	Moderate	Medium	Inclusive recruitment and delivery planning; alternative support models; early applicant communication; reasonable adjustments policy
Major disruption to service delivery	Medium	High	High	Business continuity and disaster recovery plans;

(e.g. pandemic, fire, cyberattack)				remote delivery protocols; communication plans and student support mechanisms
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16. Risks also include the loss of key non-academic staff, such as in admissions, finance, IT, or compliance, which could disrupt institutional operations. Mitigation includes succession planning, shared service agreements, and cross-training to ensure continuity in essential non-teaching functions

17. Each risk is owned by a senior manager and tracked via the institutional Risk Register. This ensures a dynamic and evidence-led response to changing circumstances, and that potential threats to student continuity are proactively managed.

Section 6. Student Communication and Consultation

18. MHI is committed to early, transparent, and inclusive communication with students if any identified risk threatens the continuation or quality of their studies. Clear mechanisms are in place to ensure that students are not only informed but also consulted where appropriate.

Communication Channels

19. Information about the Student Protection Plan is made available to students through the following routes:

- During induction and orientation activities for new students.
- Through the MHI website and the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- In course handbooks and student support materials.
- Via direct communications (e.g. email or SMS) if any specific risk materialises.

Student Consultation and Agreement

20. When changes are proposed that may significantly affect students (such as course closures or delivery changes), MHI undertakes structured consultation with student representatives. This includes:

- Inviting student input through surveys, focus groups, or meetings.
- Ensuring Student Council representation at Academic Board or Programme Review meetings where changes are discussed.
- Taking student views into account prior to any final decision.

21. Gaining agreement means seeking and considering feedback from student representatives and other stakeholders through structured consultation. Final approval for any significant changes remains with the Governing Council, ensuring that student voice is embedded while governance accountability is preserved.

22. No significant changes are implemented without formal approval by the Governing Council, which considers student feedback as part of its decision-making process. This ensures that the Student Protection Plan remains co-created, transparent, and student informed.

Section 7. Student Support and Transition Arrangements

23. Where a material risk impacts students' ability to continue their studies as originally planned, MHI will act promptly and equitably to minimise disruption and ensure continuity of learning, achievement, and wellbeing.

Initial Response and Notification

24. If any significant disruption occurs, the following immediate actions will be taken:

- Affected students will be contacted within **5 working days** of the risk being confirmed.
- The nature of the disruption proposed next steps, and available support will be clearly communicated.
- A central point of contact (e.g. the Academic Registrar or nominated case officer) will be assigned to each affected student or cohort.

25. In addition to the initial five-day notification, students will receive regular updates through email and the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at least once per week until the disruption is resolved or a permanent arrangement is confirmed

Academic and Welfare Support

26. MHI will offer the following support measures as appropriate to the situation:

- Academic advice and learning support (including alternative assessment arrangements, module substitutions, or adjustments).
- Pastoral and mental health support via the Student Support team.
- Access to digital learning platforms or facilities if physical access is affected.
- Special arrangements for students with protected characteristics or additional needs.

Teach-Out and Transfer Options

27. In the case of programme or institutional closure, MHI will:

- Honour its commitment to “teach out” existing students wherever possible.
- Where teach-out is not feasible, support students to transfer to a comparable programme, either internally or with an external partner.
- Issue clear and timely transcripts or exit qualifications where students are unable to complete their programme.

28. Support will be tailored to individual circumstances, and students will be fully informed of their options throughout the process.

Section 8. Refunds and Compensation

29. Mortha Halls of Ivy recognises that in some cases, disruption to a student's education may require financial remedies. This may include the refund of tuition fees, compensation for additional costs incurred, or both.

Policy Framework

30. All refund and compensation matters are governed by MHI's separate **Student Fees Refund and Compensation Policy (C3.2)**. This policy sets out:

- The types of disruption that may trigger eligibility for a refund or compensation.
- The process by which students may apply for a refund or compensation.
- The criteria and documentation required for each case.
- The appeals process where students are dissatisfied with the outcome.

Financial Planning

31. MHI's financial forecasts and contingency planning consider the potential costs associated with implementing this Student Protection Plan, including refund and compensation liabilities. This ensures that the College remains able to meet its obligations without jeopardising financial sustainability.

Access and Transparency

32. The Refund and Compensation Policy is:

- Published on the College website.
- Referenced in course handbooks and student financial information.
- Available in alternative formats on request.

33. Whenever a material risk affects students, all communications will explicitly reference the Refund and Compensation Policy (C3.2), ensuring that students are fully aware of their rights and how to access them. Students are signposted to this policy in any communication concerning disruption to their studies.

Section 9. Governance Oversight

34. Oversight of the Student Protection Plan rests with the Governing Council of Mortha Halls of Ivy, which is ultimately responsible for ensuring the College meets its regulatory obligations and protects the interests of its students.

35. Governance Responsibilities Include:

- Approving and regularly reviewing the Student Protection Plan.
- Receiving termly updates on the institutional risk register, including risks related to student continuity.
- Reviewing reports on the implementation of teach-out arrangements, student transitions, or compensation processes.
- Monitoring feedback and trends from complaints and appeals related to academic disruption.
- Ensuring that student voice is embedded in all major decisions that may affect continuation of study.

Operational Oversight

36. The **Academic Registrar** has day-to-day responsibility for:

- Coordinating implementation of the SPP when required.
- Liaising with awarding bodies, partner institutions, and external regulators.
- Ensuring affected students receive timely communication, guidance, and support.

37. Relevant policies (e.g. Refund and Compensation, Complaints Handling, Risk Management) are reviewed annually in conjunction with the SPP to ensure continued alignment.

Section 10. Review and Publication

Review Cycle

38. This Student Protection Plan is reviewed annually as part of the College's policy and compliance review cycle. The review process considers:

- Changes to the regulatory framework, especially OfS guidance under Condition C3.
- Internal changes to programme structures, awarding body relationships, or student demographics.
- Feedback from students, staff, and external partners.
- Lessons learned from any past disruption events or implementation of this Plan.

39. The review is led by the Academic Registrar and is submitted to the Governing Council for approval.

Version Control and Access

40. The most recent version of the Student Protection Plan is:

- Published on the Mortha Halls of Ivy website under the "Student Policies" section.
- Provided to students during induction and referenced in handbooks.
- Available in hard copy from Student Services and in alternative formats on request.

41. All previous versions are archived by the Governance Office and may be shared on request for transparency.