



University Centre Harlow at Harlow College

Student Protection Plan 2025/26

The aim of this plan:

A student protection plan is required by the Office for Students (OfS). The OfS requires that this sets out what students can expect to happen should a programme of study, campus, or institution close - [Student protection plans - Office for Students](#). The purpose of a plan is to ensure that students can continue and complete their studies, or can be compensated if this is not possible.

University Centre Harlow (UCH) based at Harlow College and Stansted Airport College is a higher education provider that is registered with the OfS and, consequently, must have a student protection plan in place. The University Centre is expected to collaborate with students to review and refresh the plan on a regular basis.

Assessment of the risk of closure or suspension of a programme of study

Harlow College is a large college and is a well-established institution. Harlow College has maintained a 'good' financial health rating with the ESFA for the last five years. Financial planning for 2025-26 shows this will be maintained. The College has multiple funding streams to mitigate against this risk, so any decline in one stream has a less significant effect. The College is ever resourceful in sourcing new funding streams, again to mitigate against any potential risks. Consequently, it is very unlikely Harlow College and the University Centre would have to close or suspend a programme of study on financial grounds alone, unless this was a decision the College chose to make for strategic or other reasons.

At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the College and University Centre implemented a detailed plan to manage its operations, including its ability to deliver teaching to, and support students as a result of the impact of the pandemic. While the situation has returned to business as usual, nonetheless, we remain vigilant and ready to respond to the changing demands of any future situation. The University Centre has a number of procedures in place to monitor the situation and to identify any changes to the delivery of teaching and support to students, in particular those that might be considered material changes. Where any change is identified, the University Centre has an agreed procedure for the communication of such changes to students including via its website, learner teaching and management systems e.g. Showbie and email.

The delivery teams and academics, as well student support services, have defined roles in ensuring such communications are comprehensive, timely and accurate.

The rights of students in relation to any material change are outlined below. Should the University Centre identify a material change that does not fall under any of the categories listed, it will inform students accordingly.

How would I be affected if the University Centre wanted to close or suspend my programme of study?

Usually, a programme of study would not be closed or suspended until all students studying that programme had graduated. We will continue to provide you with the same level and quality of teaching until graduation. In the unlikely event the University Centre wanted to close or suspend a programme before all its students have graduated, we will only do so if all students on the programme agree. We would offer you a place on a similar programme at the University Centre provided one exists and the quality of your learning experience is not affected. If there is no alternative programme at the University Centre, we would work with other universities to offer you a place on a comparable programme at another institution. If you did not want to take up any of these opportunities and wished to continue and complete your programme at the University Centre, then you would be able to do so.

See our website for the relevant policies on closing or suspending a course:

- Fee Policy and Students Terms and Conditions FE&HE
[Fee-Policy-and-Student-Terms-and-Conditions-25-26.pdf](#)
- Higher Education Student Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy (to include Widening Participation)
[HE Student Recruitment, Selection & Admissions Policy](#)

What about fees and costs? Would I get any compensation?

If you complete your studies at the University Centre then you would be unable to apply for compensation as you would have completed a programme of study. If we arrange for you to complete a programme at another university, we will only compensate you for any tuition or maintenance costs at your new university that are higher than the amounts you would have paid to UCH, plus any reasonable costs relating to moving to live at your new university.

- If we are forced to close or suspend a programme before you have completed it, and we have not been able to arrange for you to complete your studies elsewhere, then we will consider claims for compensation which could include: refunds of tuition fees that you have already paid to us for your programme of study and for which you have not received a qualification
- travel costs if you have to undertake extra travel
- continuing to pay any bursaries we have agreed to pay to you
- payments on an individual basis to recognise the time spent on a programme which will no longer lead to a qualification

If the University Centre wishes to close or suspend a programme of study and is seeking your consent, we may offer you a payment as an incentive to agree to the closure. This payment could include some of the elements listed above. However, you would still have the right to complete your studies instead of accepting the payment.

How do students know about the student protection plan?

- The student protection plan is published on our website
- All new students are made aware of the student protection plan at their induction
- All current students are made aware of the plan when they re-register at the University Centre each year through their induction

How do students and the University Centre make sure the student protection plan is followed and kept up to date?

- The student protection plan is reviewed annually by the Quality and Standards Committee (which includes student representation)
- The HE Student Reps that attend the Staff Students Liaison Committee are invited to take any recommendations for changes to the student protection plan via the Quality and Standards Committee
- Committees and staff involved in any proposals to close or suspend programmes use the student protection plan in their work
- If we need to use the Student Protection Plan because of a decision to close or suspend a programme of study, we will notify students who are affected individually. Additionally, consultation may take place through the relevant learning community forum. The HE Student Reps will be fully involved so that they can provide independent advice and support to affected students.

Complaints about the Student Protection Plan

If you have a complaint regarding the Student Protection Plan then you can raise it through the Harlow College complaints procedure located on our website.

TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION
Date Approved: 19 June 2025 (Standards & Curriculum Committee)
Review Date: June 2026
Author/Responsibility: Deputy-Principal with responsibility for Quality
Equality Impact Assessment: TBA
<p>List of related policies, procedures and other documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee Policy and Students Terms and Conditions FE&HE • Higher Education Student Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy 2025-2027 (to include Widening Participation)
<p>Complaints: If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Complaints Policy</p>
<p>Monitoring: The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by the Deputy Principal.</p>
<p>Easy reading: To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact HR Services</p>