

Student Protection Plan 2024 to 2026

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Overview

Inconvenient Excellence: the case for Marjon 2030

For over 180 years, Marjon staff and students have sought to make a difference for individual lives and communities. Our founders acted outrageously, challenging entrenched inequity by providing education for those on the very margins of society. Criticised for their work, our founders refused to apologise for the ‘inconvenient excellence’ that was perceived by many, and this spirit of disruptive ambition is a hallmark of our new strategy, Marjon 2030. Plymouth Marjon University has a critical role to play in addressing inequity, raising aspiration and providing graduates to fill higher level skills gaps.

Our response is Marjon 2030 and our ambitions are clear. By 2030 we will have extended our reach and influence geographically and be the leading provider of high-quality teaching, learning opportunities, research and knowledge exchange for professional, public services and community facing sectors. Our graduates will be sought-after practitioners, thinkers, problem solvers and leaders. They will be skilful in bringing innovative and digitally led approaches to disrupt, inspire and improve the places where they live, work and play. We are also ambitious for our community-facing facilities and services and by 2030 the University will be fully established and recognised as a valuable anchor institution for the north of our city.

What is a Student Protection Plan?

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires universities to have a Student Protection Plan (Plan) to safeguard students’ interests in the event of material changes, such as major course alterations, suspensions, closures, or even institutional closure. Plymouth Marjon University’s (Marjon) Student Protection Plan for 2024–2026 outlines the steps we will take to protect students interests and ensure your studies continue if such changes occur.

In brief, the Plan explains:

- **What changes are covered:** It specifies the types of changes that fall under the Plan and those that do not.
- **Impact on your studies:** It details how these changes might affect your studies and the risks to their continuity.
- **Likelihood of risks:** It provides an assessment of how likely these risks are to occur, which may vary by course or study location.
- **Preventive actions:** It outlines the measures we are taking to reduce the chances of these risks happening.
- **University response:** It describes the steps the University will take if the Plan is activated to ensure the continuity of your studies.
- **Support and communication:** It explains how we will inform and assist you, and your options for refunds or compensation if continuing your studies is not possible.

Student Protection Measures

At Marjon we are dedicated to helping students (you) achieve the best academic outcomes from your studies. We reserve the right to make necessary adjustments that improve educational quality while aiming to keep changes minimal. Occasionally, unforeseen events may require material changes to modules or programmes. Changes to programmes will be communicated as early as possible, with clear information and options. We will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption and protect your studies. The measures outlined in this Plan provide an initial framework for supporting you if significant changes impact your studies. In such cases, we will also develop a specific action and communication plan tailored to the affected students' needs. These protective measures supplement your statutory rights, which remain unaffected by this plan.

If changes or closures occur, we will take the following actions to safeguard your education:

- **Teaching-out:** Ensuring you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements.
- **Exit awards and certification:** Providing formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.
- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.

Marjon strives to deliver our educational services as promised, adapting curriculum to reflect the latest subject expertise. If material changes are needed, we will notify and consult with you in advance. If you find the changes unsatisfactory, you will have options to withdraw, transfer to another course, or move to a different provider with guidance and support. For minor changes not covered under the Student Protection Plan, but which significantly differ from your expectations, you may use the Complaints Procedure or explore remedies under consumer or contract law.

Which Students does this Plan Protect?

All students registered for Marjon awards are covered by this Student Protection Plan. However, the plan does not apply to students who choose to withdraw from their studies or whose registration is terminated due to issues such as conduct, academic performance, fitness to practice, visa compliance, or non-payment of fees.

Marjon collaborates with several partner institutions, ensuring all collaborative partnerships are carefully approved and regularly monitored. This process assures that our partnerships remain strong, sustainable, and focused on delivering a high-quality student experience. Partner institutions registered with the Office for Students (OfS) have their own Student

Protection Plans. However, we are committed to supporting these partners and all students registered on courses leading to a Marjon award. If you are studying at a partner institution, you are formally a Marjon student and are covered by this plan. Marjon would work closely with the partner institution to minimise any disruption and implement solutions to ensure you can continue your studies without significant impact.

What is Covered by the Student Protection Plan?

We are committed to being open and transparent about any risks to the continuity of your course and the steps we take to mitigate those risks. Our Student Protection Plan outlines how we will support you if specific events trigger the Plan, ensuring your studies continue with minimal disruption. Below is an overview of events covered and not covered by the Plan.

Events Covered by the Plan (Material/Major Changes)

- **Changes to your course:** Significant changes, such as the removal or addition of core modules or loss of accreditation.
- **Course closure or suspension:** If your specific course is closed or temporarily suspended.
- **Campus or location closure:** If your course is primarily taught at a location that is closed.
- **Inability to provide the course:** If the University can no longer deliver your course for reasons such as:
 - Ceasing operations or exiting the higher education market, including mergers with other institutions or loss of degree-awarding powers.
 - Losing our student sponsor licence, affecting international student recruitment and registration.
 - Disruptions with a delivery partner (e.g., franchised courses, joint awards, or Degree Apprenticeships) that prevent your course from continuing.
 - Significant disruptions to essential services, resources, or support, such as those caused by industrial action, IT issues, or a pandemic, which materially impact your education and experience.

Events Not Covered by the Plan (Minor Changes)

The Plan does not apply to minor adjustments or routine improvements to your course. These minor changes are part of the normal process of enhancing the quality of your education and are not considered disruptions that trigger the Student Protection Plan. They include:

- Adjustments to course design, delivery, or content based on student feedback, examiner reports, or accreditation requirements.
- Changes to optional modules, module content, assessment formats, or delivery modes.
- Timetable changes, including room or building allocations.
- Changes to research supervision arrangements.

Publication, Timescale and Review of the Student Protection Plan

This Student Protection Plan, approved by the Office for Students (OfS), applies to the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 academic years. This period aligns with the initial implementation of the Marjon 2030 strategy, including delivery of our annual strategic priorities.

Annual Review and Future Protection: The Plan will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure ongoing protection for students whose studies extend beyond 2025/2026. The next review is scheduled for spring 2026 and will be conducted by the Teaching, Learning and Academic Quality Committee. The revised Plan will then be submitted for approval to the Senate in preparation for the 2026/2027 academic year and beyond. These committees include representatives from both staff and students to ensure a balanced and inclusive approach.

Governance and Compliance: Before submission to the OfS, the Plan is received by the University's Governing Body. The Student Protection Plan is a regulatory requirement under Condition C3 of the OfS framework. Should any of the risks outlined in the Plan arise, the University will notify the OfS and implement the Plan as needed.

Access and Transparency: Applicants, students, and staff can access the Student Protection Plan on the University's website. It is provided alongside other key resources, including:

- [Complaints Procedure](#)
- [Refund and Compensation Policy](#)
- [Regulations for Academic Awards](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Marjon 2030 University Strategy](#)

The website serves as a central resource for both current and prospective students. The different needs of students sharing particular protected characteristics (as defined in the 2010 Equality Act) are considered and addressed through internal mechanisms throughout the academic year.

Risk Assessment and Continuity of Study

Risk management forms an important part of our internal control and corporate governance arrangements and is the responsibility of all staff, irrespective of their role. Risk management is a continual, ongoing process, as risks and uncertainties will change over time and all staff should contribute to the risk management process. Risk management is also about taking opportunities in a risk managed way and we have a responsible approach to risk management, seeking to recognise and manage our exposure to risks in light of our strategy and aligned to our values. In our Risk Management Policy risk is assessed against a continuum of very unlikely, possible, likely or very likely (see table 1). The Board of Governors has overall responsibility and oversight for risk management within the University.

Table 1: Probability of Risk Being Realised Descriptors

Probability	Description
Very Unlikely	Risk has a low probability of occurrence
Possible	Risk may happen
Likely	Risk is more probably than not going to happen
Very likely	Rish has a high probability of happening

We are committed to ensuring you are able to continue your studies with us wherever possible. Whilst we appreciate a number of risks may materialise which could affect continuity to your studies, we have plans in place to support you and to mitigate the impact. We categorise risks across three broad areas: risks to your education and student experience; regulatory and compliance risks; and infrastructure risks. In assessing the level of risk, we consider both the likelihood of an event occurring and the impact of that event on your studies.

Education and Student Experience Risks and Mitigations

Unable to Deliver Material Components of a Programme Risk Scenario

Our programmes are all focused on public services, professional and community sectors. The risk that the University will be unable to deliver essential components of one or more courses is considered very unlikely.

The risk rating accounts for the **specialist nature** of some modules within our programmes and the risk that we lose specialist academic staff and therefore no longer have the specialist knowledge to continue teaching specific modules. While the possibility of a key staff member leaving or being unavailable due to illness does present some risk, this is mitigated through proactive planning and the course viability review we undertook during 2023/2024. Academic Schools conduct business planning and staff resiliency measures to address such challenges.

The risk rating also covers **industrial action** over the duration of your programme. Industrial Action is a temporary show of dissatisfaction by employees that may include strike action or working to rule. We are committed to effective working relationships with staff and addressing concerns within our control where possible in order to mitigate against the risk of Industrial Action. In the event of Industrial Action, Marjon has well-developed guidance that is activated to co-ordinate and manage the response to, and our communications about, Industrial Action to ensure that we make every effort to mitigate and limit any disruption to

our students. Our guiding principle is to undertake an assessment of the impact on a module-by-module basis and take actions to ensure that learning opportunities are not missed and to ensure you are able to meet your course and module learning outcomes. We also apply mechanisms to ensure that you would not be disadvantaged in your assessment outcomes as a direct result of industrial action.

Marjon is committed to delivering programmes in accordance with the approved Programme Specification and Module Descriptors from the academic year in which a student begins their studies. Whilst it is normal to review the quality and content of courses on a regular basis to support and enhance standards and student outcomes, we have established quality assurance processes to ensure the adherence to regulatory guidance, and the consideration of lead times for implementation of adaptations to courses and modules to ensure there is no detriment to your education and student experience. Where these changes are within our control, these will not be implemented without your prior consent. Where such changes are driven by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) requirements, these will be enacted alongside an appraisal of mitigation options where required. However, during a programme's duration, minor amendments may be made to enhance quality, meet accrediting body requirements, or respond to student feedback.

If in-year changes to programme content are necessary, the University follows its established Programme and Module Modification Processes and Procedures to ensure quality and student involvement. Key points include:

- **Approval process:** All modifications are approved by the University Modification Forum on behalf of the [Teaching, Learning, and Academic Quality Committee](#). No amendments are implemented without formal approval.
- **Student consultation:** The University consults with students before making minor modifications to programmes as part of its quality assurance process. This may involve discussions during lectures or Programme Voice Partnership meetings. Evidence of student consultation is submitted with each modification request to the University Modification Forum.
- **Minimising impact:** Changes are restricted to the minimum necessary to enhance the student experience. These may include adjustments to assessment patterns, module learning outcomes, content, or modes of delivery.
- **Limits on modifications:** No more than 60 credits per academic level or 80 credits per year may be modified. Over the programme's validation cycle (6 years for home provision, 5 years for collaborative provision), modifications are capped at 120 credits. Exceeding this threshold triggers an early revalidation.
- **Major changes:** Major changes, such as adjustments to Programme Learning Outcomes or Programme Aims, will not be made without triggering early revalidation.
- **Early revalidation process:** If early revalidation is necessary, students already enrolled in the programme will be "taught out" on their existing programme to ensure continuity and minimal disruption.

By adhering to these processes, Marjon ensures any adjustments maintain the quality and integrity of its programmes while prioritising the student experience

Loss of Professional, Statutory, Regulatory or Professional Body Accreditation Risk Scenario

The risk of the University losing accreditation from Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) for its programmes is very unlikely. Marjon holds a broad range of PSRB accreditations and proactively works to maintain them, ensuring alignment with professional standards, requirements, and graduate outcomes.

Accreditation Management: PSRB requirements are embedded into programmes during their validation and revalidation processes to ensure compliance. The Quality and Academic Standards Office maintains a central schedule of re-accreditation cycles for all accredited programmes, with reports from accrediting bodies reviewed by the Teaching, Learning, and Academic Quality Committee. Accredited programmes undergo regular monitoring and review, with any disciplinary or PSRB developments addressed promptly to resolve concerns and maintain accreditation for students and programmes.

In the very unlikely event of accreditation being suspended or withdrawn, the University will take the following steps to protect students:

- **Deliver a modified programme:** Offer a revised version of the programme without the accreditation requirements.
- **Offer alternatives:** Provide students with the opportunity to transfer to another accredited programme at the University.
- **Support transfers:** Assist students in transferring to another institution that offers an accredited programme.
- **Compensation:** Where applicable, compensate students for demonstrable material financial losses caused by disruptions, in line with the University's Refund and Compensation Policy.

Closure or Suspension of an Individual Programme Risk Scenario

The risk that we are unable to deliver one or more of our courses to you is possible. This risk arises from factors such as low enrolment numbers or non-viability from an academic, student experience, or resourcing perspective. At Marjon we continue to attract strong applications and interest, particularly for our programmes focused on public services, professional and community sectors. Our strategy reflects an ambition to expand our reach and impact, and our curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant to evolving subject areas and the needs of our region.

We review the portfolio of taught courses on an annual basis to ensure that they are up-to date, fit-for-purpose and aligned to current and future expectations and student demand. Where a decision to close or suspend a course is taken, this is normally achieved within a defined timeframe in ways that ensure that both students and staff interests are fully

considered to minimise disruption and mitigate the impact on your studies. A Course Viability review was undertaken in academic year 2023/2024 to ensure viability and sustainability of current and future courses, resulting in the withdrawal of a small number of courses from academic year 2024/2025. Limited further course closures are anticipated at this time. All decisions to suspend or close courses are carefully reviewed by the [Academic Strategy, Planning and Partnerships Committee](#). Where, as a result of unforeseen circumstances, it proves necessary for the University to close or suspend a course within a foreshortened timescale (e.g., due to the loss of specialist staff, or the closure of a centre), we will trigger this Plan and communicate with you as quickly as possible to provide appropriate and timely advice and guidance to enable well-informed decisions about your future study options

The risk rating covers **apprenticeship provision**. Marjon has a well-developed infrastructure for ensuring the quality and provision of its apprenticeship portfolio and is therefore confident in meeting the requirements to remain on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR). All apprenticeships include contractual requirements regarding discontinuation, and each includes an agreement between the apprentices (students), employer and University, with the employer responsible for work-based learning opportunities and support. The University proactively engages with both employers and students but is not responsible where the employer fails to meet their apprenticeship obligations and/or ceases trading. Where a business fails, we will make all reasonable efforts to protect and support you to completion of your studies.

For all students the protection measures in place in priority and preference order are:

- **Teaching-out:** In the event of a course closure, our primary aim is to "teach out" programmes for all students. This ensures students can complete their studies at the University without being adversely affected. The quality of academic provision and the student experience will be maintained throughout this period, as far as reasonably practicable. Programme Learning Outcomes and Aims, as outlined in the Programme Specification, will remain achievable for all students.
- **Student transfer:** If "teaching out" is not feasible, students will be offered the option to transfer to a similar programme at the University or to a programme at another institution. In this circumstance we would ensure we provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.
- **Fees refund:** If teaching cannot be completed and no acceptable alternatives are available, the University will consider refunding part or all of the tuition fees, based on the academic credit and progress achieved, in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy.

Applicants to suspended or closed programmes will be notified in line with UCAS deadlines to allow them sufficient time to explore alternative options, either at Marjon or elsewhere. Applicants who have not yet accepted an offer will be contacted after the closure or suspension process has been confirmed. Applicants who have already accepted offers will receive comprehensive information, advice, and guidance to help them make informed decisions. They will be offered the opportunity to transfer to another programme at Marjon or to a programme at another provider.

Our aim is to handle any course suspension or closure transparently and proactively, ensuring minimal disruption and providing students and applicants with the necessary support and options to continue their education successfully.

Compliance and Regulatory Risks and Mitigations

Suspension or Revocation of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence Risk Scenario

The risk of withdrawal of the Student Route for international Students is very unlikely. Marjon is licenced by the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (Home Office) to sponsor international students. This allows the University to recruit, admit and register our international students who require visas for study purposes. Currently Marjon has a small number of International Students applying to study at the university which means if a student is refused a visa, it can have a disproportionate impact on visa refusal rates. Although dispensation in respect of the low numbers involves the potential for not satisfying the refusals percentage threshold this can be discussed with UKVI Home Office where appropriate.

Marjon 2030 outlines our intention to increase the number of international students studying at Marjon and it is part of the annual strategic priorities. The risk continues to be mitigated in this circumstance by working with an experienced third party who has robust agent quality assurance and assurance mechanisms which have been part of the selection process. Additionally, we will undertake regular assurance activity to ensure conditions of the student sponsor license continue to be met.

In the event of suspension of Tier 4 status, the University will take all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to affected students by:

- **Communication:** Contacting current sponsored students within 2 working days of UKVI's decision to suspend or revoke its Tier 4 Sponsor Licence.
- **Student transfer:** Providing assistance to affected students in switching to an alternative provider with Tier 4 status. Existing sponsored students will receive a letter from UKVI giving them 90 days to find another sponsor institution. In this circumstance we would ensure we provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.

If the University's Tier 4 status is downgraded, the University will:

- Work with UKVI to enable enrolled students to be 'taught out' on campus or via distance learning.
- Work with UKVI to allow students already in receipt of a visa sponsored by the University to enrol and commence their studies.
- Offer students the opportunity to postpone their application pending resolution.

Withdrawal of OfS Conditions of Registration or Degree Awarding Powers Risk Scenario

The risk that the University is no longer able to award the qualifications for which its students are registered because the Office for Students (OfS) has varied or revoked the University's registration or degree awarding powers is very unlikely. Marjon achieved the initial conditions for registration with the OfS and complies with the general ongoing conditions. We have a rigorous and robust monitoring framework to identify and manage risks where they arise and regularly engage with and submit reports to the OfS as part of our ongoing registration.

We are confident that the quality and standards of our provision is of a high standard. Quality and standards of provision is maintained by aligning policies and procedures to the UK Quality Code, European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. In addition, the University's Board of Governors have oversight of quality and standards providing assurance of the University's academic governance arrangements. The risk accounts for the potential impact of sector wide financial challenges on our long-term financial viability and sustainability. Primarily these are mitigated by the Financial Strength focus within Marjon 2030 which outlines our determination to reach further and make a bigger social impact whilst also improving our financial strength. Marjon 2030 outlines three clear strategic objectives aligned to financial strength; FS-1. Extend reach and impact through student number growth and diversification, including through academic and employer partners and international student recruitment, FS-2. Develop and embed rigorous digitally enabled finance operations, sound financial literacy and a viable corporate financing strategy and FS-3. Review and optimise our operating model to achieve financial strength, aligning resources efficiently to strategic priorities, working in partnership and leveraging commercial opportunities. These strategic priorities will be monitored and are supported by other measures in place including robust financial controls, effective engagement with external funders/auditors, stress testing of financial projections, a robust transformation plan and our substantial asset base.

The impact if revocation of degree awarding powers did occur would be extreme. It would affect all taught and registered students as Marjon would lose access to its public funding via the Office for Students (and possibly other funders as a direct or indirect consequence), its sponsor licence for sponsoring international students to study in the UK and student finance support (from the Student Loans Company) in the form of tuition fee loans and maintenance support to students.

If the Office for Students withdrew registration, we would apply for designation for teach-out to help you to complete your studies at Marjon if you wished to do so. In this circumstance we will take the following actions to safeguard your education:

- **Teaching-out:** Ensuring you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements.

- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements.
- **Exit awards and certification:** Providing formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.
- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.

Infrastructure Risks and Mitigations

Closure of a Delivery Location Risk Scenario

The risk that the University will be unable to deliver programmes at alternative delivery locations is possible. This risk scenario covers students on both taught programme and registered programmes. Marjon 2030 outlines our commitment to transforming lives, working in partnership to make a lasting impact within our city and region and reflecting our Church of England foundation as an institution committed to the common good. Our priorities are to tackle inequity, to address climate change, and to support the wider community through access to our facilities and services. We value co-design and collaboration, practising inclusivity, harnessing diversity and embracing the power of collective wisdom to challenge, disrupt and innovate for broader societal benefit. A strategic objective is to establish strategic alliances and operational partnership working to challenge and address inequity across our city and region. This means we partner in hard-to-reach areas and try to offer provision where it is needed which increase the likelihood of this scenario. Marjon will endeavour not to close a delivery location or relocate a programme while teaching is underway during an academic year unless in exceptional circumstances.

In the circumstance of closure of a delivery location we will take the following actions to safeguard your education:

- **Teaching-out:** Ensuring you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements. This may include consultation with staff and students to revise timetables to allow all scheduled teaching to take place at the current location.
- **Relocate programmes:** We would relocate teaching delivery to an alternative location, which may if applicable include hiring spaces for programme delivery and / or installing temporary buildings on site
- **Vary delivery mode:** Consider whether alternative delivery methods such as distance learning would be appropriate for any affected student.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements. In this circumstance we would provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.

- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.

Delivery of Academic Partnership Provision Risk Scenario

The risk that delivery of provision by an academic partner may be unable to continue is possible, though mitigated through established processes and oversight.

The University has developed collaborative partnerships both within the UK and internationally, ensuring quality and standards are upheld through:

- **Five-Yearly Review and Revalidation Cycles:** These periodic reviews assess both the partnership, and the programmes offered.
- **Approval and Monitoring Mechanisms:** Partnerships and their programmes undergo thorough approval processes, annual monitoring and regular academic liaison.
- **Strategic Partnership Boards:** These boards oversee strategic developments and partnership quality.
- **Committee oversight:** Academic Strategy, Planning and Partnership Committee maintain oversight of collaborative partnership provision and review any amendment requests and the mechanisms for ensuring quality and standards.

These mechanisms, coupled with close collaboration and oversight, reduce risks to programme delivery. However, external factors affecting partner institutions could still lead to challenges. The University or its partner may terminate a subcontracting arrangement by providing one year's notice, in line with strategic developments, resourcing, or quality and standards considerations. Any decision to terminate will be managed in alignment with Marjon 2030 and will follow established policies and procedures to protect affected students.

Measures to protect students if an arrangement to academic partnership programme delivery is terminated, the University will take the following steps in preferential order:

- **Teaching-out:** Students already registered will continue their studies at the current delivery location wherever possible.
- **Alternative delivery options:** If the current location is unavailable, students may be offered options to relocate to our main campus, attend programmes relocated to alternative locations, including using hired facilities for a flying faculty approach, complete the programme via distance learning.
- **Student transfers:** If alternative delivery is not feasible, the University will assist students in transferring to another programme at Marjon or to another provider. If the academic partner works with another higher education provider to offer programmes, then it may be possible to transfer within the academic partner. In this circumstance we would ensure we provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.
- **Notify applicants:** Applicants will be informed in line with UCAS deadlines, providing them with sufficient time to find an alternative programme either at Marjon or elsewhere.

Through these measures, the University ensures that the interests of current and prospective students in subcontracted programmes are protected, and disruption is minimised.

Institutional Sustainability Risk Scenario

The risk of Institutional Closure is possible. There are a number of risks that could impact on the University's ability to operate as it does now, including the loss or restriction of university status, a pandemic or other unforeseeable event or cancellation of our OfS registration. The risk accounts for the potential impact of sector wide financial challenges on our long-term financial viability and sustainability. Primarily these are mitigated by the Financial Strength focus within Marjon 2030 which outlines our determination to reach further and make a bigger social impact whilst also improving our financial strength. Marjon 2030 outlines three clear strategic objectives aligned to financial strength which will be monitored and are supported by other measures in place including robust financial controls, effective engagement with external funders/auditors, stress testing of financial projections, a robust transformation plan and our substantial asset base. The Board of Governors and University Executive Leadership Team are confident that the University is in a position to respond to sector challenges. The University's Annual Statement can be found on the University's website.

Where the University is no longer able to operate, has decided to cease operating or merged with another provider the University will:

- **Teaching-out:** Where possible implement a process of gradual closure over a specified period, normally no more than 4 years, to allow current enrolled students to complete their studies at the University. The aim is to ensure you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements.
- **Exit awards and certification:** Providing formal recognition of your academic achievements at the University.
- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.
- **Fees refund:** If teaching cannot be completed and no acceptable alternatives are available, the University or acting administrator will consider refunding part or all of the tuition fees, based on the academic credit and progress achieved, in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy.
- **Merger:** In the event that the University was forced to merge with another institution, the University would certify all teaching and learning and negotiate the transfer of courses and/or individuals to appropriate alternative Higher Education providers in order that you have the opportunity to complete your learning as intended. Where this is a full or partial merger with another HEI, the likelihood is that the affected courses would be delivered via the newly created institution arising from the merger. Where this is not possible,

alternative providers would be identified and the transfer of all our registered students would be negotiated. We would ensure that all students would be communicated, consulted and engaged with to explain the situation

Our Commitment to you on Financial Implications

Should it be necessary to activate provisions under this Plan, we will seek to ensure that solutions are tailored to consider the needs of different students. Solutions will be subject to consultation and Equality Impact Assessment. Guided by the principles of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, we will seek to ensure that the proposed protection returns the student to the position that they would have been in had the circumstances not occurred. The University considers refunds and compensation to be a remedy of last resort and is committed to using its best endeavours to ensure all students are able to continue and complete their studies at the University or an alternative provider. Any compensation payments deemed appropriate would consider actual financial loss. Where all reasonable alternative teaching arrangements to enable continuation of study have been exhausted, the University, if fair and lawful, will aim to provide fair and comparable levels of refund or compensation to cohorts of students affected. For further details, please see our Refund and Compensation Policy.

Where the University is unable to protect the continuation of study during the academic year, and unable to offer arrangements at the University or with an appropriate alternative provider, then the University will normally refund tuition fees (or a proportion thereof) and other costs (for example travel costs to visit an alternative provider, accommodation costs and other living costs) incurred in relation to the course on which you are registered. In such cases, fees will be refunded directly to you except where otherwise paid to the University by a Student Loans Company or a sponsor; in those circumstances, tuition fees will normally be refunded to the appropriate organisation.

The University will not normally refund any tuition or other fees, or offer compensation, where it is able to teach out a course except where reasonable adjustments may otherwise be required for individual students. Similarly, the University will not normally refund tuition or other fees where you are supported to transfer to alternative appropriate provision at another provider. If you wish to know more about our refund policy and information relating to tuition fee refunds, then see the University's Refund and Compensation Policy.

The University, where applicable and possible, will compensate any student who due to the disruption of their studies suffers demonstrable material financial loss as per the University's Refund and Compensation Policy which makes provision for:

- Refunds for students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loans Company
- Refunds for students who pay their own tuition fees
- Refunds for students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor
- The payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course

- Commitments to honour student bursaries
- Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to preserve continuation of study
- Compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students have to transfer courses or provider.

Requests for refund or compensation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, considering the particular circumstances of the course closure, your personal circumstances and needs, and the degree of impact. Where it is necessary to consider your individual circumstances, you may be asked to produce documentation to evidence any additional costs that you may otherwise have incurred.

Implementation of the Student Protection Plan

Marjon recognises that any period of uncertainty in relation to the future of a course is a stressful time and will ensure that additional support is provided to you. This will include availability of drop-in support sessions, if possible. You will also have access to the University's Student Support and Wellbeing Services to mitigate longer term emotional impact. If you are already receiving support in relation to known mental health conditions, additional support will be provided, where possible and if required. Care experienced students and estranged students will also be provided with additional support. If you have an Inclusive Learning Plan and are transferring to a new course this will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose. If you are transferring to another institution, we will support you with sharing your own evidence and data, but we will not proactively share that information to them. You will need to take responsibility for engaging with their disability team and support services. If you are considering the option of taking an exit award and possibly entering the employment market earlier than previously planned, you will be able to access our Careers and Employability services to assist you with consideration of your options as well as providing you with the skills to prepare you for job application and recruitment processes (e.g., CV writing and interview practice).

Should our Student Protection Plan need to be implemented we will:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid implementing change during an academic year or making changes close to the start of an academic year.
- Inform our students providing at least 45 days' notice of any material changes to their programme, modules or location of teaching by posting alerts on the Module and Programme page of the virtual learning environment. Where major changes have been made to a programme the University will contact affected students formally in writing.
- Where delivery location has been modified students will be informed formally in writing providing at least 45 days' notice of the change.
- Update our website and presence on UCAS within 2 working days of the decision being made to close or suspend a programme and inform applicants, in writing, of any programme suspension within 2 days of UCAS being notified.

- Where a partner institution through staff changes/ resources is unable to deliver the programme at their premises, at least one full academic year's notice is expected and the partner is expected to bear any expenses related to supporting the students in completing their studies.
- The University will provide all required information, advice, guidance and support to facilitate students in completing their studies.
- The University will fully support students both individually and collectively using the University's established Student Support mechanisms which include Student Support, the Chaplaincy Centre, the Marjon Student Union and Personal Development Tutors. This will include dedicated sessions to explore options, email correspondence and one on one support. Where substantial change resulting in the need for students to move to an alternative provider (for example University closure) the University will arrange independent advice for all affected students.
- The University has an established complaints procedure which students can follow if they are unhappy with the way in which the University implements its Student Protection Plan. The Complaints Procedure forms part of the Student Regulations Framework and is available on the University's website.

Document Administration

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