

PHBS-UK Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: Peking University HSBC Business School UK Campus

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Student protection plan for the period 2021-2023

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. Peking University HSBC Business School - UK Campus (henceforth "the UK Campus" or 'PHBS-UK') is a higher education provider established in the UK in 2018, with its degree awarding power from Peking University which is established in China in 1898 and duly registered with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Therefore, we must have a student protection plan in place.

The UK Campus is expected to collaborate with students to review and refresh the plan on a regular basis.

1. An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students, how those risks may differ based on your students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise.

We have assessed a range of risks to current and potential students at PHBS-UK (referred to henceforth as the UK Campus) and these are outlined below

Institutional failure

The risk that the UK Campus will be unable to operate is very low because our financial performance is robust with appropriate reserves, and we have business continuity plans to deal with major incidents that may lead to the temporary closure of buildings or infrastructure (e.g. fire, technology failure). If there is closure of buildings or entire Campus in Oxfordshire, the UK Campus has a plan to arrange online lectures that enable students to continue their course learning at different places outside the Campus.

Major incidents

The risks of major incidents disrupting services and access to the site is low. We have a range of business continuity plans enabling us to continue to operate in the event of a major incident causing a significant but temporary disruption to our business. These include arrangements to manage individual building closure (severe weather, fire, safety) and operational risks (IT failure). The location and size of our campus reduces overall risk in this regard. Additionally our estates and IT departments continually monitors safety and maintenance to minimize risk and limit the extent of any potential impact.

COVID-19

The Covid-19 creates restriction on travel and on classroom gathering, which is imposed by governments beyond the control of the UK Campus and Peking University. The restriction disrupts normal course teaching in classroom and prohibits travel between China and the UK. The disruption changes the mode of learning from classroom to online lectures. The UK Campus has controlled the disruption by introducing online Zoom lectures to students to continue their courses under those circumstances where travel and classroom teaching are restricted.

We have considered possible scenarios in relation to delivering academic provision, these are outlined below

Course delivery

Individual courses may close as part of normal portfolio management, reflecting changing student and subject focus and we aim to ensure that all closures, along with the approval of new and replacement courses, are managed through a detailed planning and approval process which requires us to ensure that current students are able to complete their studies. The risk that we are no longer able to deliver current programmes (postgraduate) in the next three years is low and subject to well-established portfolio management principles that ensure consideration of existing cohorts and their need for continuity of study.

Withdrawal of an advertised course prior to admission

University courses are promoted and advertised with the expectation of minimum cohort sizes being enrolled, as part of ensuring a strong and relevant student experience. Where recruitment to a particular course is low the course may be withdrawn temporarily or permanently prior to the admission of a new cohort.

Course components (modules) not available:

Our courses comprise modules which are revised and updated regularly to ensure that our courses remain current and appropriate. Specialist optional modules reflect the professional expertise of staff and it is possible that staff will leave and we may need to withdraw a module. This would only affect optional modules.

Accredited courses

The risk that we are unable to deliver programmes subject to external accreditation is low, but is linked to our ability to continue to meet the requirements of the accrediting bodies concerned. Our accredited courses are subject to periodic revalidation and review, with annual monitoring to ensure they continue to meet requirements of accreditation. The risk principally affects areas where courses deliver professional registration status (or equivalent). The UK Campus maintains close oversight of all accreditation activity. If an increased level of risk is identified, specific action is taken to ensure we continue to meet the external requirements. There is a strong expectation that we will continue to be able to meet the requirements of our external accrediting bodies.

Partnership provision

The risk that we are no longer able to deliver programmes offered by our academic partners is low-medium due to factors not wholly within the UK Campus's control, including: the financial circumstances of the academic partner, the strategic focus of the academic partner, contractual renewal of partner arrangements. The UK Campus maintains close oversight of its partnership arrangements, within the UK and overseas, with rigorous approval and monitoring processes, including periodic re-approval of the partner organisation, overseen by senior faculty. The UK Campus thus has effective processes in place for identifying and managing this risk.

2. The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise

Course closure:

Where a course is recommended for closure authority to close is through the UK Campus' Academic Board and includes a requirement that "existing students will remain on the course they are registered on until they complete regardless of withdrawal status." Alternatively, the students will be offered a

place to continue their course study at Shenzhen (China) Campus if courses in the UK Campus is closed.

Course closure during the admissions cycle:

The UK Campus closely manages recruitment to its courses, with all admissions teams having access to live recruitment data via secure systems, ensuring that information on applications, offers and acceptances are monitored accurately and frequently. This close monitoring allows adjustments to be made to recruitment strategy to any courses where there is a risk of failing to recruit appropriate numbers. In the event that recruitment data leads to the early closure of a course approval must be gained from our Academic Board. All students will be notified and advised of appropriate alternative provision.

Course components (modules) not available:

Our courses comprise modules which are revised and updated regularly to ensure that our courses remain current and appropriate. Where for enhancement or other operational reasons a particular module is withdrawn students are offered alternative modules appropriate to their course of study. Where it is preferable for a student to study a withdrawn module our examination boards are empowered to approve bespoke study arrangements to enable students to complete the agreed programme of study.

Program closure or suspension

In the unlikely event the UK Campus decided to close or suspend a programme before all its students have graduated, the UK Campus would offer the students affected a place on a similar programme at Peking University HSBC Business School – Shenzhen (China) Campus, provided one exists and the quality of the learning experience is not affected.

All programs in the UK Campus have their corresponding programs in Shenzhen Campus, and these programs are approved by PHBS for awarding the degree of Peking University. The students in the UK Campus are protected by Peking University since they are registered as the students of the University. This guarantees students that can find an alternative or corresponding programme to continue their study at Peking University HSBC Business School – Shenzhen (China) Campus, or other Campus of Peking University in China, if the program is closed or suspended before students have completed study in the UK Campus.

Substantial Change to the Course or the Programs

Covid-19 changes the mode of learning for all courses, and the change is regarded as a substantial change to the course, according to our “Policy for course closure, suspension and major change” that defines the place of learning changed or delivery of teaching changed as a substantial change. In the event of such substantial change caused by Covid-19, the UK Campus has prepared our students to take online lectures in Zoom to which the school has subscribed annually and will continue its licence over time.

Covid-19 stops travel between China and the UK, causing another substantial change to our Cross-border study program that requires our students to travel to China to study after their one-year study in the UK Campus. In the event of travel restrictions, the UK Campus has obtained the agreement of the Home Office to extend student visa to allow our students to change their study plan by continuing stay in the UK Campus for their 2nd year study until the travel restriction is removed.

Notifying students of changes to provision

The UK Campus will notify any potential and material changes to their course or programs via email in sufficient time, normally one academic year prior to delivery.

In rare instances where external or operational requirements lead to proposals for changes outside our established timelines, the proposal can only be approved at by the Dean and is dependent on evidence of full consultation with the affected students.

Research supervision

Our policy on postgraduate research supervision ensures that all research students are allocated two supervisors to ensure that there is appropriate expertise and continuity of supervision throughout the student's period of research study. If a supervisor leaves the UK Campus mid-postgraduate research the students are ensured to continue since an external supervisor or PHBS's supervisor from Shenzhen (China) Campus that will be appointed to provide continuity for the students. Where they cannot, or are not seen as suitable, a replacement will be found with the UK Campus.

Partnerships:

The UK Campus is contractually committed, along with its partners, to ensure that obligations or commitments to students are fulfilled in the event of the termination of a partnership agreement.

We mitigate against the failure of partnership provision through close operational links and robust approval processes which include forward planning and financial review. Our contractual arrangements require a period of transition to enable students to complete their study. In the event that a partner advises that it is withdrawing a course they are required to:

- Cease new recruitment from a specified date
- Ensure that continuing students are able to complete their study
- Manage intermitting and repeating students within the overall timeline for teaching-out, providing bespoke tutorial support for non-available elements of provision.

Students may also be offered the opportunity to transfer to another provider (where provision is within a consortium of colleges); to transfer their award to a new validating authority (where there is continuity of teaching but a change in validating institution); transfer to equivalent courses within the School subject to a mapping exercise of course learning outcomes, content delivered to date and student achievement profile, and appropriate operational considerations in terms of the impact on resources and cohort size.

3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study

Refund Policy

The UK Campus would normally expect to teach out courses or facilitate transfer to the UK Campus' parent institution. If in the view of the UK Campus that this cannot be achieved, or if other circumstances exist where a refund of academic fees is appropriate, a refund will be made in accordance with the revised version of the UK Campus' Student Fees Refund & Compensation Policy (Oct 2021). For students on taught courses, this will be calculated with reference to the number of academic terms that have been paid for, but unable to be provided. For students on research programmes, this will relate to the number of months of registration that have been paid for, but unable to be completed. Any refund will be paid to the primary funder, whether this is the student themselves, their sponsor, or the Student Loan Company. Further details regarding the calculation refunds can be obtained from the UK Campus' Student Fees Refund & Compensation Policy.

All claims for additional costs incurred from a change in the UK Campus' course provision will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account the circumstances of individual students and the degree of change to which they are subject. It is the UK Campus' policy to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by a change to their location of study or course provider, where it is determined that the UK Campus is unable to fulfil its obligations under its Student Contract.

Guarantee and Insurance

The UK Campus is guaranteed by Peking University HSBC Business School (PHBS) and the University for all of its financial commitments. In addition, the UK Campus holds a number of insurances policies including Business Interruption covering all fees and other incomes received during a year (and Profession Indemnity and Public & Product Liability). Depending on circumstances, these would be used to fund any significant need to refund fees and additional costs.

4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan

Informing students about the Student Protection Plan:

We will publicise our student protection plan to current and future students in our website and in intranet of the UK Campus as part of our Student Contract.

Reviewing the Student Protection Plan:

The Student Protection Plan will be formally reviewed every three years, led by the Director of the UK Campus in conjunction with student representatives. If there are, however, any substantive changes to our risk position, or there are sector requirements or significant new activities being undertaken by the UK Campus that requires inclusion in the Plan then this would prompt an earlier review. Should the Plan be triggered, we will conduct a review of the Plan to ensure that it operated as effectively as possible to protect the continuity of study for our students.

Implementation:

If we need to implement the measures in our Student Protection Plan we will inform affected students in writing and offer meetings for discussion. We undertake also to ensure that every student has the opportunity for an individual discussion about the potential impact of any proposed course closure so that they are supported in making decisions about their study. Wherever possible our planning will ensure that students are able to complete their studies with PHBS-UK.

Guidance to Students' Representatives

We will also work closely with our Students' Representatives to ensure they have sufficient information to provide independent support to our students.

Guidance to staff:

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our Student Protection Plan when they propose course changes by emphasising requirements that where course closures are proposed that consideration is given to the procedures for supporting current cohorts.