Student Protection Plan 2026/27

Provider name: Edge Hill University
UKPRN: 10007823
Legal address: Edge Hill University, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 4PQ
Contact point: Peter Roberts (robertpe@edgehill.ac.uk)
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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Accepted offer holder	A person who has received an offer from the University and has accepted that offer.
Affected students	Students whose continuation of study may be impacted by a risk or change covered by this Student Protection Plan.
Applicant	A person who has submitted an application to study at the University but has not yet received an offer.
Apprenticeship	A programme that combines academic study with employment-based training.
Business continuity arrangements	The University's arrangements for responding to disruption and supporting the continuation or recovery of teaching, assessment and student support activity.
Continuation of study	A student's ability to continue and complete their course, or an appropriate alternative course or route, with the least disruption reasonably possible.
Course	A programme, pathway or other unit of higher education study, including standalone credit-bearing provision where applicable.
Course closure	The decision to close a course to future or current students. The University's normal approach is to close courses to new entrants first and teach out current students wherever reasonably possible.
Current student	A student who is registered with Edge Hill University at the time a risk arises.
Discontinuation of study	A situation where the University is unable to preserve continuation of study through teach-out, alternative delivery, internal transfer or supported external transfer.
External events	Events outside the University's direct control that may affect teaching, assessment or student support, such as severe disruption to facilities, staffing or infrastructure.
Internal transfer	A supported move from one Edge Hill University course to another, where this is appropriate and available.
Material change	A significant change that may affect a person's decision to accept an offer, enrol, or continue studying on a course. Examples may include changes to course availability, location, mode of study, accreditation, significant course content, or another material part of the student experience.

Mode of study	The way in which a course is delivered or studied, such as full-time, part-time, flexible, online, blended or placement-based delivery.
OfS	The Office for Students, the regulator for higher education in England.
Offer holder	A person who has received an offer from the University to study on a course, whether conditional or unconditional.
Partnership or collaborative provision	Provision delivered with, through or in association with another organisation. Partnership arrangements are managed through approval, due diligence, contractual arrangements, quality assurance and exit planning.
Planned event	An event that falls within the University's reasonable control, such as a planned course closure, change to a course, change to a location, or change to a partnership arrangement.
Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body / PSRB	An external body that accredits, approves, recognises or regulates a course or qualification for professional purposes.
Prospective student	A general term that may include applicants, offer holders and accepted offer holders. For this Student Protection Plan, the University distinguishes between these groups because their contractual position may differ.
Registered student	A person registered or enrolled with the University, including students on an approved interruption, break in learning, placement, reassessment or repeat period, and students who have completed teaching but are awaiting completion of assessment or conferment of an award.
Risk crystallises	A risk moves from being a possibility to an actual or imminent issue requiring action.
Supported external transfer	Assistance provided to help a student consider and pursue continuation at another provider. This may include the timely provision of verified academic records, credit and curriculum information; liaison with potential receiving providers; and information and support relating to funding, immigration, travel, accessibility and other relevant implications. The availability and terms of admission to another provider cannot be guaranteed by the University.
Teach-out	Arrangements that allow affected students to complete their course when the University has decided to close the course to new entrants or discontinue it in the future.
Unplanned event	An event that is not planned by the University and may affect its ability to deliver a course, location, mode of study, material component or student support arrangements.

1. Purpose and scope

This Student Protection Plan sets out Edge Hill University's assessment of the key risks that could affect students' continuation of study, including risks relating to the University's ability to deliver a course, location, mode of study, professional accreditation, or another material part of the student experience.

The plan also explains the measures the University has in place to reduce those risks, and the steps it would take to protect students' continuation and quality of study if a significant risk became reasonably likely to occur.

The University's priority will always be to preserve students' continuation and quality of study wherever reasonably possible. Where this cannot be achieved, the University will consider appropriate remedies under its Refund and Compensation Policy.

This plan applies to registered students of Edge Hill University, including undergraduate, postgraduate, apprenticeship, professional, collaborative and partnership provision. It also applies, where relevant, to offer holders who may be affected by a material change before enrolment. Applicants who have not yet received an offer are not normally within the contractual scope of this plan, but the University will update published information and communicate with applicants where a material change may affect their ongoing application.

A material change is a significant change that may affect a student's decision to study or continue studying on a course, such as changes to course availability, location, mode of study, accreditation, or significant course content.

The plan should be read alongside the University's Student Terms and Conditions, Academic Regulations, Refund and Compensation Policy, Student Complaints Procedure and relevant course information. Edge Hill University publishes key student-facing policies together, including the Student Protection Plan, Refund and Compensation Policy, Student Terms and Conditions, Academic Regulations and complaints information.

2. Overall assessment

The University has assessed the overall risk that it will be unable to preserve continuation of study for students as **low**.

This assessment is based on the University's governance, financial planning, academic quality arrangements, business continuity planning, estates management, professional body engagement, partnership oversight and student support arrangements.

The University recognises that the same risk may affect students differently depending on their needs, characteristics and circumstances. If this plan needs to be implemented, the University will consider the position of affected students, including disabled students, students with caring responsibilities, commuter students, international students, apprentices, placement students, sponsored students, students in financial hardship, and students studying part-time or through flexible

modes. Protection measures will be adapted accordingly to take into consideration the needs of different student groups.

Risks to continuation of study are considered through the University's risk management arrangements, including review through the institutional risk register.

The plan is reviewed annually, or earlier if the University's risk profile changes.

3. Assessment of key risks

Risk 1: The University is no longer able to operate

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Severe for students if the risk crystallised.
Current controls	The University monitors financial sustainability through its planning, reporting, audit and risk management arrangements. It also maintains business continuity arrangements to support the continuation or recovery of teaching, assessment and student support activity.
If the risk crystallised	The University would seek to manage any closure in a way that enabled students to complete their studies wherever possible. Where this was not possible, students would be supported to transfer to another provider and refunds and compensation would be considered where appropriate. The University would seek to prioritise maintaining student records, supporting teach out/transfer and ensuring continuation of student funding.

Risk 2: The University is unable to exercise degree awarding powers, maintain required validation arrangements or meet regulatory requirements necessary to award qualifications

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Severe for affected students.
Current controls	The University has academic governance and quality assurance arrangements in place. The University's Quality Management Handbook sets out its academic quality strategy and operational procedures.
If the risk crystallised	The University would work with the OfS and any other relevant bodies to resolve the issue, protect existing students and maintain academic standards. Arrangements would seek to preserve the completion of assessment, examination boards, progression and award processes, maintain access to accurate academic records and evidence of achievement, and support students to complete or transfer where necessary.

Risk 3: Professional accreditation is lost, suspended or materially changed

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low, unless separately escalated through University risk governance.

Potential impact	Severe for students whose intended professional route depends on accreditation or regulatory approval.
Current controls	The University monitors professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements through academic quality processes and maintains engagement with relevant professional bodies. The University delivers a range of programmes leading to professional recognition, including teaching, medicine and nursing, social work and other professionally regulated areas. Where concerns are raised, the University will respond through an action plan and seek to protect the interests of existing students wherever possible. For Initial Teacher Education provision, as an example, the University is monitored by Ofsted, with the most recent assessment in 2024 being 'outstanding'. Department for Education requirements are monitored, and the University would work with regulators to use established improvement, reinspection and teach-out arrangements where required.
If the risk crystallised	The University would work with the relevant body to protect existing students wherever possible. Options may include an action plan, seeking agreement from the relevant regulatory body for continued recognition over a transitional period for current students, an alternative Edge Hill course, a modified course where appropriate, or supported transfer to another accredited provider.

Risk 4: A teaching location becomes unavailable

Heading	**Assessment**
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Moderate to severe, depending on the course and location affected.
Current controls	Most provision is delivered at the Ormskirk campus. Some provision is delivered through other locations, including NHS Trusts, leased premises and partner settings. These arrangements are managed through ownership, leases, agreements or other appropriate controls. Building condition surveys carried out in 2025 confirmed that the University estate is in good overall condition, with all buildings rated either A (Good) or B (Satisfactory), and none rated C or D (poor or unsafe).
If the risk crystallised	The University would seek suitable alternative arrangements, which may include temporary relocation, adjusted timetabling, alternative facilities, modes of study and online delivery where appropriate, or other reasonable measures to maintain continuation of study.

Risk 5: Unanticipated closure of subject area, department or course

Heading	**Assessment**
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Moderate to severe for affected students.
Current controls	The University manages portfolio changes through planned approval, modification and closure processes. The normal

	approach is to close courses to new entrants first and teach out plans for current students enacted wherever reasonably possible, with closure timed in line with the academic calendar and associated recruitment activity. Course changes, withdrawals and closures are managed through the University's approval, modification and closure processes. These processes are designed to ensure that students' interests are considered before changes are approved, that current students are consulted where appropriate, and that teach-out arrangements maintain academic standards and the quality of the student experience.
If the risk crystallised	The University would teach out existing students as the first option. If teach-out was not possible, students would be offered reasonable alternatives, which may include internal transfer, supported external transfer or other academic arrangements.

Risk 6: A material part of a course cannot be delivered

Heading	**Assessment**
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Moderate to severe, depending on the component affected.
Current controls	The University considers module and course resilience through approval, monitoring and review processes overseen by established academic governance arrangements. Additional teaching support may be used where required. Where material changes to a course are proposed, the University will consult affected students and student representatives proportionate to the scale of the change. Where required, evidence of student consent will be obtained before changes are approved.
If the risk crystallised	The University would seek to provide alternative staffing, facilities, placements, sequencing, assessment arrangements or equivalent learning opportunities to enable students to meet the required learning outcomes.

Risk 7: A mode of study can no longer be delivered

Heading	**Assessment**
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Moderate for affected students.
Current controls	The University offers full-time and part-time modes of study and has no general plan to withdraw modes of delivery. This is managed through regular portfolio and academic planning.
If the risk crystallised	The University would teach out existing students as the first option. If teach-out was not possible, students would be offered reasonable alternatives, which may include internal transfer, supported external transfer or other academic arrangements.

Risk 8: A legal, regulatory or contractual change prevents the University from recruiting or continuing to teach a defined group of students

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Severe for the affected group.
Current controls	The University has compliance and support arrangements for different student groups, including international students and apprentices. For international students, the University maintains Student Sponsor Licence compliance arrangements, including specialist immigration compliance expertise, staff training and monitoring of relevant UKVI requirements.
If the risk crystallised	The University would communicate directly with affected students and applicants, explain the implications, and support continuation of study where legally and practically possible. Where continuation was not possible, the University would support transfer or consider other appropriate remedies. Any implementation plan will consider immigration, sponsorship, travel, funding, accommodation and the limited remedies that may be available to affected international students.

Risk 9: A partnership, placement, employer or delivery arrangement ends

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Moderate to severe for affected students.
Current controls	Partnership arrangements are managed through approval, due diligence, contractual arrangements, quality assurance and exit planning, including appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements where a partnership ends. Where students are studying through partnership or collaborative arrangements, the University will work with the relevant partner to protect continuation of study in line with applicable contractual, academic and regulatory arrangements. For apprenticeships, the University will work with the apprentice, employer and relevant agencies to support continuation wherever possible. Where employment ends, the University will seek to support academic continuation, but continuation as an apprentice will depend on the student securing an appropriate sponsoring employer. Where a compulsory placement or other work-based learning component becomes unavailable, the University would seek: - an alternative placement or employer; - revised timing or sequencing; - an equivalent learning activity or assessment where professionally and academically permissible; and - early communication about any implications for completion, accreditation or professional progression.

If the risk crystallised	The University would seek to preserve continuation of study through teach-out, replacement arrangements, alternative delivery, transfer or other reasonable measures.

Risk 10: Industrial action, staffing disruption or external factors affect delivery

Heading	Assessment
Likelihood	Low
Potential impact	Low to moderate, depending on scale and duration.
Current controls	The University has business continuity and academic management arrangements to respond to disruption.
If the risk crystallised	The University would seek to minimise disruption, communicate clearly, protect learning outcomes, adjust teaching or assessment where appropriate, and ensure students are not academically disadvantaged as far as reasonably possible. Where appropriate, the University may also invoke its temporary academic regulations to provide additional flexibility and support in the assessment process for students affected by industrial action.

4. Measures to protect students

The University does not currently consider that any of the risks listed above are reasonably likely to crystallise during the period covered by this plan. If the plan needs to be implemented, the University will seek to preserve continuation of study wherever reasonably possible, communicate with affected students at an early stage and in clear terms, consider the differential impact of proposed measures on different student groups, consult affected students and the Students' Union as early as practicable, base decisions on the evidence available at the time, and review lessons from implementation.

If a risk becomes reasonably likely, the University will develop a specific implementation plan in line with established business continuity planning arrangements. Any business continuity response plan will be overseen by the Chief Operating Officer or other member of the University Executive, and supported by key roles as identified within the University's emergency response command structures including Directors of relevant support departments (Facilities, Student Journey, Marketing Recruitment and Admissions, etc and Dean's of faculties as appropriate to the nature of the incident.

This will normally include:

- identifying affected students and applicants
- assessing the impact on different student groups
- consulting students and the Students' Union where appropriate
- confirming teach-out, transfer or alternative delivery options
- communicating clearly and promptly with affected students
- providing academic, pastoral, wellbeing, disability, finance and careers support
- working with professional bodies, employers, partners or regulators where relevant
- considering refunds, compensation or other remedies where appropriate;
- notifying relevant external bodies where required.

Where a risk affects students' funding or financial support, the University will work with the Student Loans Company, sponsors, funding bodies and other relevant organisations to support the accurate and timely updating of course and student information and, wherever possible, minimise disruption to students' funding arrangements.

Where a specific course, location, professionally accredited programme or partnership is affected, the University will manage this through a separate implementation plan. This will ensure affected students receive clear, tailored information, while keeping this University-wide plan concise and up to date.

The University will prioritise continuation of study and will use teach-out, alternative delivery, internal transfer or supported external transfer before considering discontinuation of study as a last resort.

The University will maintain appropriate arrangements to preserve the security, accuracy and accessibility of student and academic records. Where a risk affects the University's ability to deliver provision, arrangements will include the continuation or completion of assessment, progression and award processes and the provision of appropriate evidence of academic achievement.

5. Communication with students, applicants and staff

The University will publish this plan on its website and make it accessible to current students, applicants, offer holders, staff, partners and other stakeholders.
If this plan needs to be implemented, affected students will receive written communication as soon as reasonably practicable once the University has sufficient confirmed information to provide a meaningful update explaining:

- what has happened or may happen
- who is affected
- the likely impact
- the options available
- expected timescales
- where to get support and independent advice
- whether refund or compensation arrangements may apply
- how to make a complaint

Where practicable, affected students will be invited to meetings or briefings. Individual meetings will be offered where personal circumstances, support needs or academic options require more detailed discussion.

Where implementation of this plan is likely to result in a material change to a student's course, the University will aim to communicate material changes at the earliest reasonable opportunity and, wherever possible, before changes take effect, so that students have time to consider the options and support available.

If a risk affects applicants or offer holders, the University will:

- update relevant webpages
- update UCAS or other application platforms where applicable
- contact affected offer holders as early as reasonably possible and provide appropriate information to applicants whose applications are in progress.
- explain alternative options

- pause further offers where necessary until the position is clear.

Staff will be made aware of this plan through academic governance, course approval, course modification, course closure, partnership, quality assurance and risk management processes.

Students affected by implementation of this plan will be signposted to independent advice from Edge Hill Students' Union and to relevant University support services.

6. Refunds and compensation

In the unlikely event that the University is unable to preserve continuation of study, the University's Refund and Compensation Policy will apply. This is a University-led process and does not create a separate route for students to request a refund or compensation outside the University's established procedures.

Where appropriate, the University may instigate consideration of a refund, compensation or another suitable remedy. A refund may include repayment of sums paid to the University, or a reduction in sums owed, including tuition fees, course costs or accommodation costs. Compensation may be considered when a student has suffered actual financial loss, incurred actual out-of-pocket expenses, or experienced material disadvantage as a direct result of the University's inability to preserve continuation of study. Refunds will normally be paid according to how the original payment was made, for example to the Student Loans Company, sponsor, or self-funding student as appropriate.

The University will not normally compensate hypothetical or speculative loss, but may consider evidenced, unavoidable and reasonable committed costs where these arise directly from the University's inability to preserve continuation of study.

Each case will be considered on its own merits, taking account of the student's individual circumstances, the impact experienced, the steps taken by the University to reduce that impact, and any reasonable alternative arrangements offered.

Students who are dissatisfied with a decision made by the Refund and Compensation Policy may use the University's Student Complaints Procedure.

7. Complaints

Students who are dissatisfied with how the University has implemented this plan or any decisions made under the Refund and Compensation Policy may submit a complaint using the University's Student Complaints Procedure, which is available on our website. If you have any queries about how to make a complaint you can contact complaints@edgehill.ac.uk.

At the completion of the Student Complaints Procedure, the University will issue the student with a Completion of Procedures letter which will set out how a student may refer their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Students may access free, independent advice and support from Edge Hill Students' Union at any stage in the process.

8. Review and governance

The University will review this plan annually, or earlier if there is a material change to the University's risk profile, a significant risk to continuation of study, revised regulatory guidance, or learning from implementation of the plan.
The review will take account of:

- student feedback;
- Students' Union feedback;
- complaints and casework themes;
- risk register information;
- academic quality information;
- business continuity learning;
- professional body, partnership or regulatory developments.

The revised plan will be considered through appropriate University governance routes before publication.

Responsibility for maintaining this plan sits with the PVC for Education and Student Success, with support from the relevant academic, professional service and student support leads. Where the plan is activated, the University will identify a senior accountable lead and an operational lead for the specific issue, together with leads for communications, academic delivery, student support, finance and external liaison where relevant. The responsible leads will report through the appropriate University governance routes, with escalation to Executive Board and the Board of Governors where the scale, impact or regulatory significance of the issue requires it.