



TRAFFORD &
STOCKPORT
COLLEGE GROUP

Student Protection Plan

2025/2026 – 2027/2028

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Introduction

As a registered provider of Higher Education, this Student Protection Plan is a requirement of our ongoing registration with the Office for Students. The plan has been designed to ensure that Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG) Higher Education (HE) students understand what may happen in the unlikely event that a course, campus, or the Group is no longer able to operate. By having this plan in place our students can be confident they are able to continue and complete their studies or be compensated if this is not possible.

1. Assessment of Risk

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

The Trafford College Group delivers a range of Higher Education courses including honours degrees, foundation degrees, higher national certificates and diplomas, and initial teacher training courses up to Level 7. These are offered on a full time and part time basis with delivery taking place on three of our five campuses.

The risk that the Group is unable to operate is very low because our financial performance is strong and is forecast to remain at this level. The Group serves a diverse student population in further and adult education, apprenticeships, and higher education. These diverse income streams ensure that the Group is financially secure. A business continuity plan has been developed to provide continuation of teaching and learning in the event of IT failure, major incidents, and temporary campus closures. All our campus buildings are owned, giving the Group long-term stability.

Each year the Group reviews its curriculum offer and takes steps to ensure that this can be resourced. The course approval process is designed to ensure that any new courses or development of an existing programme is adequately resourced, meets curriculum and student needs, both at an institutional and programme level. This enables programmes to be delivered effectively. The process also requires evidence that programmes align with the Group's strategic plan, and that a new course request or amendment is supported by market and labour intelligence. This is designed to promote confidence in the financial and economic feasibility and sustainability of the course.

All higher education courses are externally approved by awarding bodies, which ensures that the quality of provision and academic standards are appropriate and leads to good outcomes. This level of scrutiny adds security that continuation of study will not be affected.

Additionally, delivery is supported by flexible programme teams that work collaboratively, allowing for continuity of provision even in the event of staffing changes. Should adjustments to material components of a programme be required, the Group will provide as much notice as reasonably practicable, and programme teams will take steps to minimise any impact on students.

The risk that the Group will not be able to deliver material components is assessed as low because our programme approval and review takes staff specialism into account, and our programmes are designed to be taught by integrated academic teams, mitigating the dependency on individual members. If there is a gap for specific specialism in a module, strategies to meet the need include staff development, recruitment of a new staff member or to draw upon visiting lecturers. The Group's investment in teaching and learning resources, including specialist equipment, classrooms, labs, immersive spaces and technology is such that there should be no threat to the ability to deliver material components on our higher education courses.

The delivery of some of our programmes is dependent on the continued contractual relationships with our validating partners, Sheffield Hallam University and The University of Huddersfield. The risk of either of these contracts being terminated or specific approvals being withdrawn, is low.

The risk that we are no longer able to deliver programmes to new students is moderate in the event of low student applications. The risk that the Group is unable to continue to deliver a course on which students are already enrolled is assessed as low. The factors that the Group has taken into consideration includes low student enrolments in some curriculum areas, withdrawal by a validating partner or awarding body, or a programme being superseded by updated provision. The Group's arrangement for course closures is comprehensive and ensures continuation for TSCG students when a course is closed; this is detailed in the HE Student Terms and Conditions.

2. Mitigating Measures

The measures that TSCG has put in place to mitigate those risks that TSCG considers to be reasonably likely to crystallise.

The Group has five campuses, and higher education is delivered from three of these: Altrincham, Stretford and Stockport, all within a 30-minute commute of each other. In the unlikely event that a programme could not be delivered at a specified campus, the most likely outcome would be to relocate to one of the Group's other campuses and provide transport to those students affected.

If the Group is required to close temporarily, as occurred during the Coronavirus pandemic, all teaching and learning will be delivered online. When a student starts their programme, they are provided with training to ensure that they feel confident and develop the skills needed for online learning, as directed by the TSCG Student Digital Entitlement.

At enrolment, the Group conducts an audit of all students to ensure each has access to essential equipment, such as electronic devices and internet connectivity. Where a student does not have the necessary equipment, the Group will work with the student to ensure that their studies are not adversely affected — for example, by providing access to laptops and computers while on campus and offering support with applications for maintenance loans through Student Finance England to help fund essential equipment.

Each programme is reviewed annually to ensure the curriculum remains current and relevant. From time to time, programmes may be modified or phased out to allow for the introduction of new provision. In such instances, the Group is committed to 'teaching out' the existing programme, as detailed in the HE Student Terms and Conditions. This means that while recruitment of new students would cease, existing student would continue and complete their programme. Students are assured that the Group is committed to supporting programme completion within the timeframe specified at enrolment. These details are confirmed in the HE Student Terms and Conditions.

Within curriculum areas, pathways and modules are often common across programmes, which results in more economically viable and sustainable provision. For example, within the Early Years and Heath, our Foundation Degrees in Working with Children and Young People and Early Years Practice both share five common modules at Level 4 and 5, and students may progress to the final year of our BA (Hons) Childhood Studies. Students not only benefit from the synergies between the courses, but their student experience is enhanced.

3. Compensation Policy

Information about the policy TSCG has in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to TSCG HE students and to provide compensation where necessary if TSCG is no longer able to preserve continuation of study.

The Trafford and Stockport College Group's finances are strong and are forecast to remain at this level. This means the Group has robust finances to fulfil its contractual obligations, and to respond successfully to most opportunities. In the unlikely event of non-continuation to study, resources are in place to meet our obligations.

The HE Student Terms and Conditions provide information regarding fees, course closures, changes and cancellation, and the students' right to refunds and compensation. This applies to students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loan Company, students who pay their own tuition fees, and students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor. During induction

students will be provided with an overview of and access to the Group's HE policies and procedures including the Student Protection Plan.

In the unlikely event that the Group moves provision from one campus to another, the Group, where possible, would give 28 days' notice of the intention to move location. The Group will work with its HE students to ensure that study is not negatively impacted. This may include offering transport between sites or offering additional financial support to those students who would be traveling further than their original destination.

If a course is closed prior to enrolment, the Group endeavours to inform potential applicants 28 working days prior to the start of the Course. In the first instance applicants are offered an alternative course and if this is deemed not appropriate, HE student advisors will offer support in locating a course at a different provider, preferably within the Greater Manchester Area, many of which have strong working relationships with TSCG.

4. Notification

Information about how TSCG will communicate with TSCG HE students about the student protection plan.

Stockport College and Trafford College's websites are the primary source of information, where students can find information on courses, fees and student finance, policies and procedures and the Student Protection Plan. The Student Protection Plan together with the Student Terms and Conditions, will be sent to all successful applicants by email with their offer letter. Existing students will be directed to a copy stored on their virtual learning environment.

Any changes to a course content, course closure or campus change that may result in the Group effecting the Student Protection Plan, must be approved by the Group's Higher Education Curriculum & Quality Committee, on which students are represented.

The Group's HE Quality Team is responsible for ensuring effective partnership working with students, which includes the review of documentation including the Student Protection Plan. The Group's higher education programme committees, in which staff and students collaborate, provide a forum for discussion and deliberation. These committees feed into the HE curriculum groups, which act as subgroups of the Group's HE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

Should any material changes occur to a course, The Head of Higher Education will convene a transitional period of 28 working days; this is to allow a consultation period with students to ensure effective support is in place. The Group has a holistic network of support including academic teams, disability and support services, employability officers, student services and learning resources, which can be drawn upon to provide support to ensure academic progression is not negatively affected.

The Group's HE student body, with access to all HE-related policies and procedures, is led by student representatives who are encouraged to engage through a range of robust student

voice channels. These include one-to-one feedback opportunities, student voice feedback forums and activities, and student voice reports submitted to HE Programme Committees. Through these avenues, students are supported to raise objections, share opinions, and offer suggestions about their own HE experiences and the policies that shape them.