

**ISTITUTO MARANGONI LONDON
STUDENT PROTECTION PLAN**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. POTENTIAL RISKS TO THE CONTINUATION OF STUDY FOR STUDENTS AND MEASURES IN PLACE TO MITIHGATE THOSE RISKS	3
3. INFORMATION ABOUT REFUND AND COMPENSATION POLICY	7
4. COMMUNICATION	7
5. REVIEW OF THE PLAN	7
6. COMPLAINTS	7
7. DOCUMENT REVISION	7

1. INTRODUCTION

In common with all other registered higher education providers, Istituto Marangoni, the London School (the London School) is required to publish, maintain, and update its Student Protection Plan as part of its registration with the Office for Students (OfS). This Plan describes any potential risks to continuity of study, the measures in place to mitigate such risks, how the School communicates and reviews its plan and sets out its Refund and Compensation Policy and Complaints process.

In August 2022, the London School made a strategic decision to terminate its partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University (ManMet) with the last intake of new students enrolling for London School courses validated for awards of ManMet in February 2023. The London School will now be delivering foundation, undergraduate and postgraduation education via its new collaborative partnership with Regent's University London (Regent's) from October 2023, with all London School students enrolling after that date being eligible for an award from Regent's on successful completion of their courses.

This Plan has been updated from previous versions to reflect both the exit planning with ManMet and the new partnership arrangements with Regent's. This Plan sets out how the London School will ensure that continuation of study and appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place for existing students enrolled on programmes leading to either a ManMet award, new entrants enrolling on a Regent's award and those students who have elected to transfer from the ManMet award to the Regent's award in 2023/2024.

2. POTENTIAL RISKS TO THE CONTINUATION OF STUDY FOR STUDENTS AND MEASURES IN PLACE TO MITIGATE THOSE RISKS

London School has identified the following potential risks to the continuation of study of our students and has put measures in place to mitigate those risks:

- A. Failure to meet required standards for UK Higher Education
- B. Termination of exit arrangements with ManMet or partnership with Regent's.
- C. Loss of the London School's UKVI sponsorship licence
- D. Financial instability, loss of building operations and/or estate
- E. Failure to deliver the London School's validation academic portfolio.

The London School Audit and Risk Committee monitors the School's overall financial health, academic performance, student learning experience and academic standards to ensure the potential risks mentioned above remain minimal to allow students to continue their studies at the London School.

A. Failure to meet required standards for UK Higher Education

The likelihood that the London School may fail to meet required standards for UK higher education, including OfS ongoing registration, regulatory compliance or academic quality assurance standards is **low**.

Since 2016, the School has achieved successful outcomes for: OfS Registration (2019), Quality Assurance Agency HER Review (2016), Quality Assurance Agency Annual Monitoring (2017-2019) and Manchester Met Partnership Review (2017). It has maintained compliance with all monitoring, assessment and data reporting requirements including UKVI BCA compliance (2016-2022), UKVI Tier 4 Compliance Visit (2019), Higher Education Statistics Agency submissions (2017, -2022), HESA Audit (2017), NSS participation (2017- 2022), DLHE (2016 and 2017), Prevent (2015-2022), OIA (2016-2022), Graduate Outcomes (2019-2022).

The impact of losing OfS registration is assessed as **high** as removal from the OfS register would mean that the London School would lose access to government and student funding and would not be able to sponsor international students.

If the London School becomes unable to offer government-funded student loans, the London School will put in place a targeted UK student scholarship scheme (in addition to its existing student scholarship scheme) to support applicants' access to the School and to protect continuation of their studies once enrolled on their programme.

B. Termination of partnership with ManMet or Regent's University London.

A new agreement(s) between the London School and ManMet has been put in place and it provides a clear legal framework governing the teach out period to ensure that all students of the London School studying for a ManMet award will continue to be supported to enable them to complete their programmes. The risk that the agreement would be terminated by ManMet prior to the expiry of the new teach out agreement is **low**, although the impact on students should the contract be terminated early would be **low** because of the mitigations that would be in place, as set out below

The risk to continuity of study for existing students enrolled with ManMet remains **low** because both parties remain committed to maintaining continuity of study through the implementation of an agreed exit plan that makes provision for student choice and/or 'teach out' to enable students to complete their award. This exit plan also enables eligible students to choose to transfer to the equivalent programme with our new validating partner, Regent's, without disruption from October 2023 subject to completion of the relevant academic credits. Similarly, deferred students and students resitting or repeating the year will be given appropriate alternative offers to complete their programme with an award from Regent's.

Similarly, the risk that the new validating partner, Regent's, is likely to terminate the agreement unilaterally is **low**, with both parties being strategically committed to the partnership following full due diligence reviews and approval from their respective governing bodies. This is because the London School has a successful track record in maintaining academic standards, quality, and compliance with the requirements of awarding bodies within its previous and existing validating partnerships and plans for this to continue into new partnership with Regent's.

In the unlikely event of this risk arising, both parties confirm that the interest of students would remain paramount, and students would be enabled to complete the programme onto which they have enrolled. The terms of the agreement provide a clear framework for any exit arrangements, including making provision for the London School to terminate the agreement, if Regent's does not perform its obligations adequately. The agreement includes a commitment from both parties to support student choice, where required during any 'teach out' period, which would usually be until enrolled students have completed their approved, validated programme.

. As part of those exit arrangements, the London School and the validating partner will also make sure to provide opportunities for transfer to relevant programmes at other providers, as appropriate. Where applicable the School will make sure to offer appropriate compensation for students who have suffered a material, financial loss as a result of any termination of a validation arrangement, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions and our Refund and Compensation Policy [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>].

An important part of the London School's Strategy is the application to the OfS for its own Taught Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs). If the London School is successful in being granted its own DAPs, it will work with both ManMet and Regent's to manage the process of ensuring all students enrolled on validated programmes at the time that DAPs are awarded to the London School are will be given the opportunity to remain on their existing programme and award, or to transfer to an award of the London School.

C. Loss of the London School's UKVI sponsorship licence

Whilst it is recognised that the impact would be **high**, the risk that the London School will be unable to offer student visa sponsorship for International students is **very low**, although the impact on international students would be **high** as the London School would not be able to recruit international students without a licence.

Following the successful UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Licence Renewal (for 4 years) in 2021, the London School has an established track record of compliance with the terms of its UKVI Sponsorship Licence, including its monitoring and reporting requirements via the Sponsorship Management System (SMS). The London School continues to maintain a **low** refusal rate and undertakes regular internal audits to ensure its record keeping is compliant with UKVI requirements. In mitigation against any impact in response to the impact of EU students requiring student visas following Brexit, the School successfully obtained a significant increase in its overall CAS allocation to maintain student recruitment and preserve continuity of study for affected students and applicants.

In the unlikely event that the London School was unable to offer student visa sponsorship for International students, it will work closely with UKVI to seek to ensure that its students are able to complete their current year of study. The London School will also seek to offer affected international students opportunities to transfer to alternative providers and will offer appropriate compensation for students who have suffered a material, financial loss as a result in accordance with Refund and Compensation Policy [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>]. If the London School's Student Sponsor Licence is terminated when there are international applicants who have not yet started their programme, the London School will contact them as soon as possible and offer a study suspension or transfer opportunity.

D. Financial instability, loss of building operations and/or estate

The London School's most recent financial accounts demonstrate that the School is in a sound financial position and the OfS annual financial return demonstrates credible and prudent financial forecasts with ongoing financial health generating a sizable surplus each year. The financial surplus enables the London School to maintain sizable reserves and reinvestment in its learning resources. The London School carefully manages student forecasts and associated investment each year to enable sustainable and managed growth. The overall financial health of the London School and its oversight of financial management and risk has also been independently verified through the independent, external financial audit undertaken each year. The risk, therefore, that the London School is unable to continue operations is **low**. The risk that the London School will be required to close, or suspend delivery of, programmes is also deemed **low**.

The likelihood that the London School will no longer be able to deliver programmes at our Fashion Street site is deemed **low** due to length of previous tenancy (15 years, since opening in 2003) and lease renewal (2019). The impact of loss of building operations, equipment, including IT equipment or loss of access to the site is considered to be **low**. Since its opening, the London School has successfully operated from the site, including the building extension with tenancy, and building compliance. The London School continues to invest in the premises, improving academic and social facilities for students, and maintains a healthy annual capital expenditure budget. Building occupancy has been fully modelled for planned, sustainable student number growth, with related architectural and estates development plans for the next three years in place. Where students are impacted by the loss of access to the building, learning facilities or IT equipment, this will be dealt with in accordance with our business continuity plans and any mitigating adjustments that can be put in place on an individual basis.

Where students lose access to building, facilities, or IT equipment, which may result in loss or major incidents regarding loss of building, facilities, or IT system failure which may result in loss of, will be dealt with in accordance with our business continuity plans,

If the London School was unable to deliver programmes at our Fashion Street site, it would first seek to ensure not to close the building during the teaching period. In the case of any unexpected emergency events or force majeure, involving the temporary closure or all or part of its estate, the London School would relocate its teaching to an alternative location and inform students in a timely manner. In the event of disruption caused by a major localised incident (such as flood or fire) or a major local, national, or global incident, the School will take appropriate steps to maintain continuity of study while also complying with all relevant government, legal and sector regulatory requirements. In such instances or where relocation is not immediately possible, the London School will not change the content or academic standards of the programme although in some instances it may involve a material change to the mode or pattern of programme delivery (e.g. moving to online delivery where appropriate during the affected period). The School is confident of its ability to transition to alternative modes of delivery based on its experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic (2019-2021) which included putting in the necessary I.T facilities in place for students, academic staff, and professional staff, therefore, the risk of not being able to do so in the future remains **low**.

E. Failure to deliver the London School's validated academic portfolio

The risk that the London School is no longer able to deliver specific programmes or pathways in the next three years including the deployment of adequate expert staff or tutors within specific courses is **very low** because the School has access to a wide range of academic staff with relevant professional currency and academic expertise.

If the London School decided to suspend or terminate the delivery of validated programmes, it would notify all applicants and students in a timely manner assuring them that they will be able to continue their studies on an equivalent programme or provide an opportunity to transfer to other programmes awarded by the validating partner or provide support to apply and enrol elsewhere.

Where adjustments are required for individual students, the School will ensure appropriate measures are put in place in accordance with individual requirements.

Major and material changes to programmes would not normally take place in-year and would only apply to the next cohort of students. However, in response to local, national, or global incidents that may occur during the year it may be necessary to make material changes to programme delivery in order to maintain continuity of study. In any case applicants will be informed of any material changes in sufficient time to be able to consider if they wish to change their choice of programme and/or withdraw their application at any stage in the admissions process.

Any students or applicants affected by a change to a programme may be eligible for compensation in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>].

The London School remains committed to recruiting, supporting, and maintaining a diverse student and staff population that is consistent with its international and global identity. Its commitment to retain its European student and staff population remains equally strong. To mitigate against a potential fall in student or staff recruitment the London School developed a clear strategy for ensuring that the terms of the EU Settlement Scheme were communicated and understood by eligible staff and students. Clear and accessible information for applicants and prospective applicants also ensures they understand what they need to do when applying to study in the UK. Applicants, prospective applicants, and students are supported and receive timely information and advice by the admissions and student services team as appropriate. The School is committed to ensuring that job applicants from the EU continue to be considered on their merit and receive information and support on what they need to do to qualify to work in the UK.

3. INFORMATION ABOUT REFUND AND COMPENSATION POLICY

The School's refund and compensation policy can be found here [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>].

4. COMMUNICATION

The London School publishes this Student Protection Plan on the London School's website, and it is uploaded on the London School's student intranet.

In advance of each new academic year, all staff will be made fully aware of this Student Protection Plan and their responsibilities within that, particularly with regard to implications arising from proposed changes or modifications to validated programmes.

The London School will make sure to engage with, and subsequently give reasonable notice to, students and applicants when the London School needs to make material changes to their programme, which will be undertaken in accordance with the London School's student terms and conditions and with the refund and compensation policy. All changes to advertised programmes will be identified ahead of prospectus printing, where possible, and the School's website will be updated within 10 working days after changes have been formally approved.

If the London School needs to implement the measures in our Student Protection Plan, we will institute a dedicated hotline, email, FAQ and drop-in support service (including academic and professional service staff and independent advice) to support students collectively and individually. Alongside this, the London School will seek to support student transfer arrangements as applicable (with our partners, other local UK Higher Education providers or internally, across the global network of Istituto Marangoni Schools, in line with student choices).

5. REVIEW OF THE PLAN

The London School reviews the Student Protection Plan annually via the Academic Board, the Audit and Risk Committee and, ultimately, the Board of Directors. Student Representatives participate in the annual review, as well as the appointed Academic Student Governor. In addition to this, the School will inform students if there are to be material changes to their programme, communicating with current or prospective students through the Admissions Team (applicants) and Quality Assurance Office (enrolled students), ensuring appropriate advice is provided so that students can make informed decisions on the continuation of their studies in line with the student terms and conditions.

6. COMPLAINTS

Students or applicants can raise a complaint using the Istituto Marangoni London Student Complaints Procedure available here [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>] or the Istituto Marangoni London Admissions Appeals Procedure available here [<https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/schools/london-school-of-fashion-and-design/london-school-regulatory-documentation>].

7. DOCUMENT REVISION

Document	Student Protection Plan: IM London School OfS Registration, Condition C3
----------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------

Approved by	Academic Board Audit and Risk Committee Board of Directors
Approved date	18 th July 2023