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## **Student protection plan for the period 2018/19**

**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**

### The University

With annual income approaching £300 million and net assets of £285 million, UAL's solid financial position means that the risk of the university being unable to operate as a whole is very low. Surpluses generated over the last five years have been healthy, averaging above 8.0 per cent of income. It is envisaged that this will continue into the future and compares favourably to the forecast sector mean for the three-year period ending July 2020 of 2.3 per cent.

This strong performance has enabled UAL to build up substantial cash reserves to enable investment in facilities to meet the needs and demands of the future. It also provides significant financial firepower in the short or medium term to respond to any operational risk or challenge should they crystallise. This is demonstrated by the usual liquidity measure used by the sector (days ratio of net liquid assets to total expenditure) where UAL's estimated annual average figure of 299 days for the three years ending 31 July 2020 compares very positively to the forecast sector mean of 91 days.

The university has a strong track record of successfully completing substantial capital programmes. Planned future developments will be financed from a mixture of cash reserves, the sale of redundant sites and long-term loan facilities that have already been approved and put in place. Additionally, hedging mechanisms have also been set up to provide protection against any significant increases in interest rates.

Over the years, the University has done well to incrementally diversify its overall risk by developing two major streams of income - home tuition fees and overseas tuition fees - both now in excess of £97 million. As set out in the 2015-22 strategy, the challenge ahead will be to diversify risk further by developing a comparable third stream of academic enterprise income. With its Short Course, Awarding Body and Language Centre operations well established and consideration being given to the development of other activities linked to its core business, UAL has made good progress to date with this aim.

## College Teaching Sites

UAL comprises 6 colleges based on 14 teaching sites spread across London. UAL has Disaster Response Plans to deal with major disasters such as fire that affect any site directly and plans to address major incidents in London such as terror attack. Disaster response plans are regularly tested and the disaster recovery team are fully trained. UAL has security on all its sites with a physical presence during opening hours. We have updated counter terrorism training for key staff and police security bulletins are circulated to key staff.

The majority of UAL's 14 teaching sites are freehold owned or on long leases (9 freehold, 3 long lease and 2 on leases of 10 years plus). Having sites spread across the City means our activities are not focussed on one particular district and so any incident is likely to only affect a proportion of our students and we are likely to have the ability to relocate activities to an alternative site, on a temporary basis, should one site be taken out of use. The University also has insurance cover which includes business interruption.

### London College of Fashion move to a single campus at new East Bank development on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in 2022

LCF will move from its existing 6 sites to a single dedicated new build campus in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in East London (the site of the London Olympics in 2012). Current plans are for occupation of this new campus by September 2022. The paragraphs below give the risk assessment for students starting their studies in 2018/19 and those in 2019/20. This information is also being made available to existing students at LCF and will be provided to applicants for course starting in 18/19 and 19/20.

#### 2018/19 Starters

The risk of disruption to most students commencing their studies in 2018/19 is low as any students on three year degrees who complete in time will remain on existing sites. The same applies to any students on four year degrees or whose studies extend to four years for other reasons as detailed in the paragraph below. The risk of disruption to students whose studies extend to five years or more is moderate. The move will affect two groups of students: those who embark on a four year integrated masters degree and who opt for a placement year in their degree, making the duration five years; those students who take a year out or repeat a year on a four year integrated masters degree. The students in these categories are likely to undertake the final year of their studies in the new East Bank campus at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. A comprehensive move plan will put in place measures to support all students moving site for the launch of this new campus for LCF.

#### 2019/20 Starters

The risk of disruption to most students commencing their studies in 2019/20 is low as any students on three year degrees who complete in time will remain on existing sites. The risk of disruption for students whose studies extend to four years or more is moderate. The move will affect four groups of students: those who embark on a four year integrated masters degree; those who opt for a placement year in their degree, making the duration four years; and those students who take a year out or repeat a year on a three year undergraduate degree; those who embark on the one year International Preparation for Fashion course and then successfully progress to a three year or longer undergraduate degree. The students in these categories are likely to undertake the final year of their studies in the new East Bank campus at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. A comprehensive move plan will put in place measures to support all students moving site for the launch of this new campus for LCF.

## Chelsea, Camberwell, Wimbledon – Creating New Histories

Launched in April 2017, Creating New Histories is our five-year strategy with an ambition to build an exciting, attractive, credible and sustainable future for Chelsea, Camberwell and Wimbledon colleges. A restructuring of the leadership team has been undertaken with Deans now in place leading the three subject areas of Art, Design, and Performance. The next phase involves a Portfolio Review and plans have now been announced for some changes to the location and portfolio of courses across the three colleges.

The specific plans for existing courses are detailed in the paragraphs below which in summary involve the merger of some courses and the relocation of these and other courses from one college site to another. The risk of not being able to complete studies for students currently studying on courses affected by these changes is very low as UAL has committed to teaching out existing courses for all students. There is a low risk of disruption as a result of these changes as the colleges will follow the UAL policy on course changes and draw up a comprehensive move plan that will address specific impacts on physical resources including studios and technical and workshops and specific impacts on subject expert staffing.

### Portfolio Plan

Details of the forthcoming course portfolio changes were published in May 2018. In summary:

- some courses are being relocated and will be taught on a different site from 19/20;
- some courses are being merged and also being relocated, again from 19/20;
- some courses are being closed with the last intake of students in 18/19;
- some new courses are being developed with the first intake of students in 19/20.

Information on the details of these course portfolio changes and the impact on current and future students is being made available as follows with an assessment of the impact on different cohorts of student also given below.

Existing students – Information sessions are planned to run in May and June 2018 in each college for existing students to get full details of the impact on them, if any, for their courses.

Applicants and enquirers - full details will be available on the UAL website.

### Students studying in 17/18

These changes will not affect students who are studying on any year of the courses concerned in 17/18. Courses due for closure, move of location, or merger will be taught out at existing sites. Students who take a year out, or are required to retake a year or a unit may be affected, depending on the course, details will be made clear to all students.

### Students starting in 18/19

UAL is committed to teaching out courses at existing locations and students on courses due to close, merge or be relocated, will be the last cohort in existing locations. This may affect students who take a year out or are required to retake a unit. The College at which students are currently studying will arrange regular discussions with students about the course changes.

### Students starting in 19/20

New, merged or relocated courses will start in new locations from 19/20 and so students starting in that year will not be affected by these changes.

## Postgraduate Course Changes

A number of postgraduate courses are also planned for closure, merger and/or relocation. There will be no impact on existing students or students entering these courses in 18/19 as these courses will be taught out on existing sites.

## UAL Tier 4 Licence

UAL has Highly Trusted Status from the Home Office and a Tier 4 licence to issue Certificates of Acceptance of Studies to overseas students which enables them to get a visa to study in the UK. The risk that UAL would lose this Licence either for a temporary period or permanently is low as UAL has a vast amount of experience of handling thousands of applications from overseas students and monitoring their attendance in line with Home Office requirements. Our structures, processes and auditing arrangements are regularly tested. The University commissions an annual audit of its Tier 4 compliance processes through an external audit firm. The annual audit focusses on the key compliance risks and outcomes are routinely reported to the Board of Governors and the University's external auditors. The University has a dedicated team of specialist Tier 4 administrators managed across the Colleges through the University's Academic Registry.

## Subject Specific Assessment

UAL is a specialist university focussed on the disciplines of arts and design and related areas. Within that arts and design discipline category are distinct subject areas. The risk that we are no longer able to deliver courses within these subject areas is very low because as the largest specialist arts and design HE institution in the UK UAL benefits from some unique features which safeguard our students in the event of course closure or related developments.

- UAL is collegiate and subject areas are offered in more than one of our six colleges.
- UAL is large and multi-site and has the physical and staffing resources in place to adapt to changed circumstances such that the rights of its students to finish their course can be safeguarded.

## Franchise Arrangements

UAL has a partnership agreement with Hong Kong University, School of Professional and Continuing Education, under which some UAL courses are franchised for delivery by HKU (currently 3 courses). The risk for these students taught by HKU not being able to complete their studies is low and the partnership agreement between UAL and HKU details the responsibilities for teaching out where a discontinuation of the partnership occurs.

## Note on Course Changes

UAL is committed to maintaining the currency and value of its degrees and to that end academic staff review content on a regular basis. Changes can be put forward to the content and curriculum of courses and to their assessment and UAL has a set of modification procedures that apply in these cases with approval at an appropriate level for the extent of change. Changes are normally implemented from the next intake of students. On occasion and where the changes will be of benefit to current students the University will consider the early introduction of changes to courses. Approval in these cases is only given once all students affected have been consulted and any concerns raised have been satisfactorily addressed.

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

There are currently no risks under which students would not be able to complete their studies that UAL considers to be likely to take place. However the following details UAL's policy when we decide to close courses.

- UAL has a 'teach out' policy under which we commit to ensuring the course of study can be completed by all currently enrolled students, even where the course is being discontinued and we will not be taking on new student cohorts.
- Teach out arrangements aim to be in the original location and original college of UAL.
- Where the course needs to move sites students will be transferred to another site of UAL, with as much notice as possible to allow staff and students to plan a transition.
- In extreme circumstances UAL would transfer the teaching out of a course to a different college of UAL.
- UAL is committed to making sure students on running out courses receive the same high quality of provision that all courses receive. To ensure this is the case a set of procedures governs the decision to close courses, how they are managed during closure, and the special monitoring arrangements we apply to these situations. These Course Closure Procedures can be accessed here.

## **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**

UAL now has a Refund and Compensation Policy (attached below)

UAL's current assessment is that there are no students for whom we have identified a risk of non-continuation of study. Nevertheless should an instance occur that commits UAL to invoking its Refund and Compensation Policy we have sufficient cash reserves to draw on to meet conceivable demands. UAL's financial strength is outlined in section 1 in the first paragraph.

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

The University will publish this Student Protection Plan on the website for potential students. Students will be made aware of the Plan as part of the offer process with a link provided in the offer letter.

We will publicise this Student Protection Plan to current students through placement on the student orientated intranet, and reference in induction and other material given to students at the start of their studies.

The University has consulted the elected sabbatical team of the Students' Union in this initial development of the first version of the Student Protection Plan. Approval of the plan is by Academic

Board which includes student representatives. The University commits to working with the SU as the plan is revised through the regular business meetings held between senior university staff and the SU sabbatical team.

The Student Protection Plan is approved by the University's Academic Board who delegate the ongoing monitoring and updating of the plan to the Academic Planning Sub Committee (APSC). All new course developments and course closure plans are monitored by APSC. Decisions on individual course closures or other changes that need to be reflected in the plan will be considered and approved by the Academic Planning Sub Committee and the overall plan reapproved on an annual basis by Academic Board. The University's Course Closure Procedures require a consultation with students and staff before a decision to close is taken and the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee takes an overview of all courses in closure.

UAL commits to notifying students of any changes that may affect their studies in a timely manner. Should any measures in the Student Protection Plan need to be triggered, students will be notified by the Dean of School or Academic Programmes.

UAL commits to taking a decision to close undergraduate courses at least 12 months before the intake of the last cohort and 9 months for postgraduate courses.

UAL commits to consulting with students already studying on a course before taking a decision to close.

The University works closely with its Students' Union on all university business and should this Student Protection Plan need to be invoked UAL will work with the SU to put in place ways for students to inform themselves of changes proposed or actions taken in response to events. The Students' Union will provide independent advice to individuals or groups of students so they are clear on their rights and can question and challenge the University's proposals if they consider this appropriate.

*[Version 1 approved by Academic Board under Chair's Action on 21st May 2018]  
[Approved by the Office for Students on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018]*