

Student Protection Plan

Purpose

The policy is written in line with the Office for Students (OfS) guidelines and regulations under the requirements of the Higher Education and Research Act (2017) to develop and maintain a Student Protection Plan (SPP) in order to ensure the continuity of studies of current and future students in the event of discontinuation in operations.

Introduction

Applied Business Academy (ABA) established in December 2013 as an independent academy and is located in Dockland, London. Currently, ABA is running Level 3 Apprenticeship courses in Digital Marketing and Higher Education courses, the aim is to provide educational services to Home Students wishing to pursue higher education level 4 to 7 programmes in IT training.

Nevertheless, there may be occasions that unforeseen and uncontrollable events may occasionally occur which mean that changes will have to be made to ensure the continuity of student studies, as also detailed in student handbook.

Such events may be triggered by situations such as (but not limited to):

- restriction or withdrawal of validating agreement(s) by awarding bodies;
- significant material changes;
- inability to operate as intended;
- loss or restriction of licenses;
- revocation of OfS registration;
- closure or relocation of location;
- a decision not to continue running an existing course;
- major changes in the contents of a course;
- removal of necessary license(s) to run a course;
- loss of accreditation by regulator(s);
- temporary disruption(s) of any kind due to uncontrollable events;
- industrial action by staff;
- inability to maintain specific and necessary resources to run a course;
- inability to deliver specific modes of study such as full-time, part-time and other combinations;
- inability to deliver specific timings of study such as day-time, evening or weekend;
- the unanticipated departure of key members of staff;
- inability to recruit staff with the necessary skills to deliver a course.

Our commitment to current students, applicants and future students

Should any of the disruptions described above or any other unforeseen event takes place and imposes a threat to the continuation of student studies, ABA undertakes the commitment to:

- we will announce it immediately to the student committee via their email addresses and we will post meeting minutes on our student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- should this student protection plan be triggered, students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was decided, or notified to the academy;
- academy location, or course changes, will not take place during the middle of the academic year but rather such changes will be implemented before the commencement of the academic year;
- should the campus need to be relocated, we undertake to keep this within the Greater London area;
- should any programme of studies, or mode of study, deemed necessary to close we undertake to phase out courses in a timely fashion so that the academy 'teaches out' students to the originally stated time scale(s) before programme of studies or mode of study closure and thus not disrupt the continuity of student studies;
- in the event of imposed academy closure due to ABA's accreditation being revoked by its regulator(s), or a partner awarding body withdraws validation agreement(s), we undertake to agree with these institutions an orderly and gradual closure in order to minimise such disruption to student studies;
- ABA also undertakes the commitment to work with individual students and assist them to secure another provider, should they wish to do so;
- ABA will return to the funding organisation (refund), or directly to the student if self-payer, or to the student sponsor, the proportional relevant student fees (if any) so that students do not suffer any financial losses;
- ABA undertakes the commitment to provide reasonable maintenance costs including lost time (if relevant) and travelling expenses for the remainder of the academic year from the date that ABA cannot continue teaching affected students in the event that they will need to travel to the location of the new provider if that location is not within the same city as ABA's affected centre.

Measures to be taken in specific situations

- In this section numerous disruptive scenarios are identified and discussed in more detail along with mitigating measures to protect the continuity of student studies.
- ABA undertakes the commitment to take all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to those services and to affected students.

If ABA is no longer able to operate, or has decided to cease operating:

- We will announce this immediately to the student committee via email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was notified or decided;
- meetings with awarding bodies will be organised immediately with the aim of finding another provider for the students to continue their studies with.
- ABA also undertakes the commitment to work with individual students and assist them to secure another provider, should they wish to do so;
- ABA will return to the funding organisation (refund), or directly to the student if self-payer, or to the student sponsor, the proportional relevant student fees (if any) so that students do not suffer any financial losses;
- ABA undertakes the commitment to provide reasonable maintenance costs including lost time (if relevant) and travelling expenses for the remainder of the academic year from the date of the change so that students do not incur additional costs if it is necessary to travel to the location of the new provider if that location is not in the same approximate geographical area of ABA

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA financial performance year-on-year is stable and is also supported by a clearly defined and realistic strategic plan.

If ABA has lost validation(s) for one or more of its courses that are being delivered:

- we will announce it to the student committee without any delay and directly inform the affected students via their email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our website and student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was notified or decided;
- we undertake to discuss and agree with the institution that has revoked the particular validation a time scale so that the academy 'teaches out' students to the originally stated time scale(s) before the course closes in ABA;
- continuing with we also undertake to agree with the institution that has revoked the particular validation an orderly and gradual closure in order to minimise such disruption to student studies;
- meetings with the institution that has revoked the particular validation will be organised immediately with the aim of either finding another provider for the students to continue their studies with awarding body ;
- ABA also undertakes the commitment to work with individual students and assist them to secure another provider, should they wish to do so ;

- where applicable, ABA will return to the funding organisation (refund), or directly to the student if self-payer, or to the student sponsor, the proportional relevant student fees (if any) so that students do not suffer any financial losses;
- ABA undertakes the commitment to provide reasonable maintenance costs including lost time (if relevant) and travelling expenses for the remainder of the academic year from the date of the change so that students do not incur additional costs if it is necessary to travel to the location of the new provider if that location is not in the same approximate geographical area of ABA's campus.

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA's awarding bodies visit and audit ABA regularly and any (if any) issues identified are addressed immediately (as per Chapter B7 OF UKQC) to the satisfaction of the awarding body. In the history of ABA there has never been a case that a validation was lost, supporting the low risk of this scenario.

If ABA is, or expects to be, operating with probationary validation(s):

- ABA will be working closely with the relevant awarding body that has stipulated the probation with the aim of fully complying with the relevant requirements and guidelines on the given time scale(s) with the aim of overcoming the stipulated probation and thus protect the continuity of student studies;
- ABA will agree a detailed action plan with the relevant awarding body that has stipulated the probation and work towards meeting the condition(s) of the probation;
- a summary report, or a link towards the report (if any), of the relevant awarding body that has stipulated the probation together with the action plan will be published on ABA's website and student portal;
- we will announce it to the student committee without any delay and directly inform the affected students via their ABA email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our website and student portal ;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was notified or decided.

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA's awarding bodies visit and audit ABA regularly and any (if any) issues identified are addressed immediately to the satisfaction of the awarding body. Nevertheless, it may be the case that an awarding body stipulates operating a particular course under a probationary validation or subject to stipulated conditions. ABA undertakes the commitment to work closely with this awarding body in order to meet the given conditions according to requirements and hence maintain low risk in the operation of

any course(s).

If ABA is no longer able to deliver courses to students in one or more subject areas and/or departments:

- we will announce it immediately to the student committee and the student body via their ABA email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our website and on student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- should this student protection plan be triggered, students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was decided or notified to the academy ;
- academy location, or course changes, will not take place during any one academic year but rather such changes will be implemented before the commencement of the academic year;
- in the event of imposed academy closure due to ABA's accreditation being revoked by its regulator(s), or a partner awarding body withdraws validation agreement(s), we undertake to agree with these institutions an orderly and gradual closure in order to minimise such disruption to student studies;
- ABA also undertakes the commitment to work with individual students and assist them to secure another provider, should they wish to do so;
- ABA will return to the funding organisation (refund), or directly to the student if self-payer, or to the student sponsor, the proportional relevant student fees (if any) so that students do not suffer any financial losses;
- ABA undertakes the commitment to provide reasonable maintenance costs including lost time (if relevant) and travelling expenses for the remainder of the academic year from the date that ABA cannot continue teaching affected students in the event that they will need to travel to the location of the new provider if that location is not in the same approximate geographical area.

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA has a rationalised and clearly defined course portfolio with all the necessary resources in place to ensure continuity and effectiveness. The same applies for faculty departments responsible for delivering these courses. Departments and courses are well resourced and there are no considerations or problems in any of these areas.

If ABA is no longer able to deliver material components of one or more courses, particularly if there are areas of particular vulnerability, such as single person dependencies for teaching:

This particular scenario is highly unlikely to take place given that ABA does not deliver any specialist courses. Courses on offer are broad in scope and only require, for example, standard resources and material components such as learning and teaching aids, Learning Resource Centre(s) and a

student portal. All necessary virtual and physical components including relevant systems, processes and documentation are in place and are well maintained and regularly updated. Given the volume of staffing in each course on offer it is also never the case that particular courses are dependent on a single person since there are numerous academic staff that hold relevant qualifications to be suitable substitutes.

Nevertheless, should there is the need to address such a scenario, ABA undertakes the commitment to:

- we will announce it immediately to the student committee and inform the affected students via their ABA email addresses;
- we will immediately replace the relevant resource(s) in order to ensure the continuity of student studies in the affected course(s);
- upon replacement or substitution of any such resource(s) we will confirm this to the student committee and the affected students via their ABA email addresses.

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA is a well-established learning institution with all the relevant resources in place and with ongoing investment in resources. In addition, given that the courses on offer are all broad in scope there are no specific vulnerabilities involved or special resources needed, neither any of the courses are dependent on single individuals.

If ABA is no longer able to deliver one or more modes of study to students, particularly if there is a consideration to withdraw a mode of study:

- We will announce it immediately to the student committee via their email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our website and on student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings;
- should this student protection plan be triggered, students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was decided or notified to the academy ;
- should any programme of studies, or mode of study, deemed necessary to close we undertake to phase out courses in a timely fashion so that the academy 'teaches out' students to the originally stated time scale(s) before the programme of studies, or mode of study closure and thus not disrupt the continuity of student studies ;
- ABA also undertakes the commitment to work with individual students and assist them to secure another provider, should they wish to do so ;
- ABA will return to the funding organisation (refund), or directly to the student if self-payer, or to the student sponsor, the proportional relevant student fees (if any) so that students do not suffer any financial losses;

- ABA undertakes the commitment to provide reasonable maintenance costs including lost time (if relevant) and travelling expenses for the remainder of the academic year from the date that ABA cannot continue teaching affected students in the event that they will need to travel to the location of the new provider if that location is not in the same approximate geographical area.

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA is an established learning institution and does not intend to withdraw any of its published modes of study.

If ABA is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student such as international students:

ABA does not have Tier 4 approval by the UKVI and it thus does not recruit any international students, neither it intends to do so in the future.

- ABA's strategic plan clearly state that a key drive for ABA is to widen participation and eliminate barriers to learning. ABA is also determined to make a contribution to social mobility.
- All types of individual students that do not require Tier 4 sponsorship are welcome and ABA will do its utmost to facilitate any particular needs that they may require to enable them achieve their academic potential and succeed in their studies whilst with ABA. To that end, ABA has student welfare officer who aim at helping students that need further help in their studies.
- Equally important, ABA works closely with registered disable students to help them secure an appropriate Disability Student Allowance in order to enable them to acquire even more specialist resources and thus to assist them in their efforts to achieve their academic potential.

Should ABA is no longer able to recruit or teach a particular type of student:

- we will announce it immediately to the student committee and the affected student(s) via their email addresses and we will post relevant comments on our website and student portal;
- we will instigate immediate student consultation and representation in relevant decision-making meetings);
- should this student protection plan be triggered, students will be contacted within two working days of the day of which the applicable change was decided or notified to the academy;
- upon conclusion of consultation with relevant parties and should there be a need for further action a decision will be taken on how to help individual cases and hence protect the continuity of students to affected students (if any).

The risk associated with this scenario (on a scale of low, medium, high) is low. ABA is committed as articulated in its vision and mission statement to widen participation and eliminate barriers to learning. To that end, ABA will continue recruit all types of students that meet ABA's entry criteria and awarding bodies' entry requirements and is committed to helping these individuals achieve their academic potential. As to international students ABA does not have Tier 4 approval by the UKVI and it thus does not recruit any international students, neither it intends to do so in the future.

Student Feedback and participation

- This student protection plan will be reviewed annually.
- Students wishing to provide feedback or make a complain regarding this student protection plan or the processes adopted in the unlikely occurrence(s) of any event(s) identified are welcomed to do so by following ABA's standard channels.
- Before a final approval is given on any version of this student protection plan a process of consultation will commence with the student via the student committee. Specifically, it will be communicated to the student representatives of the student committee so that it can be communicated accordingly and discussed among the students independently as may be required by students. The student committee is then required to provide any comments, concerns and/or proposed amendments to ABA so that the student protection plan fully reflects student views.

Provision of student independent advice

In the unlikely situation that any of the identified events in this student protection plan take place, or when the student committee reviews this protection plan and students wish to receive independent advice, ABA can make such an additional facility available to students on request by the student committee to the management.

Information about student protection plan to all stakeholders

This student protection plan is published in ABA's website for the benefit of all stakeholder groups and in particular current students, applicants and future students. It is also published in student portal for the benefit of current students and references toward this student protection plan are made in the student handbook. It is equally published in ABA's staff handbook for the benefit of all staff members.

Student refund and compensation fund

ABA is an established and long-standing private management academy with all the necessary resources in place that are reviewed every year and are maintained and augmented regularly.

In addition, ABA is currently exploring insurance policies as an alternative method of cover.

UK Quality Code references: Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education
Chapter B3 Learning and teaching
Chapter B5: Student Engagement
Chapter B7: External Examining
Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring And Review
Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Appendices:

- 1. Public Information policy
- 2. Review and sign off of public information
- 3. Student recruitment and enrolment
- 4. Student engagement
- 5. Student Handbook
- 6. External Examination procedure
- 7. Fee payments and discounting
- 8. Fee refunds
- 9. Due diligence
- 10. Use of external advisers