

Student Protection Plan for students on Staffordshire University awards studying at Ashton Sixth Form College (Stamford Park Trust)

Provider's name: Ashton Sixth Form College (Stamford Park Trust)

UKPRN: 10082366

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About the college

Ashton Sixth Form College (Stamford Park Trust) is an academic and vocational college in Tameside. The College serves approximately 2500 16-19 year olds each year and approximately 400 adult and higher education students.

The College is proud of its small but unique offer to adult learners in the borough. **The College offers awards with Staffordshire University and this protection plan pertains to those students enrolled on one of those awards.** Staffordshire University has oversight of the quality of the awards the College offers and ensures compliance with UKVI. The College operates a full quality assurance cycle which complements the quality assurance arrangements operated by the University. Together, these ensure and assure the offer of the named higher education programmes at the College.

Quality measures and reporting

The College quality assurance cycle is articulated within the 'Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Policy'. This outlines the systems and processes used to lead, ensure and assure the quality of student experience at the College including the reporting structures.

The College's strategic plan is underpinned by departmental Self-Assessment Reports and Quality Improvement Plans (annually) in which Key Performance Indicators are articulated. Success measures are shared with the university as per their requirements in order for them to have oversight of Quality and to fulfil statutory reporting.

The College has in place a Risk Management Framework which the College uses to monitor and update its changing risk profile and identify mitigating actions to be implemented. Risk management is part of the Business Planning and Strategic Review process. This is led and managed by the Senior Leadership team (SLT) and is overseen by the Board of Governors.

The College also has in place a Business Continuity Plan so that the College can mitigate the impact of any incidents as quickly as possible by referring to robust business continuity plans. These plans are updated on an annual basis, or as the need arises.

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

This Student Protection Plan sets out what measures we have in place to protect students studying at Ashton Sixth Form College (Stamford Park Trust) on a Staffordshire University award. This applies in the event that a risk to the continuation of your studies should arise. The type of event or changes, which might cause such a risk, may include but are not limited to:

- significant material change;
- a decision to close the College has been taken;
- a strategic decision by the College to close a course;
- loss or restriction of validation or franchise status with Staffordshire University;
- withdrawal of designation for student support purposes;
- a decision is taken not to run a course for the subsequent year;
- major changes in year to course content;
- changes to regulatory framework affecting a specific course;
- loss of accreditation from regulatory bodies, e.g. Ofsted, Office for Students, etc;
- disruption of College activity (e.g. temporary disruption within term-time not covered by any of the above);
- industrial action by College Higher Education staff or third parties;
- the unexpected departure of key members of Higher Education staff.

Likelihood: The risks listed above are all considered low risk.

The measures contained in this plan are in addition to the protections students have under consumer protection law, and do not impinge on their consumer rights. The College and the University retain the right to make minor adjustments and improvements to courses, programmes and module content year on year, and these in themselves do not warrant the triggering of student protection measures. However, if a student feels the course as delivered varies significantly from what they expected, they may be able to seek recourse under consumer or contract law.

The College and the University partner has other policies in place which allow us to mitigate the risks that are outlined above, these include:

- Admissions Policy (College and University)
- Programme Closure (University)
- Credit transfer policy (University)
- Refund and Compensation Policy (College and University)
- Fees policy (College)

These policies have been developed in line with the Quality Code for Higher Education and CMA guidance.

Information about the policy to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that the College or the University are no longer able to preserve continuation of study.

If a student's tuition fees are paid to the University, the University's Fee, Refund and Compensation policy can be found at <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/legal/policies/refundand-compensation-policy.jsp>. The policy is written in line with University regulations and approved through the relevant University committees. This is applicable to all of the awards currently run in partnership with Staffordshire University. Should the College introduce programmes or modes of study which require tuition fees to be paid directly to the College, the College's Fee policy can be referred to in conjunction.

Key actions that will be taken in the event of the College no longer being able to preserve continuation of study:

- It should be noted that we will make arrangements to 'teach out' current students where we have voluntarily decided to leave the market or close a programme. This means that we commit to ensuring the course of study can be completed by all currently enrolled students, even though the course is being discontinued and we will not be taking on new student cohorts. Where this is not the case:
- The University's Credit Transfer policy allows advance standing with another university/provider should a suitable alternative programme be unavailable.
- We will work with students to discuss their options to change programmes, select alternative content or transfer. We will ensure that students have access to independent advice through the College are signposted to external sources of advice should you require this support.
- All reasonable steps will be taken to minimise the resultant disruption to those services and to affected students by, for example:
 - • offering affected students the chance to move to another course;
 - • delivering a modified version of the same course;
 - • providing assistance to affected students to switch to a different provider.
- Where a student is required to transfer to another course, or move to another institution, there are likely to be implications for student finance arrangements. The HE Admissions team will be notified of students affected in the event of any the above steps being taken.
- The HE Admissions team will contact affected students and provide information, advice and guidance to support them through the transfer.
- The College is committed to communicating any changes to students as early as possible, with clear information and options.

Information about how we will communicate with students about this student protection plan.

This Student Protection Plan will be publicised and communicated in the following ways:

- On the College website
- Within enrolment and admissions communications
- Should the College need to enact any element of the plan students will be notified within 1 week of the decision being formally approved and made aware of their rights as stipulated in the plan and CMA guidance.