

Provider's name: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Provider's UKPRN: 10007771

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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**

*Please provide an evidenced statement of your assessment of the range and level of risks to the continuation of study for your students. For example:*

The Governing Body is responsible for the School's system of control and for reviewing its effectiveness. The School has established a risk management framework to support the School Strategy, and this framework was reviewed and updated by the Senior Leadership Team and the School's Audit and Risk Committee in June 2017. The framework includes a strategic risk register that identifies the high level "red" and "amber" risks linked to the Strategy, and provides a tool for evaluating and managing each risk. Strategic risks are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, the Management Board and the Committees of Council. Risk is also a standing item at all meetings of Council. Risk registers are in place for all Faculties and for central services, which assess the likelihood and impact of operational risks.

We have assessed the likelihood and impact of risks that may affect the continuation of study for our students and have concluded that there is no significant risk that students enrolling on our courses will not be able to continue their studies. We have considered our operating environment and outline below those risks which form part of our assessment.

### **Institutional Closure**

The risk of LSHTM closing is very low. The School has been in continuous operation since 1899 and has been at its present location since 1929. The School is in a stable financial position: we maintain strong cash balances, which are well in excess of our annual tuition fee income; our annual accounts are signed by our auditors on the basis that we are a going concern for at least a further 12 months (but in reality, much longer than this); and we have historically maintained financial surpluses and annually submit our financial forecasts to HEFCE (now OfS), which sets out how we intend to continue to be financially sustainable, and manage and mitigate major financial risks in future years. We continue to have strong student recruitment and attract significant funding for research. In addition to this, unlike most Higher Education Institutions we have a large distance learning provision and a truly global student cohort, meaning we are more resilient to changes in local markets. The School has business continuity plans in place to ensure that students can continue their studies following situations of fire, medical issues, terrorism, security issues, building related issues and natural events.

### **Building Works**

There is a moderate risk that building work could affect the student learning experience. The risk is moderate as the School normally plans major building works in advance and makes appropriate arrangements to use alternative spaces either within the building or in the adjacent local area.

### **Loss of Member Institution of the University of London Status**

The risk that LSHTM will cease to be a Member Institution of the University of London is very low because the University of London's 2016-17 Financial Statements state that it is a going concern and LSHTM's membership is unconditional.

### **Suspension of Course**

The risk that LSHTM will suspend one or multiple courses is low. There is currently an ongoing education review to assess the architecture and provision of LSHTM's academic portfolio. However, the majority of our London-based students are on 1 year taught masters' programmes meaning any courses highlighted by the review as being at risk of suspension can be closed the following academic year.

### **Major Changes in Year to Course Content**

The risk that LSHTM will make major changes to course content whilst students are enrolled on the course is very low as courses undergo a periodic quality review every 4 years. Where major changes are needed LSHTM has robust procedures for proposing and approving their amendments with any approved changes having effect from the next academic year. As the majority of our student are on one-year taught Masters Programmes, we are able to continually update & improve programmes between cohorts.

### **Suspension or revocation of Tier 4 Sponsor Licence**

The risk that the provider's Tier 4 Sponsor License will be revoked or suspended due to non-compliance with UKVI guidelines has been identified due the relatively small number of CASs that we issue and therefore, the small number of declines required to reach the threshold for revocation of our license. We have taken measures to reduce risk in all areas of Tier 4 which include an Internal Audit review of compliance; an externally procured audit on current compliance processes; monitoring of key indicators such as Visa decline rates; continuous monitoring of changing legislation and policy to ensure compliance and development of external specialist networks and peer mock audits to highlight areas of development. A new Immigration Advisory Service has also been established.

### **Industrial Action**

The risk that student's classes may be affected by industrial action is considered moderate. Whilst in most cases this may only result in a short term disruption of studies, given the specialist nature of the institution, the fact that taught degree courses typically last no more than one year and the reduced number of contact hours compared to typical undergraduate study, this risk has the potential to affect the continuation of study for our students.

### **Loss of Key Staff**

The risk that students will not be able to continue their studies due to a loss of key staff with particular consideration to those studying in niche areas and requiring specialist supervisors is low. This is because the School employs a large number of highly skilled staff for research purposes in a broad range of specialist areas, has developed strong links with similar institutions such as the

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and operates a variety of scientific groups and centres. As such, we are confident in our ability to find suitable replacements to ensure the continuity of study when key staff leave LSHTM. It is also worth stressing that our turnover rates are low, given the high status and specialist nature of the institution, meaning that staff are strongly attached to the institution.

### **Mental Health**

LSHTM recognises that mental health issues can affect a student's ability to continue their studies. We offer free of charge counselling services to all students, which include face-to-face sessions with student counsellors, crisis support and other counselling related resources on our intranet and where concerns are more serious, referral to a Consultant Psychiatrist. In addition to this, LSHTM has undertaken a programme to train academic and professional service staff as mental health first aiders and has a policy in place to raise any causes for concern to ensure that students are appropriately supported and able to continue with their studies.

Where authorised by our students, counsellors can arrange a Case Meeting with faculty members to discuss and agree appropriate academic and psychological support to enable students to continue with their studies.

### **Disability**

The Student Advice and Counselling Service supports students with disabilities and prepares learning support agreements. These agreements outline the services and reasonable adjustments we will provide to individual students based on their particular needs and the requirements of their programme of study; to ensure that they are properly supported and able to continue with their studies.

### **Pregnancy**

LSHTM has a New and Expectant Mother's policy and our Student Advice and Counselling Service can assist students who need support during or after pregnancy to help reduce the impact on student's ability to continue with their studies.

### **Financial Hardship**

LSHTM recognises that financial hardship can affect student's ability to continue with their studies. We maintain a Hardship Fund that can award students who experience financial hardship with up to £1500.

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

*Please provide an evidenced statement of the measures you have put in place to preserve continuation of study for your students in those areas where you consider the risk to be increased.*

### **Building Works**

Where we are unable to deliver a programme in a particular building, alternative arrangements are made to utilise space in nearby buildings.

### **Suspension of Course**

If a course is highlighted by the education review as being at risk of closure an appropriate teach-out plan will be agreed by Senate. Where this course is a distance learning course we are required by the University of London to continue the course for a period of 5 years to enable students to complete within their maximum period of registration.

### **Industrial Action**

If industrial action occurs, LSHTM will monitor and record all classes that are affected by this action. Where it is known, or becomes apparent that a lecturer will not be available to teach, LSHTM will play and otherwise make available to students a recorded lecture of the previous year where available. Following conclusion of the industrial action, students may make extenuating circumstances claims where examinations have been disrupted. In addition, LSHTM will assess the level of teaching received by students on each course and make appropriate mitigation.

## **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**

*Please link to or provide a copy of your refund and compensation policy and ensure that it makes provision for:*

In the very unlikely event that a student is unable to complete study due to the closure of a programme or the School as a whole, the School has sufficient funds to meet any outstanding commitments for bursary payments and to provide reasonable compensation for tuition and maintenance cost. Refunds and compensation will be made in accordance with our tuition fee policy and student complaints procedure

As a postgraduate institution the Tuition Fee Policy does not include refunds for tuition fees to the Student Loans Company, as this would apply only to undergraduate students. Our policy is to refund to the payee of the fees, normally the student or a sponsoring organisation. As LSHTM buildings are in a single city centre site and we have arrangements with other HE providers in the immediate area to rent space when required. In situations where a student is affected by a change in location, their journey should not change significantly. Nevertheless, where students are materially disadvantaged by such a change, they may seek compensation by following the student [complaints procedure](#)

In the event of significant refunds and compensation we will call upon our cash reserves, which are materially greater than our total annual tuition fee income, giving us the financial scope to deal with even a major event where a high number of refunds and compensation became payable.

We have in place professional indemnity insurance, which would be called upon as financial recourse for any significant student compensation claims.

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

We will publicise the plan to current & future students by publishing it on the website with other School Policy documents. We also reference the plan in other relevant policy and procedures such as the Tuition and Refund Policy and Complaints Policy.

We will review our student protection plan annually and future drafts will be sent to the Student Representative Council for comment. This will allow students the opportunity to give their feedback and provide input on student protection plans that we publish.

We will inform our students of material changes to their courses as soon as practical after we become aware of the need to make the change. Where possible this will be done in advance of the students' registering on the course. When changes occur whilst students are on a course, they will be informed in writing and will be consulted.

If we need to implement the measures in our student protection plan we will provide extra counselling sessions, Q&A sessions with the Director, additional meetings with the Student Representative Council and a dedicated email address to support students collectively and individually.'