

CHICKENSHED

THEATRE CHANGING LIVES

**Chickenshed
Student
Protection
Plan
2025-26**

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Chickenshed Higher Education Student Protection Plan

Section 1 Introduction and general description of risks and mitigations for the protection of HE experience and outcomes for students.

Chickenshed is a registered provider of Higher Education with our Awarding Body and Validation partner being Middlesex University. Chickenshed has been an Alternative Higher Education Provider (HEP) since 2005 and has now had three highly successful Revalidation/ Review Processes in 2008, 2012 and 2018.

Chickenshed's latest Review/Revalidation in May 2018 covers the organisation for the period 2018 to 2024.

During this time the organisation has also had two very successful full QAA Review processes in 2015 and 2017 and three successful QAA Annual Monitoring Report processes. The recent October 2017 Higher Education Review saw Chicken HE Provision receiving two commendations for "quality of learning opportunities" and "enhancement of student learning opportunities" with the other two judgements "meeting UK expectations" .

Chickenshed was only one of 6 Alternative Providers to obtain a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Award in 2017 where the organisation achieved a Silver Award. That level of Silver Award was maintained in the 2018 TEF Process.

This is the context in which Chickenshed is producing its Student Protection Plan for Office for Students Registration and ongoing monitoring and review with Staff and Students. As a mature, confident HE provider we are describing the measures we have and are adding to, to preserve continuation of study for Students in the event of potential risks materialising to that study. The Plan also outlines those potential risks and their likelihood.

As Chickenshed is an inclusive provider of HE with a huge commitment to the maintenance and enhancement of HE for it's extremely diverse student cohorts - the recognition of the different needs of students and how that might affect Student Protection planning.

Chickenshed also recognise that Students have other protections available to them under their rights as consumers and the measures outlined in this Plan are in addition to these individual rights.

Section 1.1

Chickenshed is committed to providing a high quality inclusive educational experience, fully supported by a range of academic and administrative services and facilities. Chickenshed is very open about the possibility for students for different reasons, to feel that their experience does not meet their expectations either due to issues that are either out of the Company's control or within the Company's control. In either circumstance Chickenshed always seeks to understand and resolve student concerns. The aim of any activity in this policy is to create conditions where there can be appropriate "continuation of study" for a student – or alternatively support a situation where this is not possible for good and transparent reasons.

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This student continuation of study Refund and Compensation Policy will be applied in the following instances where potential refund/compensation would be considered.

- A student has made a submission through the Student Complaints and Grievance Procedure;
- A student is seeking compensation for accommodation and maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to preserve continuation of study;
- A student is seeking compensation for tuition, accommodation and maintenance costs where a student has to transfer courses or provider – due to Chickenshed not being able to offer an identified course and not being able to organise an appropriate transfer.

And covers:

- Refunds for students who pay their own tuition fees or are funded by family;
- Refunds for students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor;
- Payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course;
- Commitments to honour student bursaries which depend on continuation of study.

Section 2

Potential Risks and Measures to Protect Students and Minimise Risks Risk

1. HE Courses Closing due to inadequate Recruitment of Students

This particular risk is highly unlikely due to the long term 13 years profile of stability achieved by Chickenshed as an Alternative Provider (now HEP) with its HE Courses together with the consistent parallel profile of external agency ratification of stability and risk. Out of the 16 areas of quality monitoring and risk usually identified by QAA and reported on in the latest HE Review - 15 were considered "low risk" with one for Information considered "moderate risk" with those elements of risk already dealt with.

Additional Measures to Aid Recruitment include;

A. Excellent progression links with Chickenshed FE Level 3 course programme leaders, tutors and students with increased cross FE/HE cohort working to inspire aspiration to HE development for 35 FE students each year.

B. Similar positive links with Chickenshed Young Company group with 250 members between the awareness and recruitment ages of 16 to 25 years.

C. Strong, sustained Outreach links with 20+ partner schools in Chickenshed's " HE Professional Organisation Partnership Network where Chickenshed FE and HE are recommended for progression.

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D. A pre-course awareness, recruitment and Pre-Induction programme second to none - led by existing students and Alumni network where prospective students are able to experience practically and in observation every aspect of the Chickenshed HE programme on a number of occasions pre and post interview. This enables Chickenshed to both build extremely positive awareness and communication structures for recruitment and maintain them through to Course enrolment.

Risk 2. HE Course Closure due to inadequate staffing to manage and run HE Courses.

The risk of this eventuality is highly unlikely due to the range and depth of the staff pool available to Chickenshed who are trained by Chickenshed Higher Education Staff teams to work with and deliver Higher Education Course inclusive knowledge and skills outcomes to HE students on Foundation Degree and BA Top Up Year programme.

A. Chickenshed has a very wide HE teaching staff team supported by a strong Inclusive Support and Mentor team. Team teaching with staff at different stages of experience and with different discipline and area expertise commended by QAA is the preferred and developed delivery method for Chickenshed. Teaching team structures encourage and enable an overlap of HE and professional inclusive delivery staff to add enhancement depth to teaching and learning. So professional inclusive teaching and delivery staff from Chickenshed's professional Theatre and Performance Division and Membership / Young Company Division participate in inclusive HE teaching, monitoring and assessment methods and are adept in those methods. This enables Chickenshed's large HE Staff Teaching Team to be further supplemented by an even wider staff team from the two other divisions in the unlikely eventuality of there being a sudden depletion in the specific HE Staff Teaching Team.

B. In addition Chickenshed have an extremely wide Project Staff Team who work intermittently on Chickenshed projects including Education projects and who are similarly experienced in supporting and leading delivery to Chickenshed target groups including HE students.

Risk 3

Risks to specific HE subject or discipline staff availability to deliver specific course modules or areas of experience.

A. These risks are unlikely due to the mitigation elements already explained in the Risk 2 Section. Specifically Chickenshed inclusive education and delivery training formally encourages and enables staff to pursue multi-discipline and education area skills, knowledge and expertise. This philosophy and practice is deliberately used as part of the Company's inclusive approach to individuals and their education as the overriding idea is that any student may need a range of performing arts communication methods and strategies to achieve learning in any area however specific. So staff are encouraged to train and become adept in the teaching, delivery and support of all subject disciplines and areas. So if for any period of time there is a

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gap in any specific subject or module area there are staff teams who can fill that gap in the short term whilst the specific new recruitment in the area or discipline is organised.

B. Again the wider trained Project Staff network Chickenshed has set up and has access to can also supplement any specific staff area or discipline team gap.

Risk 4

Major Incident or eventuality temporarily affecting HE teaching and learning capacity at Chickenshed Theatre.

This Risk is highly unlikely following 23 years of uninterrupted, successful delivery of Education courses at Chickenshed Theatre.

Chickenshed has functional and practical Major Incident and Business Continuity Plans which detail strategies for Major Incident situations including temporary building closure and relocation of teaching and learning venues. These plans are included in the Appendices of this Student Protection Plan. Some of the planning focuses on the utilisation of temporary venue space and extra Outreach project delivery opportunities and space from partners in Chickenshed's Professional Partnership Organisation Network. Chickenshed has built up excellent professional working relationships between its HE students and the organisations in the Partnership Network often going out of its way to meet partner project and education delivery needs. The goodwill built up ensures that both flexible use of space and also flexible, extra alternative delivery of accredited outreach project work can be organised to meet temporarily rearranged HE Module teaching and learning schedules.

The Major Incident Plan and Business Continuity Plan are revisited and revised annually.

Section 2.1

CHANGE IN LOCATION

Students studying on a programme at Chickenshed who to preserve continuation of study are required to attend lectures or practical teaching at a location different to their main base, may be entitled to claim travel expenses for travel to a location which is not at their base. Chickenshed will provide support to ascertain what is needed for students for whom this provision is their next step.

Students can claim for the actual costs that they incur, but the amount they will actually be paid will be calculated according to the difference in the cost between travelling to their base and to their placement, lecture or training session.

Chickenshed already offer a transport funding support process so this would either be provided or extended – to meet the needs of the student if appropriate.

Risk 5.

Risks associated with potential dilution of the Inclusive character of the HE Courses and related Access and Participation reputation.

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Chickenshed's HE Courses are in "Inclusive Performance" and the unique delivery and reputation of the courses are built on Chickenshed's inclusive education and theatre ethos, theory and practice and the related Access and Participation measures initiated to maintain that delivery and reputation. The Company's Access and Participation Plan gives more information on this area but it is important to note that Chickenshed sees the maintenance of this inclusive reputation in theory and practice as an entitlement for Students, and something that students see as a vital factor in their selection of Chickenshed for HE progression and therefore is worthy of mention in the Student Protection Plan.

The risks that this inclusive reputation and practice could be diluted or impaired are small. Chickenshed's awareness measures and related events, publicity, information and communication are geared to reach the most wide ranging audiences in terms of social, education and community inclusion.

A. Outreach activity is 75% targeted at areas of identified social disadvantage and areas and postcodes are analysed both prior and during the course life of all cohort.

B. Chickenshed's Further Education course cohorts which feed the Company's HE Courses are all also built on the widest possible Education, Social and Community inclusion foundations and regularly analysed to ensure this diversity of reach is maintained.

C. Chickenshed sends its inclusively diverse student and staff groups out to equally inclusively diverse target groups in schools, colleges and community groups to actively model inclusive HE practice and build positive access and participation relationships.

D. Chickenshed's external monitoring and accreditation profile through QAA, Teaching Excellence Framework and Awarding Body Validation regularly and deliberately offer up its inclusion, access and participation track record for scrutiny, evaluation and further development.

Section 2.2

CHANGE IN PROGRAMME OR PROVIDER/FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

In the event that Chickenshed is unable to continue offering a programme on which students are currently registered due to academic or financial sustainability or other event, Chickenshed will communicate with all students affected by a prospective programme closure or change and ensure teaching and other resources continue to be provided. Where this is not possible for individual modules or years of study Chickenshed will work with its validated partner Middlesex University and students to confirm their options in relation to transfer to other programmes or modules and ensure dedicated academic and professional services support continues to be available. Staff will provide specialist advice and guidance on study options and support for liaison with other organisations. Chickenshed has excellent Awarding Body relationships where transfer can be explored – together with other H.E. links.

In the unlikely event that a change of location or provider is required, Chickenshed will make arrangements to ensure that students have the opportunity to complete

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their programme by working with an alternative provider to provide teaching or other services. Consideration of compensation arrangements will be given in these circumstances. Students may be entitled to claim travel expenses, but the amount they will actually receive will be calculated according to the difference in the cost between travelling to their base and to the alternative location.

Chickenshed has contingency planning assurance in place as part of the organisation's Memorandum of Cooperation with its Awarding Body Middlesex University.

Section 2.3

WITHDRAWAL OF A PROGRAMME

In the event that Chickenshed withdraws a programme on which students are currently registered, Chickenshed is committed to preserving continuation of study to enable all students to complete their programme. Chickenshed will communicate with all students affected by a prospective programme withdrawal and ensure teaching and other resources continue to be provided.

Where this is not possible for individual modules or years of study Chickenshed will work with students to confirm their options in relation to transfer to other programmes or modules and ensure dedicated academic and professional services support continues to be available, via the Progression and Support team, who provide specialist advice and guidance on study options.

In the unlikely event that no alternative arrangements can be made, Chickenshed will refund tuition fees based on the proportion of completed study time and according to the arrangements set out later in this policy.

Risk 6

Wider Chickenshed Staff Awareness of HE Student Issues and not being adaptable to risk and Student Protection needs.

This is very low risk. The Chickenshed wider staff network are kept very regularly informed of Student Protection Plan needs and the need to provide and maintain value for money and security. The Property Procurement and Contracts Manager, Communications and Consumer Protection Manager, General Data Protection Regulations and Finance officer and HR Managers all have student protection information disseminated to them regularly every two weeks at Management Board and lead the outside Higher Education Dept response which complements fully the internal HE Student Protection Process.

Risk 7

Potential Course Closure Temporary or Permanent

Chickenshed has developed an Interruption of Study/ Compensation and Refund Policy using advice both from In service Training and experts in the field. This policy sets the parameters of action where students and Chickenshed HE staff have

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exhausted all relocation and credit retrieval options and need to explore compensation and refund.

Chickenshed's Business Interruption Plan sets out resources and processes available to Chickenshed to meet Student Protection Plan responsibilities.

Chickenshed is also working with its insurers and consultants to explore and implement Student Protection insurance both for Chickenshed as HE Provider and also via advice to students re awareness for individuals and families of the potential for a student to obtain individual insurance. Chickenshed intends to ensure that insurance arrangements for Chickenshed to back up existing measures and information re individual options for students will be in place by 1st August 2019.

Section 2.4

CONTINUATION AND COMPLETION OF STUDY

Chickenshed is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to complete their programme, and to receive the appropriate learning opportunities set out as part of the programme offer and related terms and conditions. Chickenshed encourages students to inform Tutors/Managers where there is any cause for concern, and Chickenshed's Student Complaints and Grievance Procedure exists to enable students to make representation about such matters if there is a need to escalate. Tutors are always on hand to hear student issues to solve issues and avoid escalation.

Specific arrangements for circumstances relating to students affected by a change in location, in programme or provider, or withdrawal of a programme are set out below. If a student believes that this process has not been followed, they should in the first instance follow Chickenshed Student Complaints and Grievance Procedures.

Section 2.5

CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION OR REFUNDS

Chickenshed is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to complete their programme, and also to consulting with students to ensure that alternative arrangements to promote continuation of study and provide fair and acceptable options are available. However, if a student believes that their individual circumstances have not been fully taken into account, and Chickenshed has failed to deliver the appropriate learning opportunity, they should in the first instance follow Chickenshed Complaints and Grievances procedures. Claims for compensation after negotiations to preserve continuation of study will not be considered until the outcome of the complaints or student grievance procedure is known.

Chickenshed is committed to ensuring that there is consistency in approach and that students are treated equally. Compensation may be considered as the most appropriate resolution although for the avoidance of doubt this will be payable in cases of material failure by Chickenshed, lack of an appropriate alternative and where there has been a demonstrable loss to the student (E.g. Has the student been able to achieve the learning outcomes for their course?). Consideration will be given to whether any alternative arrangements mitigated the loss experienced by the student. In all cases the student will be required to provide evidence of the loss

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suffered – if they wish to proceed to facilitate compensation Chickenshed will provide support if students have needs which may warrant this.

The focus in such cases will be to ensure that students receive the education that they are entitled to expect based on their contract. Chickenshed's priority is to ensure that students receive the contracted Chickenshed experience. Although financial compensation is an option, any consideration of compensation or refund would consider alternatives (e.g. non-financial redress). Such alternatives may be an apology or goodwill gesture or the offer of alternative learning methods where the course cannot be delivered in the way it was originally intended where this is considered more appropriate.

Section 3. Student Contribution to Student Protection Plan

Chickenshed Students, as an important part of the commended-by-QAA Student Representation processes- have worked with HE staff to state and reiterate the areas of the Chickenshed HE experience they wish to protect and guarantee. These are a range of the contributions they have made to the issue of Student experience protection.

A. Lower Tuition Fee

Students have suggested Chickenshed maintain wherever possible the programme of lower tuition of fees and also extra funding for the Inclusive Support programme. The area of potential Financial Exclusion made this a priority for Students and so within the restriction of ongoing funding students value this current arrangement.

Students have realised the balance to be struck between lower tuition fees and overall resourcing issues for a small HE provider such as Chickenshed and feel informed about this.

Also following recent research on 70% approx. of HE students often not receiving the parent / Carer financial support which the assessors of maintenance loan and Government funding agencies assume they do - Chickenshed students are concerned. The adequacy of the loan itself to meet living expenses is thus often in doubt. Students are thus keen to request that the Bursary programme is offered as standard to All students- regardless of perceived and assumed parental/ carer financial situation.

B. On Course Extra Inclusive Support - Maintaining Inclusive Support Mentor Teams and Services

Students have indicated that this area is an important part of the Student Support and Student Protection provision at Chickenshed and they want this area to be protected and expanded at complex key sections of the course schedule. Students have outlined how having support accessible and available including at times of non- delivery protects their retention and achievement at times when external barriers outside the course and potential internal barriers within the course might affect or even put at risk their progression. Ratios of one Support Mentor team member to five HE students has been raised to 1 to 4 and higher in intensive activity periods.

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Chickenshed regularly prioritises 40%+ of its internal Tuition Fee funding whilst also actively researching and reaching external funding streams to protect this area of Student Protection planning.

C. Post- Course Extended Training or Trainee Employment

Students have been actively working with Chickenshed to create and fund an Alumni Framework for exploration and resourcing of Training and Trainee employment opportunities both internal and external. These are dependent both on prioritising funding and uncovering external funding. Students want this unique area of Inclusive post-course provision to be both protected and expanded.

d. Chickenshed will review its student Protection Plan with students annually to ensure new priorities are discussed and represented.

Section 4. Communication to Students

Chickenshed will use the following methods and opportunities to communicate, discuss and develop the Student Protection Plan with Students.

A. Dissemination through regular Student Representation and related Programme Voice group channels.

B. Publication on Chickenshed HE Website to ensure access for students both internally and externally.

C. Publication in Chickenshed Course Handbook

D. Ensuring students receive at least a term's notice wherever possible if these are material changes to their course which have to be made.

E. Ensuring that if measures in the Student Protection Plan need to be implemented, staffing support resources are prioritised to ensure students are supported in their understanding of plan actions both as a cohort and as individuals.

Section 4.1

TUITION FEE REFUND

Tuition fee charges are determined on the basis of enrolment status and not actual attendance. This means that if a student stops attending, but does not formally withdraw or interrupt, they will be liable for tuition fees until the date at which they officially notify Chickenshed, or are withdrawn from the programme.

Students deciding to withdraw from a course must notify Chickenshed in writing of their decision. In the absence of written notification of withdrawal a student shall be assumed to be in attendance.

STUDENT REFUND FORM

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Any amounts due to be refunded by Chickenshed will only be processed on receipt of a completed Student Refund Request Form.

If the original payment was made by Bacs or cheque the refund will be made by BACS/bank transfer. The student is responsible for ensuring that the correct bank details are completed on the form. Chickenshed will not accept any responsibility for payments misdirected as a result of incorrect account details provided on the form.

If the original payment was made by a debit or credit card the refund will be made to the card used in the original transaction.

For Sponsored students, the refund will be made to the Sponsor. If the student is partially self-funding, the student will receive a pro-rata proportion of the refund.

This process will also cover potential Accommodation Refunds.

Section 4.2

STUDENT LOAN COMPANY PAYMENTS

Where fees have been paid by the Student Loan Company any refunds due will be paid to the Student Loans Company thereby reducing the value of the loan.

Section 5

Student Protection Plan

Risk Assessment for Awarding Body and Validating Partner Terminating Partnership with Chickenshed

The risk of Middlesex University terminating their partnership with Chickenshed in terms of their role as Awarding Body and Validating Partner is low for the following clear reasons.

1. Chickenshed's partnership with Middlesex University is a mature partnership developed over 19 years of Higher Education provision with Middlesex initiating the partnership due to Chickenshed's innovative and ground-breaking inclusive practice and reputation.

2. Validation of Chickenshed's current HE quality has come from the publication in March 2018 of Chickenshed's QAA Higher Education Review with two commendations from the four judgements and nine areas of good practice. Chickenshed's Inclusive Performance course is thus one of the highest performing courses in the country and the highest performing course at Middlesex University.

3. Middlesex University have revalidated Chickenshed's Foundation Degree and BA Courses for a further 6 years in May 2018.

4. Middlesex are confident in Chickenshed's ability to recruit 75% of its students both through their Further Education partnership through the College of Haringey Enfield and North East London (Conel) and now Capital City College Group which also

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incorporates City and Islington and Westminster Kingsway College alongside Chickenshed's main partner CNEU. These assured student places add to Chickenshed's sustainability profile helping to guarantee numbers as far as possible.

5. Chickenshed's Regional, National and International profile based on 45 years of inclusive theatre and education practice ensures the organisation represents one of the highest profile partnerships in Middlesex University's profile.

6. Chickenshed has been one of the very few small Alternative Providers in the past to be awarded Silver in Teaching Excellence Framework Awards the award mirroring past Silver Award for Middlesex University. Chickenshed will be applying for the new revised TEF Awards when they are developed in 2022 and has an 'Interim TEF Award' based on fulfilling registration requirements. Chickenshed does not use the Interim Award for any publicity or for any evidence of course quality as recommended by the OfS. This, amongst a consistent profile of strong external recognition and validation for Chickenshed and its HE work, helps the Chickenshed HE courses demonstrate an ability to contribute both to the enhancement of Middlesex's HE reputation AND its reputation for supporting and fostering inclusive practice.

7. Chickenshed have had both its founders Mary Ward and Jo Collins awarded honorary doctorates by Middlesex University as a product of an outstanding mature partnership over 19 years of HE and 21 years of partnership. Middlesex University have thus invested a great deal in the Chickenshed HE partnership and terminating that partnership would be very unlikely.

8. Should Middlesex University, despite these reputational benefits, decide to terminate the Awarding Body partnership Chickenshed would respectfully seek validation from another Validating Partner. Capital City College (incorporating College of Haringey Enfield and North East London, City and Islington College and Westminster Kingsway College) do have Higher Education provision based at its partner colleges but none related to Performing Arts or Inclusive Arts. The University of West Herts and the colleges of Havering and South Essex Also deliver HE but not at BA Level. So Chickenshed would explore and achieve another Validating partner for their HE Courses in the unlikely event of their Awarding Body terminating the HE partnership.

Section 2 – Specific student Protection Plan mechanisms and processes

What is a Student Protection Plan?

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires universities to have a Student Protection Plan (Plan) to safeguard students' interests in the event of material changes, such as major course alterations, suspensions, closures, or even institutional closure. Chickenshed's Student Protection Plan outlines the steps we will take to protect students interests and ensure your studies continue if such changes occur.

In brief, the Plan explains:

- **What changes are covered:** It specifies the types of changes that fall under the Plan and those that do not.
- **Impact on your studies:** It details how these changes might affect your studies and the risks to their continuity.

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- **Likelihood of risks:** It provides an assessment of how likely these risks are to occur, which may vary by course or study location.
- **Preventive actions:** It outlines the measures we are taking to reduce the chances of these risks happening.
- **Chickenshed response:** It describes the steps Chickenshed will take if the Plan is activated to ensure the continuity of your studies.
- **Support and communication:** It explains how we will inform and assist you, and your options for refunds or compensation if continuing your studies is not possible.

Student Protection Measures

At Chickenshed we are dedicated to helping students (you) achieve the best academic outcomes from your studies. We reserve the right to make necessary adjustments that improve educational quality while aiming to keep changes minimal. Occasionally, unforeseen events may require material changes to modules or programmes. Changes to programmes will be communicated as early as possible, with clear information and options. We will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption and protect your studies. The measures outlined in this Plan provide an initial framework for supporting you if significant changes impact your studies. In such cases, we will also develop a specific action and communication plan tailored to the affected students' needs. These protective measures supplement your statutory rights, which remain unaffected by this plan.

If changes or closures occur, we will take the following actions to safeguard your education:

- **Teaching-out:** Ensuring you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements.
- **Exit awards and certification:** Providing formal recognition of your academic achievements at the Chickenshed.
- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.

Which Students does this Plan Protect?

All students registered for Chickenshed awards are covered by this Student Protection Plan. However, the plan does not apply to students who choose to withdraw from their studies or whose registration is terminated due to issues such as conduct, academic performance, fitness to practice, visa compliance, or non-payment of fees.

Protection Plans. However, we are committed to supporting these partners and all students registered on courses leading to a Chickenshed award. If you are studying at a partner institution, you are formally a Chickenshed student and are covered by this plan. Chickenshed would work closely with the partner institution to minimise any disruption and implement solutions to ensure you can continue your studies without significant impact.

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What is Covered by the Student Protection Plan?

We are committed to being open and transparent about any risks to the continuity of your course and the steps we take to mitigate those risks. Our Student Protection Plan outlines how we will support you if specific events trigger the Plan, ensuring your studies continue with minimal disruption. Below is an overview of events covered and not covered by the Plan.

Events Covered by the Plan (Material/Major Changes)

- **Changes to your course:** Significant changes, such as the removal or addition of core modules or loss of accreditation.
- **Course closure or suspension:** If your specific course is closed or temporarily suspended.
- **Inability to provide the course:** If the Chickenshed can no longer deliver your course for reasons such as:
 - Ceasing operations or exiting the higher education market, including mergers with other institutions or loss of degree-awarding powers.
 - Significant disruptions to essential services, resources, or support, such as those caused by industrial action, IT issues, or a pandemic, which materially impact your education and experience.

Events Not Covered by the Plan (Minor Changes)

The Plan does not apply to minor adjustments or routine improvements to your course. These minor changes are part of the normal process of enhancing the quality of your education and are not considered disruptions that trigger the Student Protection Plan. They include:

- Adjustments to course design, delivery, or content based on student feedback, examiner reports, or accreditation requirements.
- Changes to optional modules, module content, assessment formats, or delivery modes.
- Timetable changes, including room or building allocations.

Annual Review and Future Protection: The Plan will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure ongoing protection for students

Governance and Compliance: The Student Protection Plan is a regulatory requirement under Condition C3 of the OfS framework. Should any of the risks outlined in the Plan arise, the Chickenshed will notify the Awarding Body Middlesex University and OfS and implement the Plan as needed with Middlesex University advice and guidance – and OfS regulatory requirements re Reportable incidents.

Access and Transparency: Applicants, students, and staff can access the Student Protection Plan on Chickenshed's website. It is provided alongside other key resources, including:

- Complaints Procedure

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- Safeguarding/Prevent and Sexual Harassment Policies and Information

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The website serves as a central resource for both current and prospective students. The different needs of students sharing particular protected characteristics (as defined in the 2010 Equality Act) are considered and addressed through internal mechanisms throughout the academic year.

Risk Assessment and Continuity of Study

Risk management forms an important part of our internal control and corporate governance arrangements and is the responsibility of all staff, irrespective of their role. Risk management is a continual, ongoing process, as risks and uncertainties will change over time and all staff should contribute to the risk management process. Risk management is also about taking opportunities in a risk managed way and we have a responsible approach to risk management, seeking to recognise and manage our exposure to risks in light of our strategy and aligned to our values. In our Risk Management Policy risk to students experiences and outcomes are assessed against a continuum of risk both in terms of Higher Education specifically and education developments in general.

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Table 1: *Probability of Risk Being Realised Descriptors*

Probability	Description
Very Unlikely	Risk has a low probability of occurrence
Possible	Risk may happen
Likely	Risk is more probably than not going to happen
Very likely	Risk has a high probability of happening

We are committed to ensuring you are able to continue your studies with us wherever possible. Whilst we appreciate a number of risks may materialise which could affect continuity to your studies, we have plans in place to support you and to mitigate the impact.

Education and Student Experience Risks and Mitigations

By adhering to these processes, Chickenshed ensures any adjustments maintain the quality and integrity of its programmes while prioritising the student experience

For all students the protection measures in place in priority and preference order are:

- **Teaching-out:** In the event of a course closure, our primary aim is to "teach out" programmes for all students. This ensures students can complete their studies at Chickenshed without being adversely affected. The quality of academic provision and the student experience will be maintained throughout this period, as far as reasonably practicable. Programme Learning Outcomes and Aims, as outlined in the Programme Specification, will remain achievable for all students.
- **Student transfer:** If "teaching out" is not feasible, students will be offered the option to transfer to a similar programme at the Chickenshed or to a programme at another institution. In this circumstance we would ensure we provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at Chickenshed with Middlesex University as Awarding Body being the first choice for transfer.
- **Fees refund:** If teaching cannot be completed and no acceptable alternatives are available, Chickenshed will consider refunding part or all of the tuition fees, based on the academic credit and progress achieved.

Our aim is to handle any course suspension or closure transparently and proactively, ensuring minimal disruption and providing students and applicants with the necessary support and options to continue their education successfully.

Compliance and Regulatory Risks and Mitigations

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Infrastructure Risks and Mitigations

In the circumstance of closure of a delivery location we will take the following actions to safeguard your education:

- **Teaching-out:** Ensuring you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements. This may include consultation with staff and students to revise timetables to allow all scheduled teaching to take place at the current location.
- **Relocate programmes:** We would relocate teaching delivery to an alternative location, which may if applicable include hiring spaces for programme delivery and / or installing temporary buildings on site
- **Vary delivery mode:** Consider whether alternative delivery methods such as distance learning would be appropriate for any affected student.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate information, advice and guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements. In this circumstance we would provide formal recognition of your academic achievements at Chickenshed.
- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.

Through these measures, the Chickenshed ensures that the interests of current and prospective students in subcontracted programmes are protected, and disruption is minimised.

Institutional Sustainability Risk Scenario

The risk of Institutional Closure is possible. There are a number of risks that could impact on the Chickenshed's ability to operate as it does now, including the loss or restriction of H.E Provider status, a pandemic or other unforeseeable event or cancellation of our OfS registration. The risk accounts for the potential impact of sector wide financial challenges on our long-term financial viability and sustainability.

Where the Chickenshed HE is no longer able to operate, has decided to cease operating or merged with another provider Chickenshed will:

- **Teaching-out:** Where possible implement a process of gradual closure over a specified period, normally no more than 4 years, to allow current enrolled students to complete their studies at Chickenshed. The aim is to ensure you can complete your course as planned, with minimal difference between your initial expectations and the outcome. If this is not feasible, we will support you to complete your academic year or term, providing an exit award or credits to acknowledge your achievements.
- **Student transfer:** Helping you transfer to another institution to complete your studies, with appropriate guidance to explore options, make informed decisions, and manage administrative arrangements.
- **Exit awards and certification:** Providing formal recognition of your academic achievements at the Chickenshed.

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- **Information, advice, and guidance:** Offering support and clear communication to prospective and current students regarding any potential closures or changes.
- **Fees refund:** If teaching cannot be completed and no acceptable alternatives are available, the Chickenshed or acting administrator will consider refunding part or all of the tuition fees, based on the academic credit and progress achieved, in accordance with the Refund and Compensation Policy.
alternative providers would be identified and the transfer of all our registered students would be negotiated. We would ensure that all students would be communicated, consulted and engaged with to explain the situation

Our Commitment to you on Financial Implications

Where Chickenshed is unable to protect the continuation of study during the academic year, and unable to offer arrangements at Chickenshed or with an appropriate alternative provider, then Chickenshed will normally refund tuition fees (or a proportion thereof) and other costs (for example travel costs to visit an alternative provider, accommodation costs and other living costs) incurred in relation to the course on which students are registered. In such cases, fees will be refunded directly to you except where otherwise paid to the Chickenshed by a Student Loans Company or a sponsor; in those circumstances, tuition fees will normally be refunded to the appropriate organisation.

Chickenshed, where applicable and possible, will compensate any student who due to the disruption of their studies suffers demonstrable material financial loss as per Chickenshed's Refund and Compensation Policy which makes provision for:

- Refunds for students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loans Company
- Refunds for students who pay their own tuition fees
- Refunds for students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor
- The payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course
- Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to preserve continuation of study
- Compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students have to transfer courses or provider.

Requests for refund or compensation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, considering the particular circumstances of the course closure, your personal circumstances and needs, and the degree of impact. Where it is necessary to consider a student individual circumstances, they may be asked to produce documentation to evidence any additional costs that they may otherwise have incurred.

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Implementation of the Student Protection Plan

Chickenshed recognises that any period of uncertainty in relation to the future of a course is a stressful time and will ensure that additional support is provided to students. This will include availability of drop-in support sessions, if possible. Students will also have access Mentor and Counselling Services to mitigate longer term emotional impact. If students are already receiving support in relation to known mental health conditions, additional support will be provided, where possible and if required. Care experienced students and estranged students will also be provided with additional support. If students have an Inclusive Learning Plan and are transferring to a new course this will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose. If students are transferring to another institution, we will support students with sharing their own evidence and data, but we will not proactively share that information to them. Students will need to take responsibility for engaging with their disability team and support services.

Should our Student Protection Plan need to be implemented we will:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid implementing change during an academic year or making changes close to the start of an academic year.
- Inform our students providing at least 25 days' notice of any material changes to their programme, modules or location of teaching by posting alerts on virtual learning environment and onsite – plus email contact. Where major changes have been made to a programme Chickenshed will contact affected students formally in writing.
- Where delivery location has been modified students will be informed formally in writing providing at least