



## Annex G.17: Northern School of Contemporary Dance Student Protection Plan

This Student Protection Plan sets out what measures Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) has in place to protect our students who are studying for a qualification, validated by the University of Kent, if a risk to the continuation of studies should arise. The type of event or changes, which might cause such a risk, are detailed below. The Plan has received student input and feedback from student representatives

## Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: Northern School of Contemporary Dance

Provider's UKPRN: 10008816

Legal address: 98, Chapeltown Road, Leeds LS7 4BH

Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Head of Academic Registry, [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk)

### **1. Introduction and scope of the plan**

This Student Protection Plan (SSP) sets out the school's assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for our students. The SSP indicates what measures Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) has in place to protect our students in the event that a risk should arise. The type of event or changes to core business, which might cause such a risk, are detailed in the assessment of risk below. The SSP has received student input and feedback from student representatives.

The plan is available to all current and potential NSCD students. It covers registered undergraduate and postgraduate taught students enrolled on a programme of study, leading to an award which is validated by the University of Kent. The measures contained in this plan are in addition to the protections students have under consumer protection law, and do not impinge on their statutory right as a consumer.

NSCD retains the right to make minor adjustments and improvements to course, programme, 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 and was advertised, they can raise this through the school's complaints procedures, including taking their case, should it be necessary to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education.

In building this SSP, NSCD has considered the smooth transition of its students from the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama in September 2022 and has operated as an independent HEI since that time.

### **2. Commitments from NSCD to Students and Potential Students**

In designing and seeking approval for this plan, NSCD has an established track record of delivering internationally recognised higher education programmes and professional training to students in contemporary dance and related subject areas and supporting students to pursue careers in their chosen field. Building on that track record, this SPP is intended to provide reassurance to current and future students that the school has appropriate arrangements in place as the only Conservatoire for Dance in the North of England, to ensure the quality and continuation of their studies.

As such, NSCD commits to:

- being open and transparent with students should any risk to the continuity of their programme of study arise, and inform them in a timely manner;
- take all reasonable steps to protect students' studies should a decision be taken to discontinue a programme, or in the event of the closure of the school;
- consult with students and consider students' views in a timely manner before deciding to implement any substantial changes to their programme of study or discontinuing it, or the closure of the School;

- take into consideration the needs of all students or applicants and the impact on them of any proposed changes and any steps taken to protect their interests;
- inform the OfS of any changes that may require a review of this SPP or any of its provisions.

If students have any general views, concerns or feedback in relation to this SPP, they should contact the School's Head of Academic Registry at [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk)

If applicants have any concerns or feedback in relation to this SPP, they should contact the School's Admissions Manager, [admissions@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@nscd.ac.uk)

### **How is NSCD mitigating against risk?**

The School has a risk assessment management framework to support its Strategy. The framework includes a strategic risk register that identifies the high level "red" and Moderate "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, Academic Board and the Board of Governors. Risk is also a standing item at several committees and informs the school action plan. Risk registers are in place for all academic and for Central Services, which assess the likelihood and impact of operational risks.

## **Student Protection Plan**

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.

### ***Unplanned Closure of NSCD due to Financial or Business Reasons***

The risk that Northern School of Contemporary Dance finds itself unable to continue to operate due to changes in the external regulatory or funding environment is assessed as being relatively low. The school has risk management processes, disaster response, and business continuity plans in place; these are regularly reviewed. The school is overseen by a governing body that includes a majority of independent members. There is internal scrutiny provided by internal auditors and independent scrutiny provided by separate external auditors who assess the strength of internal control frameworks and risk management processes. The school's historical financial performance is very strong and the forecast of this to continue into the future, is good. The School's Report and Financial Statements as of 31 July 2022 set out its most up to date financial position, the school's independent auditors Saffery Champness have again signed off an unqualified audit report and confirmed that there are no issues to report and that it is their belief that the school's accounts have correctly been prepared on a going concern basis. The school maintains a prudent Reserves Policy, retaining a minimum of seven months expenditure in Reserves and to date has always comfortably exceeded this requirement. Given the strength of the school's financial position, and its status as a highly competitive, national and international recruiter of talented students, we assess as low the risk that we might need to terminate any core areas of our provision in an unplanned or urgent way. The school is, therefore, well positioned to absorb market shocks. Further information on the School's finances can be found in the Annual accounts which are available on this webpage: <https://www.nscd.ac.uk/about/governance/>

### **Closure of the location building or campus**

There is a programme of excellent estates management at the school, NSCD presently owns its estate outright with no mortgage or lending facilities. This comprises traditionally built facilities which are two storeys high, and which are maintained to the highest of standards. The school has completed a five-year renovation and refurbishment project having invested more than £900K in its estates, academic and student facing resources. Evaluation and monitoring of facilities and resource upgrades are discussed and approved at the Academic and Estates resource committees annually. Leeds is well sourced with alternative studio provision which NSCD presently utilises during extended projects. Good partnerships in the local area would accommodate the school's core business and students practical

work in other local and accessible venues should the need ever arise. This is built into the schools revised disaster recovery plan and therefore alongside its financial management considers this risk to be very low.

### ***Unplanned Closure of the School due to Acts of God***

The risk of the closure of the school's operations due to fire, flood or other 'Act of God' having an impact on the quality or delivery of programmes of study is assessed as being relatively low. Business continuity planning includes precautionary and contingency measures (e.g. offsite back up of computer records, relocation of staff to home or temporary offices) which would enable the School's central administrative functions to continue to operate. This back up plan has been thoroughly tested by successfully taking the school's operational and teaching functions entirely online for a term during the two Covid19 lockdowns. The complete closure of a school's site due to fire, flood or other 'Act of God' would pose some risk to the continuation of students' studies, mainly the need for access to specialist facilities and equipment, however again this could be transferred partially online or into other spaces in the short term. As outlined above, the school's disaster recovery plan and business continuity plans set out measures to be implemented in such an eventuality and this would include external hire of studio spaces in partnership with other institutions. Leeds has good facilities for this. It is possible that in such circumstances the impact on students' ability to continue their studies would be sufficient to trigger the measures set out in this SPP, although each situation would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Ability to award validated degrees***

NSCD is global facing institution which promotes excellence in its learning, teaching, and assessment. The school has excellent progression and retention rates, and this quality of student experience is reflected by its great student outcomes. Our focus on artistic practice, practice focused dance training and high-quality learning and teaching, has secured us a first-class reputation. As a small specialist institution with approx. 250 students, drawn from over 39 countries, we provide an environment in which we encourage curiosity, develop enquiring minds, have inspiring tutors and create a space and resource where world-class artists thrive in their artistic development.

NSCD has excellent professional relationship with the quality assurance office at the University of Kent. The school has consistently met the necessary quality assurance and academic standards requirements set its validator. In the 2018 five-year periodic review conducted by the University of Kent Review Panel concluded that:

- They had confidence in the quality and standards of the validated programmes offered by the Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD).
- The Panel was impressed by the school, and the way in which it had developed as an institution during the period since its last review. They found that there was clear leadership within the school, and that there was a defined direction and vision for the school's future.
- The Panel identified a sense of organisational ownership from both staff and students and a strong sense of community within the school, which it hopes will be retained as the school expands its offer.
- The Panel recommended the continuation of both the partnership and the programmes offered.

In January 2022, the school went through a full Quality Standards Review conducted by the QAA and they concluded and recommended to the OfS that NSCD achieved and with high expectation in all 13 areas of the inspection.

In 2020 NSCD signed up to a further five-year partnership memorandum of agreement with the University of Kent (until 2025). The risk of losing validation of one or more programmes of study on a timescale that directly affects students already on that programme is relatively low. In 2023, NSCD will be making an application to the Office for Students to gain degree awarding powers, the University of Kent are supportive of this decision and if successful we will begin the transitional journey to be a validating body in our own right. As identified above, the risk of losing validation of one or more programmes of study on a timescale that directly affects students already on that programme is relatively low.

### ***Closure of a programme of study for strategic reasons***

Northern School of Contemporary Dance is a small, specialist institution delivering professionally focussed higher education and training in Contemporary Dance and related subjects. Its portfolio of programmes of study is relatively small (3 undergraduate programmes and 6 postgraduate programmes), with programme development taking place in an incremental and planned manner. At the present time only one programme – the BA in Contemporary Dance - exceeds a year in length thereby significantly reducing the ‘teaching out’ risk and obligation. Consequently, the risk that NSCD might decide to discontinue a specific programme of study on a timescale that directly affects students already on that programme is relatively low. The discontinuation of a programme of study would be planned in such a way to allow current students to complete their studies and would require the formal approval of the School’s Academic Board, in consultation with the University of Kent. Where a programme is discontinued, NSCD would plan to close the programme to new students and ‘teach-out’ current students (see below). The University of Kent would also need to agree to the programme closure under its procedures, under which further consideration would be given to the interests of any students affected.

### ***Changes to programmes of study or closure of a programme of study due to unviable student enrolment***

The risk that NSCD would discontinue or not offer a programme due to insufficient student enrolments or continuation is relatively low. Demand for student places is high and we regularly review the suite of programmes we offer to ensure that they continue to keep pace with student, employer and industry needs.

The risk that the qualification students obtain is significantly different from that for which they enrolled is low, because of NSCD’s approach to programme development, approval and review, as well as the formal process for seeking approval from the School’s Academic Board for the discontinuation of a programme of study. NSCD retains the right to make minor adjustments and improvements to programmes and module content year on year, as part of standard quality enhancement processes and in response to student and employer feedback.

The school undertakes a comprehensive review of its subject and programme portfolio on an annual basis, examining management and appraisal data to consider the sustainability of subject and programme areas. This is reported to the University of Kent on an annual basis. In 2023, all courses will have gone through some form of major or minor revision or validation in order to ensure that the courses and student academic experience is current.

Our review and quality enhancement processes are informed by student consultation, and we endeavour to communicate planned changes in a timely and helpful manner. These minor amendments or improvements in themselves do not warrant the triggering of the provisions under this SPP. As set out under the arrangements for validation of awards, a range of adjustments and improvements to programmes are also subject to scrutiny and agreement by the University of Kent.

### ***Loss of UKVI Tier 4 sponsor licence which permits us to recruit and enrol international students***

NSCD’s international student population has grown steadily over the last 3 years. This target number is relatively small and does not constitute an immediate threat to the recruitment data. At this present stage we have received no detrimental recruitment issues related to Brexit or student fees increasing for EU students.

We have robust and effective quality processes in place, which substantially minimises the school’s risk of being unable to provide a course as a loss of representation of international students, on any one particular programme. For example, if it was to place itself in a position where its tier-4 licence would be at risk, as such, we would expect to address any issues of this nature, usually, before they became an event that would trigger the SPP and view the risk of this happening as low to moderate.

### **Non recruitment of students due to reputational damage**

NSCD believes that its actions define its reputation. As a small specialist institution, we can often positively respond in a fleet of foot way to the challenges of the sector and outward facing scrutiny of the institution. NSCD attempts to employ a number of measures to support its brand, reputation and student body. NSCD does not underestimate the risks surrounding its reputation as a conservatoire, it has the potential to move quickly and be responsive to reputational risks on the horizon. NSCD believes that good communication strategies support good reputation, as does, excellent relationship with its staff and students. The school makes every attempt to apply effective intelligence analysis to provide insight and identify any warning flags. The Higher education sector is under much scrutiny at present and the negative press to a small provider such as NSCD is measured as moderate.

### **Pandemic (Learned from the covid pandemic of 2020)**

The global Coronavirus (Covid19) pandemic affected higher education providers across the United Kingdom, and NSCD was no exception. NSCD responded well in a review of its infrastructure to facilitate a move to blended learning (a combination of in-person face to face and online teaching). Lessons learnt from this pandemic serve the school well in its readiness to deliver should there be another national lockdown. We know that we are able to minimise the risks posed by a pandemic and we know that we could move swiftly to deliver a mixed timetable of blended learning throughout the academic year (and beyond, if necessary), with 'in person face to face' teaching being increased if it is safe to do so. In circumstances in which NSCD is forced to close its campus to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff, and to move teaching fully online, we also know that this is possible for a manageable period of time. To ensure and maintain academic quality and standards of our courses, NSCD will liaise with the University of Kent whenever the UK government's restrictions and requirements arising from a pandemic necessitate a change to how its courses are being delivered. In the event of continuing government restrictions, changes will be communicated to applicants before they register for their course as well as current students prior to re-registration. NSCD will communicate any further necessary changes any affected students in due course in a timely manner. Risks associated the school around covid-19 are measured as low, given that this has already been experienced.

### **Assessment of the risks**

Area associated to risk	Mitigating factors	Residual risk level;
a) The School is unable to operate or will decide to cease operating for financial or business reasons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. School is in a sound financial position, evidenced by annual financial statements, published online, audited and presented to the school's finance committee and board.</li><li>II. Robust risk assessment processes and procedures in place</li><li>III. Robust estate planning and maintenance processes and procedures</li><li>IV. Emergency and disaster recovery processes and procedures in place</li></ol>	Low
b) NSCD closes the location (building or campus) in which the course is taught and cannot find suitable premises within an appropriate location nearby to the school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. Bought ownership of the estate and development of the estate</li><li>II. Robust estate planning and maintenance processes and procedures</li><li>III. Emergency and disaster recovery processes and procedures in place</li><li>IV. Excellent access to other facilities and partnership arrangements within the area e.g. Yorkshire dance, RJC, Leeds Dance Studios, Dixon's Academy</li></ol>	Low to Moderate

<p>c) The School loses its power to award degrees as a result of its validating university serving notice to dissolve its partnership agreement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Quality of provision and rigorous processes and procedures (as evidenced in two previous periodic programme reviews conducted by University of Kent and Conservatoire for Dance and Drama.)</li> <li>II. Annual course planning design and delivery reviews</li> <li>III. Commitment to re-validation of the courses every 5 years</li> <li>IV. NSCD signed a new 5-year partnership agreement with the University of Kent in 2020</li> <li>V. Should the University of Kent choose at any point to dissolve the partnership, NSCD will use its notice period to find a new Validating partner or view the options to apply for its own degree awarding powers</li> </ol>	<p>Low</p>
<p>d) The school discontinues a specific course, outside of the standard validation cycle, in relation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. One or more courses and/or faculties</li> <li>II. Material components of one or more courses</li> <li>III. One or more modes of study</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Commitment to 'teach out' courses and programmes for enrolled students where such action is appropriate and practicable</li> <li>II. Strong curriculum planning and annual critical review and programme appraisal</li> <li>III. Committee structures support non-reliance on key individuals for contingency planning</li> <li>IV. Currency in the design of courses, modules, and progression routes</li> <li>V. Robust risk assessment processes and procedures</li> <li>VI. NSCD would follow University of Kent procedures for the withdrawal of taught programmes <a href="https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html">https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/codes/index.html</a></li> </ol>	<p>Low</p>
<p>e) The school is no longer able to recruit international students due to loss or suspension of its UKVI Tier 4 licence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Robust policies, processes, and procedures for compliance of UK boarder agency requirements</li> <li>II. Student access plan</li> <li>III. Equality, diversity and inclusion policies and procedures</li> <li>IV. Robust estate planning and maintenance processes and procedures</li> <li>V. School successfully completed a compliance inspection from the UK boarder's agency in October 2020</li> </ol>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>f) The School has to suspend its operations through no choice of its own i.e. Acts of God or act of terrorism or pandemic (such as Covid-19)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Robust risk assessment processes and procedures</li> <li>II. Clear health and safety audits in place</li> <li>III. Working alongside guidance from the department for Education (DfE) and Public Health England (PHE)</li> <li>IV. Manual of processes and procedures in place managed by a specially formed incident team to support communication with staff, students and third parties</li> <li>V. Action plans in place for safe return to study</li> </ol>	<p>Moderate<sup>1</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup> NSCD has recognised the need to increase this risk as a result of the experiences surrounding COVID-19. There is a marginal increase to moderate based on managing the pandemic and positive feedback from the student and staff body.

g) Non recruitment to courses due to reputational damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. The school maintains its position as a centre for educational excellence</li> <li>II. Maintains excellent student and alumni feedback</li> <li>III. Responds well in actions taken around social and political agendas e.g. Black Lives Matter, and legal cases brought against other similar institutions.</li> <li>IV. Excellent communication with the sector and strong industry partnerships</li> <li>V. The work of the student body reflects well the diversity of society in all its forms</li> <li>VI. Student societies, the student union and collaborative partnerships support the values of the school</li> <li>VII. Positive industry connections and relationship management supports the security of the school's brand and its student/ alumni opportunities</li> <li>VIII. NSCD has become a member GuildHE with a view to strengthening its partnership and knowledge exchange potential with the sector</li> </ul>	Moderate
h) Non recruitment to courses as a result of closure to the sector and fewer employment opportunities for dance graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Excellent track record for responding to course changes with the University of Kent, to modify the programmes through major and minor revisions to respond to sector developments and opportunities.</li> <li>II. Excellent network and guest professional input into the programmes to support employment and professional network opportunities for students and graduates</li> <li>III. In-house artist development run programmes to support accelerated avenues to the profession for NSCD undergraduates and postgraduates</li> </ul>	Moderate
g) Non recruitment or continuation of studies due to a pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. As of (f) plus</li> <li>II. NSCD has developed specific continuity plans related to a pandemic</li> <li>III. NSCD identifies a moderate risk to the closure of buildings and suspend face to face teaching because of related pandemic outbreaks. This is mitigated through rigorous reporting and student /staff support measures</li> <li>IV. NSCD seeks support from a testing centre opposite its campus</li> <li>V. Daily monitoring of situation by Health and Safety team</li> <li>VI. Facility in place to put learning online with immediate effect</li> </ul>	Moderate

**Procedural Implementation of the SSP:**

Should major changes, such as those described above, be approved the Chief Executive and Principal, we would convene a meeting of Vice Principal and Director of Studies, Director of Finance and Resources, Head of Academic Registry, Heads of Undergraduate and Postgraduate faculties and Student Representatives. The group would proceed to make a decision as to whether they would need to trigger the plan or recommend to the School Executive Board that it should trigger the Plan. This will often depend on the circumstances of the case. The Governing body and leadership team, in consultation with the student representatives, can chose to trigger the plan for any reason if students' studies and recruitment to programmes are likely to be significantly impacted by a substantial change. If the plan were triggered the school would listen to students' views and, based on feedback, may decide to amend aspects of the original decision or the steps it had intended to take. During this time the school would be in contact with the University of Kent (as our validating body) to agree further arrangements to carry out the plan.



In the event of a decision being taken to discontinue a programme of study for strategic, academic or other reasons while students are pursuing that programme, one or more of the following steps would be taken by the School to protect those students:

*'Teach out'*: Whenever possible, NSCD will make arrangements to 'teach- out' current students where a decision has been taken to phase out a programme of study. The programme will be closed for the purposes of the recruitment of new students. This means that we commit to ensuring programmes of study can be completed by all currently enrolled students within existing timeframes determined by programme and academic regulations. If a decision is taken to discontinue a programme, the arrangements which are proposed for students affected will be considered by, and may be subject to the agreement of, the University of Kent.

*Alternative programme*: Where teaching-out is not possible, NSCD will make every attempt offer an alternative programme through our close working relationship with other conservatoire schools in the UK or another UK HEI. NSCD has made good partnership relations with a number of European higher education providers to offer the diversity of choice for our student body should the need arise. The school will also work with the University of Kent to facilitate transfer to other providers, including advice, and transfer of credit. The school may offer alternative locations of study, even if that means securing alternative premises, or alternative modes of study, to allow students affected to complete studies.

*Transfer of Study*: Where students are studying on a programme of study where there is not a comparable programme offered within other conservatoire schools in the UK, then NSCD will investigate whether students can transfer to a similar programme offered by another higher education provider. If such a transfer of study is possible, then NSCD will take all possible steps to facilitate the transfer to the other higher education provider e.g. provision of a record of academic achievement to date.

The arrangements will detail what will happen to students who need to undertake re-sits due to first attempt failure during the teach out period, or who are not able to complete assessments at the time set due to illness.

The School's validated institution agreement with the University of Kent state that in the event of termination of Agreement between the University of Kent and NSCD, the parties would ensure that students already enrolled on the course would be given the opportunity to complete it within the expected timeframe. The University of Kent and NSCD will work together to ensure that any such students are able to complete the course.

Should it prove impossible to make alternative provision for enrolled students affected by programme closure, or should costs be incurred by students on account of having to undertake repeat study in order to transfer into such alternative provision, then the leadership team in conjunction with the Head of Academic Registry, will consider refunds and compensations under the schools tuition Fee Policy and Refunds and Compensation Policy for those students affected (see section 3.)

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

The strategic plan, risk register and business continuity plans are reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and issues which would adversely impact on the student experience are considered amongst these updates. This enables us to change a course of action to provide extra mitigation against specific issues where the likelihood or impact of the risk has grown.

Student representatives are amongst the elected members of our committee structure, and therefore central to our decision making.

The school has considered two areas of risk to the continuity of study for certain students that it considers reasonably likely to crystallise and has set out actions in place to mitigate against these.

a) Significant material changes to the intensity of course provision due to No ISTA or world leading funding, impacting on recruitment or leading to suspension of a programme of study	Measures
<p>The reduction/removal and non-continuation of ISTA or equivalent funds have been considered as part of the standard annual programming review and curriculum planning process. The school may take the decision to reduce its curriculum or make a significant change in the way the curriculum can operate against the usual intensity expected of a Conservatoire. This may affect new applicants due to course programme changes and review of assessment of a programme. In extreme measure it may include the suspension of a programme altogether.</p> <p>The school has not identified any course or programme to be at significant risk but the measures in place to mitigate any risk to the continuation of studies are as follows:</p>	
Course not running due to lack of student recruitment numbers	a) approved process and timeline of decisions for courses to be removed from the course offer
Although assessed as low risk, Inability to recruit diversity in student numbers and not achieve targets agreed through the School's Access and Participation Plan (APP)	<p>a) To continue to work with the school's learning and participation unit and outreach provision through courses to reach out to the most talented of individuals in targeted communities without present access to dance in schools</p> <p>b) clear representation of marketing materials so that applicants can identify themselves in the identity of the school and its work</p> <p>c) design courses and make major revisions to the curriculum in order to provide a meaningful and personal experience for all learners in relation to their socio-cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>d) have support packages in place to remove barriers for all applicants who would not be able to participate in Higher Education without these in place.</p>
Course closure / Suspension	<p>a) commitment to 'teach out' provision for enrolled students where such action is reasonable and practicable</p> <p>b) adoption of a programme suspension / closure and changes are standard, and this will be handled in collaboration with the University of Kent.</p>
Material change to the course	<p>a) commitment to 'teach out' existing programme/course unless change approved in writing by all existing students</p> <p>b) adoption of a programme suspension / closure and changes are standard, and this will be handled in collaboration with the University of Kent.</p>
b) Inability to support the movement of people and employability of graduates, caused by the events of pandemic or economic recovery in the sector.	Measures

Cultural and creative sectors are important in terms of their economic footprint and employment. They also spur innovation across the economy, as well as contribute to numerous other channels for positive social impact (well-being and health, education, inclusion, urban regeneration, etc.). Through research and collaboration with others, NSCD recognises that these sectors at present are among the hardest hit by the pandemic, with large city regions often containing the greatest share of jobs at risk. The school believes that it has the potential to be an economic driver and source of innovation. Leeds for a long time has been the incubator to support specialisations in the cultural and creative sectors to evolve and emulate reports of the arts being able to tackle competitive and societal challenges from new angles, favouring resilience, skills creation and prosocial behavioural changes.<sup>2</sup>

The School has not identified any course or programme to be at significant risk, graduate data is positive, and alumni relations are strong. The measures in place to mitigate any risk to the continuation of studies are as follows:

<p>Hesitancy of applicants to enter Higher education, due to the slowdown of human movement and perceived lack of employment opportunities, in a sector struggling to regenerate after a pandemic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Join the sector in working through collaborative means to develop innovation through notable and accelerated digitisation of arts training and practice</li> <li>b) continue to develop the school’s network capabilities and offer a range and portfolio of courses which can support a ‘cross-over culture’ between the arts, education and health sectors</li> <li>c) use our National Portfolio Status to support graduate commissions that will in parallel with income and business support measures, invest in cultural production to help the sector rebound after the crisis</li> <li>d) invest in our graduate careers programme to address gaps in self-employment support schemes by encouraging the simplification of eligibility criteria and making them accessible to hybrid forms of employment</li> <li>e) for NSCD to be a key contributor in the consultation with network organisations, representatives of self-employed professionals, small cultural and creative businesses, and sectoral employer organisations in the region to raise the efficacy of policy measures and support the dance ecology in the North of England and beyond.</li> <li>f) Develop and nurture new opportunities for continued professional development for NSCD recent graduates in partnership with other organisations such as Yorkshire dance and one dance UK.</li> <li>g) support the visibility of our graduate workforce and achievement through NSCD website</li> </ul>
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<p>c) BREXIT: forecasting a sharp drop in the number of students from other EU countries after Brexit, due to the ending of their loan entitlement and the imposition of higher (uncapped) fees;</p>	<p>Measures</p>
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From an analysis of the student dashboard over the last 5 years, approximately 19% of the NSCD student body comes from another EU country.

<sup>2</sup> see for example, the 2019 *Culture and Climate Change* report by World Cities Culture Forum showcasing how 14 world cities put climate and the environment at the centre of their cultural policies ([http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/assets/others/WCCF\\_Report\\_June\\_28\\_FINAL\\_v4.pdf](http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/assets/others/WCCF_Report_June_28_FINAL_v4.pdf) accessed 1st November 2020).

Lack of diverse recruitment and limited breadth of cultural dimensions brought to the programme as a result of having few and no applications from the EU

- a) to continue to work with collaborative networks in Europe to promote the school's unique offer
- b) Look at targeted marketing for European applicants
- c) Look at financial modelling to offer incentive bursaries
- d) receive support offered by our European alumni
- e) In the event of non-recruitment to target in this area to look at offering to home students.

### **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**

#### **3.0 Refunds and Compensation**

Details of the School's arrangements and policy concerning refunds and compensation under the Student Protection Plan is set out in the attached **Refund and Compensation Policy** which can be found on the School's website.

The consumer contract is between the student and NSCD as set out in the Student Terms and Conditions. Students should refer to the **Terms and Conditions** published on the School website which they will have received in durable medium at the point of offer, or should contact NSCD admissions for a copy.

The Student Protection Plan sets out possible situations where NSCD will no longer be able to preserve continuation of study for one or more students, or where there has been disruption to a course of study. These are also set out in the Refunds and Compensation Policy. The Student Protection Plan identifies such situations as being of low risk. It is ultimately the School's responsibility as part of its governance to ensure that the commitments set out in its Student Protection Plan are properly discharged. The final decision regarding the issuing of refunds and compensation under the Student Protection Plan to individual students will be made by the CEO and Principal of the School or their delegates.

In the event that one of the situations or events identified in the SPP and clause 4.1 were to occur and the Student Protection Plan be activated, NSCD will liaise as appropriate with the University of Kent to ensure a fair outcome for students in all circumstances with regard to refunds and compensation.

Notwithstanding that in such circumstances NSCD will take proactive action without requiring students to lodge a formal complaint, students who wish to make a request for a refund or compensation under the Student Protection Plan may do so by contacting the Head of Academic Registry, [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk). If a student is dissatisfied with the proposed outcomes, they can access School's Complaints Procedure and if there is no resolution, you can contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

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

##### **4.1 Communicating with Students and future students about this SPP**

NSCD will publicise this SPP to current and future students by publishing it on the School's website, making sure that there is a link to the SPP (on 'Student Infobase' on the School's VLE), and by ensuring that the SPP is appropriately referenced in communications with potential students during recruitment, admission and registration.

The Terms and Conditions for students set out circumstances under which NSCD will consult students on significant changes to programmes. NSCD will also inform affected students of any material changes which may affect their studies in a timely manner. Should the SPP need to be implemented, students will be notified by the School's Vice Principal (or nominee) via email. The School commits to giving

students maximum notice of any changes, but at least 12 weeks prior to the intended dates of programme change or closure where this is possible.

The school will communicate and advise individual students about implications and conditions to fees and other funding, where a student takes an intermission in their studies. This is also covered more fully in our Interruption of Studies Policy. This describes the circumstances in which we would offer a fee waiver for repeat study and expresses the school's commitment to explore alternatives to repeat study. This information is reiterated to students in the documentation sent to them when their intermission is approved. Advice and support will be offered in the first instance by the School's Head of Academic Registry [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk). Additional advice and support are available from the relevant programme management team within each of the school's faculties.

Where applicants have accepted an offer to study at NSCD but have not yet registered at NSCD, the School will notify them if the Plan is triggered and will likely affect them. In such cases, we would inform them of any changes and would try to minimise their impact by supporting their applications/transfer to suitable alternative arrangements. For example, we would help them to find an alternative course or provider, or we would help them to defer their place for a year if this was appropriate. Advice and support will be offered in the first instance by the School's Admissions Manager [admissions@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@nscd.ac.uk)

#### **4.2 Communicating with staff about this SPP**

NSCD will ensure that staff are made aware of the implications of this SPP when they propose programme changes by including a reference to the SPP in its early programme approval, review and amendment documentation, before submitting for scrutiny by the University of Kent. The SPP will be published on 'Staff Infobase' on the School's VLE and referenced in relevant staff induction and training activities. Staff made aware of the procedures that are being followed in the closure or suspension of a course of study or significant course changes and attention will be drawn to our refunds and compensation policy.

Staff will also be briefed around support and communications protocols with all students and third parties and as such will be guided to either the School's Head of Academic Registry [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk) and/or NSCD's Communications Manager [Tom.McGinn@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:Tom.McGinn@nscd.ac.uk)

#### **4.3 Consultation with Staff and students around the SSP**

The SPP will be reviewed annually in March and is overseen by the School's Leadership team and the Quality Assurance Committee, with reports being submitted to the Academic Board and the Board of Governors (both of which include student and staff members). As well as these committees, students and staff are encouraged to input their views into the plan for development and scrutiny. This is a collaborative process through the Student Voice Forum (a subcommittee of Academic Board) which includes student representatives from all programmes, and staff members from faculties and professional services.

The Student Protection Institutional oversight is maintained through the school's governance, leadership and management structures. The plan will be taken through the school's Academic Board for annual approval.

#### **5.0 Complaints**

Complaints regarding a programme of study should be raised via the School's Student Complaints Policy & Procedure which is published on the School's website and conforms to the UK Quality Code and Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) recommended good practice. As agreed with the University of Kent and as set out in the school's complaints procedures, students may also be able to raise an academic complaint regarding a programme of study with the University of Kent. The provision for refunds and compensation in this Student Protection Plan do not affect students' rights of complaint under the Student Complaints Procedure.

Complaints relating to this SPP should be referred to The School's Head of Academic Registry [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk) in the first instance.

#### **6.0 What is not covered by this plan.**

##### **If NSCD makes:**

- Minor adjustments and improvements to a course, as part of routine programme monitoring. This could include no longer accepting new students onto a particular version of the course.
- Minor adjustments to module content or module option choices. NSCD will attempt to make changes to the website content of the programme prior to acceptance.
- Changes to a student's timetable, including rooms, buildings or close-by locations

If there are any immediate views, concerns or feedback in relation to this Student Protection Plan please contact the please contact the Head of Academic Registry [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk) .

#### **7.0 Questions**

Please direct any questions relating to the Student Protection Plan please email [quality.office@nscd.ac.uk](mailto:quality.office@nscd.ac.uk)