

Student Protection Plan 2022

Introduction

Making the decision to invest in your future by studying for a degree is an important one. You should think carefully about what subject interests you and will help you to get the job you want in the future, and you should think about which programme and mode of study will best suit you and your circumstances. Once you have made that choice, you will want to be confident that your chosen university or college will deliver that course to you.

All universities and colleges that are registered with the Office for Students publish a student protection plan. This is intended to provide you with an idea of any risks there might be to completing your studies and the measures that the institution has put in place to minimise those risks.

At the University of Law, we value the commitment that students make to study with us. We will have explained to you what you can expect from us in the delivery of your chosen course. We do accept, however, that from time to time we may need to make changes to our courses, sometimes following feedback from students to make improvements. This student protection plan sets out the types of changes made by the University of Law that may have an impact on your studies (“disruptive events”) and what we will do to ensure that you are able to complete your studies on your chosen course with a minimum of stress and disruption to you. We also recognise that disruptive events may have a different effect on students with different needs, characteristics, and circumstances, for example students sharing particular protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010).

Our original plan, since updated, was approved by our regulator, the Office for Students, and is available to all current and potential students.

The measures contained in this plan are in addition to the protections you have under consumer protection law, and do not affect your consumer rights.

1. What kind of changes at the University of Law might affect your studies and what measures do we have in place to mitigate the impact of those changes?

This section sets out the sorts of changes at the University of Law that could have an impact on your studies (“disruptive events”). A key principle for us is that any major changes we make to our provision of courses or campuses will be undertaken in the summer months between academic years.

We offer a range of optional modules on all our undergraduate programmes. Sometimes when take-up of a particular optional module at a particular campus is low we will not be able to deliver that module face-to-face as it would have a negative impact on the quality of your learning experience. This risk is lower at our London campus, and higher at smaller campuses. Where we cannot run a particular optional module at a particular campus, we are normally able to offer the module online as an alternative. Students on a student route visa would not be able to take advantage of this alternative and would need to take a different optional module. It is rare that we would not deliver an optional module on our online courses.

While unusual, it is sometimes appropriate to make changes to an existing programme, for example to reflect changes required by regulators, or following student feedback to improve the quality of learning or assessment. Another example has been the move to online delivery triggered by the Covid pandemic. Such changes are unlikely to impact negatively on students. When we make changes, they must be approved using our Programme Design, Development and Approval Policy. The impact of any change and measures taken to minimise any disruption to students will be carefully considered by the Academic Board Programme Approval Committee, which includes student representation, before agreeing to those changes. Our website is the primary source of information for prospective students, but where we have made changes to programmes, we email all prospective students who have accepted a place or to whom we have made an offer, to advise you of the changes and to give you the option of your cancelling your place with us. Students already studying on a course are first invited to be involved in making changes, through the Student Union, are informed of changes via email and are encouraged to raise any concerns with their personal tutor.

We offer our undergraduate programmes at a number of campuses in England. The benefit of this is that many of our students choose to live at or near home. However, in the event that application numbers are low for a particular course at a particular campus we may need to cancel that course, in accordance with our Course Cancellation Policy, available at <https://www.law.ac.uk/policies/>. We are also extending our range of award titles. The risk of cancelling a particular course at a particular campus will be higher for smaller campuses, and for specific award title courses. It is extremely unlikely that we would cancel our core LLB at any campus. Any decision to cancel will be made at least four weeks before the start of the course. This is to allow us to provide you with help and advice in relation to finding an alternative course with the University, including at a different campus. This dialogue will include considerations arising from any protected characteristics and needs you may have. If you decide to withdraw, we will refund your deposit and any fees paid towards the course in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy.

Similarly, any decision to close a programme, i.e., not run it again, will not be made lightly, and will be made well in advance of any closure in accordance with our Programme Closure Policy. We will ensure that students already enrolled and studying on that course can complete it within the original schedule for that programme. While the risk is low, we confirm that we will inform students in good time to allow you to transfer to another provider should you decide that that is the best option for you.

In this document we use the expression “teach-out”. This means that we commit to ensuring you can complete the course of study you started with us, even though the programme is being discontinued and we will not be taking on new student cohorts.

Some of our campuses are hosted by partner institutions. In the unlikely event of a study centre closing or the relationship terminating the University is committed to ensuring you can complete the course of study you started with us.

As a leading provider of legal and business education, we are always seeking to ensure that our campuses are sited in the best locations for students who wish to study with us. While rare, it is possible that we may decide to re-locate a campus.

Any such decision will be based on input from our students; we want our students to have the best possible experience in accessible campuses, in areas with strong employability contacts. Any such decision will be made well in advance of any closure. This will allow ample time to make provision for you and our staff. Any new location will maintain the quality of facilities for learning. Relocation within close proximity of the original site (normally considered to be within 10 miles but with consideration given to accessibility and public transport links) is not considered to be closure, though if you feel that you have been adversely affected financially by such a move you may make individual representation to the University. If we close a campus and/or relocate to a new site which is more than 10 miles from the original site, we will teach-out the course at a local venue to the original site for the original intended duration of that course. We will inform students in good time to allow you to transfer to another provider should you decide that this is the best option for you.

The University of Law is a private university. As a private institution, changes in our ownership can occur. When changes of ownership occur in private universities this normally happens in such a way that it has no impact on students.

We believe it is very unlikely that we will cease operating as a university. In this unlikely event, we would produce a market exit plan in accordance with Condition of Registration C4, to be approved by the Office for Students, to help our students transfer to another provider. We have strong relationships with a number of universities in England and would work with them to facilitate your transfer. Refunds to you, where appropriate, would be made in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy.

We believe that there is limited risk in losing our powers to award degrees. We have a history of strong compliance with quality assessment, including having a successful QAA Higher Education Review in 2017.

Should we lose our degree awarding powers we would work with other providers to make the award to our students under a franchise or other similar arrangement. Refunds to you, where appropriate, would be made in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy (see below).

2. Our Refund and Compensation Policy

We have explained above how we will seek to handle any disruptive event that may arise during your studies. Our Refund and Compensation Policy is available at <https://www.law.ac.uk/about/policies/>. It applies to you, whether you are in receipt of a tuition fee loan, sponsor support or pay your own fees. Our Refund and Compensation Policy sets out the circumstances in which refunds and/or compensation would be made, for example a disruptive event during an academic year.

Undergraduate students:

- We will not, in general, refund undergraduate students for completed academic years of study. Where you have completed modules, you will receive a transcript setting out your marks to date and credit awarded. For any change which has been scheduled between academic years, we do not believe it will be appropriate to refund that year's fee because we will formally have recognised the value of learning you have completed.
- Where a disruptive event such as programme closure occurs during your study, we will, where possible, put in place local teach-out arrangements.
- If you feel that the alternatives that we have put in place are not suitable for you (for example if our changes adversely affect your caring responsibilities) we will consider reimbursing some or all of your fee in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy.

Postgraduate students:

Most postgraduate students are studying on one-year courses so, as changes will be planned for the summer between academic years, disruption to study is unlikely to arise.

For those postgraduate students whose studies span more than one academic year it is possible that disruptive changes can occur:

- Where possible, we will put in place local teach-out arrangements.
- If we are unable to put in place appropriate teach-out for part-time postgraduate students¹, then we would approach another provider with whom to complete your studies.
- If you feel that the alternatives that we have put in place are not suitable for you (for example if our changes adversely affect your caring responsibilities) we will consider reimbursing some or all of your fee in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy.

The University of Law has the financial resources to ensure appropriate teach-out, transfer, refund and compensation arrangements described above.

¹ Part-time students, or any other postgraduate students whose study spans more than one academic year

3. Communication with you

Our Student Protection Plan is published on our website. We have ensured that staff are aware of this Plan and the consequences of closing programmes through formal communication and training with them. In any case, any decision to close a programme is made by the Executive Board, which will consider any financial implications, with the Academic Board Programme Approval Committee approving teach-out arrangements to ensure that academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience is properly managed.

We will communicate specifically with individual students as appropriate. For example, if we are planning a campus relocation, we will contact all existing and prospective students to explain the plans, and to set out options.

The Student Union will be involved with the development of Student Protection Plans and will also be involved with monitoring its implementation. While overall responsibility for oversight of the Student Protection Plan lies with the Executive Board, oversight of its impact on students is undertaken by the Academic Enhancement Committee/Admissions Committee of the Academic Board which has student representation.

Should we need to implement the Student Protection Plan, including communicating with students, we will follow the relevant policy, available at <https://www.law.ac.uk/about/policies/>:

Course Cancellation Policy
 Programme and Campus Design, Development and Approval Policy
 Programme Closure Policy
 Refund and Compensation Policy

If you are unhappy with how we implement any of these policies, in the first instance please contact complaints@law.ac.uk. We have a strong record in resolving complaints informally, but if you do decide to make a formal complaint you should use our Student Complaints Policy, available at <https://www.law.ac.uk/about/policies/>. The Student Union provides independent advice on the complaints process.

Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0		First version	August 2019
V1.1	Deputy Academic Registrar	Further amendments	August 2019
V1.2	Executive Board	Annual review	September 2020
V1.3	Academic Registrar, Student Union President, Chief Financial	Routine review	March 2022