

**Provider's name: Chichester College Group**

**Provider's UKPRN: 10007817**

**Legal address: Westgate Fields, Chichester, PO19 1SB**

**Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan: Kirste McCool Director of Higher Education**

### **Student protection plan – 2025/26**

#### **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**

Chichester College Group (CCG) was formed in 2017 when Chichester College merged with Central Sussex College. In the summer of 2022, CCG completed its latest merger with Greater Brighton Metropolitan College to create a Group that is a £120 million turnover business for 24/25.

As the largest College group in Sussex, we offer a broad curriculum which empowers our students and customers to develop the knowledge and skills demanded by our diverse economy. Our comprehensive and inclusive curriculum covers all 15 subject sector areas from entry level to level 7, with a full ladder of learning in the majority of vocational areas enabling students to progress from level 1 to level 3 and beyond.

We offer a range of product lines including, bespoke provision for 14-16 students, SEND students, 14-16 alternative provision, 16-18 technical and vocational study programmes (including T Levels), A Level provision, adult offer, community learning, higher education, apprenticeships and commercial provision.

Innovative curriculum delivery is demonstrated through the use of emerging VR/AR/AI technologies in curriculum delivery. Our flexible and accessible approach supports the delivery of higher education and apprenticeship provision, programmes for prisoners on licence, evolution of T Levels programmes, development of industry placement opportunities, bespoke leadership training for Southern Water and successful delivery on apprenticeship programmes for South East Coast Ambulance Service.

CCG is the lead partner in the Surrey and Sussex Institute of Technology (IoT) launched delivery in September 2023 in partnership with NESOT, University of Brighton and Sussex University alongside a significant number of employer partners including Gatwick Airport, NatWest, Roche, Wates and Southern Water.

We currently delivery programmes validated by University of the Arts London, University of Brighton, University of Chichester and University of Portsmouth alongside our Higher Nationals provision.

## **Institutional closure**

The risk that CCG is unable to fulfil its obligations and duties to students is **very low** because our financial performance is consistently strong. CCG provides a range of services to a diverse student population, and this economy of scale provides security that our financial position presents low to zero risk of non-continuation or closure.

Financial capability is verified by the Department for Education (DfE). The College is assessed on an annual basis by the DfE as having a "Good" financial health grading. The current rating of Good is considered an acceptable outcome. Financial statements are also reviewed by the Office for Students (OfS), through its annual performance review to ensure CCG's ability to deliver high quality HE programmes.

CCG monitors risk to business continuity through a group-wide register. The register is reviewed and updated termly basis using a numerical scoring system to assess the actions in place to mitigate risk. The register is used by the internal auditors to inform their annual internal audit strategy. The risk register is reviewed on a termly basis by the Audit and Risk Committee and Corporation.

Regular review and planning ensure CCG is positioned to deal with given scenarios in an effective and efficient manner.

## **Significant disruption to CCG operations**

The risk that CCG operation will be disrupted to the extent that its operations are significantly impaired is **very low**. CCG has implemented robust policies and procedures with regard to the quality and standards of its programmes, admission of students and the support available through Additional Learning Support and Student Experience Teams.

CCG has in its previous Colleges a solid track record with the relevant regulatory authorities which include: HEFCE/Office for Students, Quality Assurance Agency, British Council, UK Visas and Immigration, OFSTED, ESFA, Care Standards and LANDEX).

This track record provides confidence in CCG's ability to manage unforeseen disruption to operations. The business contingency plan is designed to enable the institution to mitigate the impact on students should the following events occur:

1. Withdrawal of CCG designation for student support purposes (that gives students of the CCG the ability to apply for and receive student loans).
2. Withdrawal of CCG designation as an FE Provider.
3. The loss of a validating partner.
4. Suspension or revocation of the CCG Tier 4 Sponsor License (the license issued by the Home Office which allows a provider to admit and teach international students).
5. Other disruption of CCG activities (including but not restricted to acts of terrorism, construction or repair work, damage to buildings or equipment, extreme weather, health and safety issues, industrial action, legal restrictions, upgrades to equipment).

## **College Teaching Sites**

CCG currently consists of seven colleges across nine sites. The colleges each have an independent distinctive identity, which offers students the experience of belonging to a college, but also belonging to the wider group.

Across CCG there is a structured and strategically aligned leadership model for Higher Education, ensuring clarity, consistency, and responsiveness across the group.

To ensure effective governance and continuous improvement of HE provision, the group has implemented robust deliberative structures:

- Higher Education Managers Group – Chaired by the Director of HE, this group includes Heads of Learning and support staff. It serves as a key operational forum for coordination, issue resolution, and the sharing of best practices.
- Higher Education Board – Chaired by the Principal for HE, this strategic body includes Principals and Directors from across the group. It provides oversight, sets direction, and ensures that HE provision aligns with institutional goals and sector expectations.
- Access and Participation Committee – Chaired by the Director of HE, this group monitors the impact of actions identified on the Access and Participation Plan and ensures that measures are implemented to meet targets.
- These structures ensure that HE is strategically led, operationally supported, and continuously enhanced through collaborative, informed decision-making.

## **Validating partners**

CCG works closely with a range of partner institutions that are supported with regular liaison meetings or linked tutor support. The validated programmes are also subject to revalidation every five years, and the partnerships renewed as part of the ongoing relationships. In 2025 renewal of all validating partnerships was undertaken, validation events or periodic review for the entire provision were completed and programmes updated and approved for delivery. These contractual agreements are now in place until 2031.

In the event of the loss of a validating partner, the institution will take all reasonable steps to protect students' interests, including seeking teach-out arrangements or facilitating transfers to equivalent programmes. Where feasible, we will work with our other validating partners to secure continuity of study, ensuring academic credit is preserved and progression is supported. Students will be kept fully informed and offered tailored guidance throughout the transition, with access to academic, financial, and pastoral support. The risk of loss of validating partner is therefore very low.

Agreements with validating partners includes that any students on a programme that is withdrawn would be taught out, and there would be arrangements in place to ensure a good student experience, programme closure whilst students are on programme would be an act of last resort, but CCG would

identify opportunities to transfer all learners in advance. The risk of students not being able to complete their programme of study in such circumstances is therefore **very low**.

### **Closure of a campus**

In 2024, Chichester College Group closed the Broadwater campus as part of a planned strategic consolidation. This decision was not driven by financial instability or emerging circumstances, and the transition was managed with no disruption to OfS-regulated provision. While this event reflects that campus closure can occur, the Group continues to assess the risk of further closures as low, based on current financial health, strategic planning, and infrastructure investment. The closure of Broadwater was an isolated and strategic action, not indicative of systemic risk across the Group's campuses. The risk of any closure of any further Colleges or campuses within the group will close is **very low**.

If a campus is relocated or closed, students will be notified as soon as possible and offered relocation support, online delivery alternatives, and financial assistance for additional travel costs.

### **Closure of a programme**

From time to time, CCG will decide that either a programme should be closed to new students or that it cannot offer a programme during a particular academic year. These circumstances can arise for a number of reasons:

- Academic staff becoming unavailable owing to health reasons/maternity or paternity leave/departure from the College
- The programme can no longer be offered as the associated costs have become unsustainable.
- CCG taking the decision to offer new programmes, resulting in the need to close existing provision in order to create the necessary capacity.
- More rarely, a specific programme may be impacted by changes to the regulatory framework or by changes in the accreditation secured from university partners or from a professional, regulatory or statutory body (PSRB).

CCG has an established protocol to deal with the proposed closure or suspension of one of its programmes as outlined in the Colleges admissions policy. CCG will take measures to safeguard the interests of those present and future. CCG will always consider its options before closing or suspending a programme. Decisions to close a programme are monitored by the Group Leadership Team, and through the deliberative structures at the HE Managers Group, and HE Board.

In the event of industrial action, the institution will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students' learning and progression. This may include rescheduling teaching, providing alternative delivery methods (such as online resources), and ensuring clear, timely communication. We will also offer academic support and guidance to help students navigate any impact on assessments or course outcomes.

In the event of key staff departure, continuity will be maintained through redeployment, recruitment, or guest lecturers. Additional academic support will be provided

In the event of the revocation of our Tier 4 Sponsor License, Chichester College Group will act swiftly and transparently to safeguard the interests of affected international students. We will liaise directly with UKVI to clarify visa implications and provide immediate guidance to students. Where possible, we will support transfers to alternative licensed institutions or facilitate continuation of study through our other validating partners. Academic records and transcripts will be issued promptly to support progression, and students will have access to tailored immigration advice, financial support for relocation, and dedicated pastoral care to minimise disruption and ensure continuity of learning.

CCG reviews its Higher Education provision annually, ensuring that all awards are appropriately resourced in terms of staffing and resources. Given the competitive nature of the higher education market, there is a likelihood the College may amend or stop delivery of at least one of its programmes, subject to approval by a validating partner. The risk of a programme being withdrawn or suspended within the next three years, and applicants being affected in some manner is therefore **low/moderate**.

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

In the unlikely event that we were unable to deliver a course at a specified campus, where possible, the provision would be relocated to another campus and appropriate transport would be provided for students to ensure their studies would not be interrupted. The flexibility of our estate makes relocation the most likely and positive outcome.

It may be that over time, a course in a specialised programme may be superseded by newer provision, and together with declining recruitment may need to close. Such instances are anticipated through highly effective curriculum planning and arrangements are made to ensure that all students currently enrolled to the programme continue to receive the teaching and learning opportunities that enable them to succeed.

If CCG were unable to continue to deliver courses in such circumstances, we have a commitment to 'teach out' the existing programme, in line with validating partner regulations. This means that we commit to ensuring the course of study will be completed within the time scale specified at enrolment.

Many programmes are designed with shared pathways and modular components; this provides enhancements to the student experience and mitigates against the negative impact of small group sizes. There have been instances where programmes have continued with small group numbers and in these cases the overall student experience has been positively sustained. Highly effective business planning ensures this delivery model is sustainable.

To ensure that there is parity of course content alternative modules or transfer options will maintain the integrity of learning outcomes and professional standards. We will ensure that any changes do not disadvantage students in terms of academic progression or future employment opportunities.

In the highly unlikely event that we were unable to deliver material components of a course in any subject our breadth and depth of academic expertise would enable us to provide secure continuation of study. Our partnership organisations would be an additional support in this regard and would extend our existing highly effective recruitment processes. One of our core values is to place the student at the heart of all we do, and this value ensures they are respected partners in all learning activities.

### **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**

CCG will ensure that all students are treated equitably when agreeing a way forward to achieving their qualification. However, if CCG is unable to preserve the continuation of study for any incidents outlined above, the Group may explore if it is appropriate to provide students with fee waivers or refunds. CCG will consider what financial recompense may be due to the students owing to demonstrable, material financial loss caused by the disruption to their studies.

Refunds of course fees will be made according to the duration of learning undertaken and impact of alteration or course closure to overall learning outcomes of the programme of study.

Fee waivers will be considered if a student has to undertake substantive rework in order to obtain the learning outcomes of an alternative course due to the closure or substantial alteration of existing provisions.

CCG will support students that are transferred to an alternative site or institution for the academic year impacted for out of pocket expenses and any other reasonable adjustments agreed prior to the transfer.

We commit to ensuring that all mitigation measures are equitable, transparent, and sensitive to the diversity of our student body, recognising that students have different needs and circumstances. Our approach will include:

- **Mobility needs:** For students with mobility challenges, we will prioritise accessible facilities and offer online alternatives to minimise disruption.
- **Educational needs:** Students with disabilities or specific learning requirements will receive tailored adjustments, such as adapted assessments, additional tutorials, and assistive technologies. Our Additional Learning Support Team will work directly with affected students to ensure continuity of learning and compliance with the Equality Act.
- **Individual Support Meetings:** The College Group commits to providing dedicated advice and support through Student Services, including academic guidance, welfare support, and financial assistance. Communication will be clear, timely, and accessible, with information sessions and one-to-one appointments available.

If steps 1-3 do not derive a satisfactory outcome, then a case may be taken for financial recompense review by the Higher Education Board and Chief Financial Officer.

#### **Policies**

[Fees-and-withdrawals-policy 2024-25.docx](#)

[HE fees Withdrawals Policy 2025-26](#)

[Admissions Policy 25-26](#)

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

We will communicate the provision of the student protection plan to all students through the college website and HE information pages.

All published prospectus materials will include a link to this web site.

A student friendly version of the SPP will be created to ensure accessibility.

For new and existing students, the plan will be included in all student handbooks and accessible through the virtual learning environment.

The student protection plan will be communicated to all staff through a programme of HE CPD, including bespoke staff development sessions, conference activities and is embedded into the curriculum business plan and monitored through the HEM and HEB deliberative structures.

Although CCG may make improvements and minor adjustments to modules any changes will be made with student consultation and be authorised the GLT, by the HE deliberative structures and our validating partners.

The student protection plan will be reviewed through a range of student engagement groups with formalised feedback from the Student Union. This will be managed through the normal quality cycle where the plan will be a standing agenda item at the HEM/HEB deliberative structures.

This level of engagement will establish a partnership approach to the formation and review of the student protection plan with key stakeholders.

Where possible students will be given a minimum of 4 weeks' notice, in writing, for material changes to courses.

An open and transparent process of review will be conducted annually. Student representation will be managed by the Student Union with a formal annual report submitted to the HE boards for consideration. The partnership arrangements already in place at CCG will add a layer of cooperation to this process.