

# Northern Regional College: Student Protection Plan

## Student Protection Plan for the period 2024/25

**Provider's name:** Northern Regional College

**Provider's UKPRN:** 10020372

**Legal address:** Farm Lodge, Ballymena, BT 43 7DF

### Contact point for enquiries about this student protection plan:

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## Aim

This Student Protection Plan outlines the potential risks that could impact Northern Regional College's ability to deliver teaching, learning, or support services as agreed with our students. It includes an assessment of the likelihood of these risks occurring and the proactive measures NRC has in place to mitigate their impact. The plan also explains how students will be informed and supported should any part of the plan need to be activated.

## Commitments

Northern Regional College is committed to ensuring that all enrolled students have the opportunity to complete their studies and achieve their qualifications as intended, regardless of the mode or location of delivery. This commitment applies to:

- Students studying at any of the College campuses, which are in Ballymena, Coleraine, Magherafelt and Newtownabbey.
- Students enrolled in higher education programmes delivered in partnership with awarding bodies, including HEIs.
- Students participating in work-based learning, apprenticeships, or community-based education programmes.

This Student Protection Plan does not apply in cases where a student voluntarily withdraws, is withdrawn due to academic or disciplinary reasons, fails to meet financial obligations, or is deemed unfit to continue in a shared learning environment.

NRC is committed to transparency and will communicate clearly with students about any risks to the continuity of their programme. We will also outline the steps being taken to minimise disruption and support students in making informed decisions about their studies.

**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**

We have assessed the following risks to the continuation of study:

- **Institutional Closure:** The risk of NRC ceasing operations is **low**. The College maintains a strong financial position, with robust governance and strategic planning processes in place.
- **Programme Closure:** Where a programme becomes unsustainable (e.g., due to low enrolment), we will implement a **“teach-out”** strategy to ensure current students can complete their studies.
- **Campus Relocation or Closure:** We currently have **no plans** to close or relocate campuses. Any future changes will involve consultation with affected students.
- **Loss of Key Staff or Resources:** Programmes are delivered by teams of staff, and contingency plans are in place to ensure continuity in the event of staff turnover or resource issues.
- **Disruption from External Events:** NRC has comprehensive **business continuity plans**, including remote learning capabilities, to respond to events such as natural disasters, pandemics, or security threats.

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

To mitigate reasonably foreseeable risks:

- **Teach-Out Commitment:** If a programme is closed, it will remain open to current students until completion. New enrolments will be suspended, not existing provision.
- **Alternative Provision:** Where necessary, we will support students in transferring to similar programmes at partner institutions or other regional colleges.
- **Distance Learning Options:** Where appropriate, students may be offered the opportunity to complete their programme through online or blended learning.
- **Placement Support:** For programmes requiring placements NRC will ensure all students are matched with suitable opportunities.

**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**

Guidance on College refund and compensation policy is found within the College's **Fees & Charges Policy**. This policy makes provision for the following:

- refunds for students in receipt of tuitions fee loan 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.
- commitments to honour student bursaries.
- 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 must transfer courses or provider.

We have cash reserves of which would be sufficient to provide refunds and compensation if required.

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

We will ensure students are fully informed about this plan through:

- **Publication** on the NRC website and Canvas Student Hub
- **Inclusion** in course handbooks and induction materials
- **Staff Training** during annual development events
- **Student Engagement** via the Student Union and Student Experience Forum meetings

In the event of a programme change or closure, the College will implement the procedure for 'Course Creative, Changes, Cancellation or Closure', which identifies:

- Individual and group consultations will be held with currently enrolled students, before any changes happen, to give the opportunity for discussion.
- Students will be notified within **one week** of the decision
- Independent advice will be available through Colleges Careers Advisors