

## STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Category	Student Experience – Student Protection
Subject	Student Protection Policy
Approving Authority	Senior Management Team (SMT)
Responsible Officer	Head of Compliance
Responsible Office	Student Support and Welfare Office
Related Procedures	Course Closure Procedure, Student Transfer Procedure, Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
Related Policies	Tuition Fee, Refund, and Compensation Policy; Risk Register; Risk Management Framework
Effective Date:	03/02/2025
Next Review Date:	02/02/2026

### 1.0 Introduction and Intent

- 1.1 The Student Protection Policy is a critical part of iQualifyUK's strategy to ensure the continuity of student education, even in the face of unforeseen disruptions. It is designed to protect students by outlining how we will respond if their course or educational experience is impacted by changes beyond normal management control, such as course cancellations, institutional closure, or other significant alterations.
- 1.2 The intent of this Policy is not only to protect student rights but also to ensure that any disruption to education is managed in a transparent, efficient, and fair manner. This Policy ensures that iQualifyUK actively identifies potential risks to students' academic progress and provides clear, practical steps to minimise these risks.
- 1.3 By establishing this Policy, iQualifyUK is committed to upholding all students' academic journeys. Should there be any severe disruption, students will be informed immediately and given clear, actionable options for continuing studies. These may include transferring to an alternative course, moving to another institution, or receiving financial support and compensation.
- 1.4 The College understands that student education is an investment and will take all necessary measures to safeguard this investment. This includes offering support, guidance, and compensation when necessary to ensure that any disruption does not unduly impact students' educational goals.
- 1.5 This Policy aligns with the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, which requires all higher education institutions to have a Student Protection Policy in place. The Policy is designed to meet all regulatory expectations, ensuring that students receive the highest level of protection in the event of course changes or disruptions.
- 1.6 iQualifyUK will work closely with students, academic staff, and other stakeholders to implement the Policy effectively. Students will always be informed of any changes, and we will assist immediately if any disruption occurs.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 iQualifyUK is committed to supporting students by identifying potential risks to their education and ensuring these risks are managed effectively. This Policy outlines strategies for mitigating risks and provides clear procedures in case of course closure or significant disruptions.

2.2 The Policy is developed in consultation with the Student Council to ensure it reflects the diverse needs of students and the various programmes offered. The College is committed to upholding students' rights, informing them promptly about changes, and offering practical solutions when needed.

2.3 Students can contact the Head of Compliance at [enquiries@iqualifyuk.com](mailto:enquiries@iqualifyuk.com) for further information. Accessible formats for this policy are available upon request.

### 3.0 Legislation and Guidance

3.1 The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires institutions to maintain a Student Protection Plan to safeguard students in case of programme changes, suspensions, or institutional closure.

3.2 This Policy follows the regulatory advice published by the Office for Students (OfS) and is based on best practices for student protection.

### 4.0 Risks to Non-Continuation

4.1 iQualifyUK assesses risks to non-continuation over four years, covering the typical duration of study for most of our courses. These risks are measured using a systematic risk management framework, rated on the following criteria.

4.2 The College has identified several key risks to non-continuation, including:

1. **Closure Risk:** Very low risk due to strong financial health and regulatory compliance.
2. **Loss of Accreditation Risk:** Low risk, as iQualifyUK complies with OfS registration requirements and has a strong governance framework.
3. **Restriction of External Validation:** Medium risk, though safeguards are in place through the College's strong partnerships with external awarding bodies.
4. **Significant Modifications to Course Content or Delivery:** Low risk, but the College is committed to minimising disruption and providing alternatives to affected students.
5. **Industrial Disruptions:** Very low risk, with a strong history of effective employee relations.
6. **Unexpected Staff Departures:** Low risk, as iQualifyUK recruits quickly and effectively to fill gaps and ensure continuity of academic support.

4.3 These risks are reassessed annually, and actions will be taken to minimise their impact.

### 5.0 Measures to Mitigate Risks to Non-Continuation

5.1 iQualifyUK maintains a substantial financial reserve. If a programme must be taught out, the College will create a Teach Out Plan in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

5.2 If a programme needs to be withdrawn or significantly altered, iQualifyUK will:

- Communicate any changes immediately, providing clear options for affected students.
- Offer Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG) to assist students in transferring to another provider, if necessary.

5.3 In cases where campus facilities become unavailable, the College will:

- Relocate programmes to alternative locations or hire temporary teaching spaces.
- Adjust timetables to ensure that teaching continues as scheduled.

5.4 If disruption cannot be prevented, students will receive compensation as outlined in the Tuition Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy.

## 6.0 Measures to Inform and Protect Students

### 6.1 Timely Communication

In the event of any disruption, iQualifyUK is committed to providing students with clear and timely information. The College will notify affected students immediately and provide detailed instructions on the next steps. This will include:

1. Notifications via email, phone, and in-person meetings (where applicable).
2. Clear explanations of how the disruption affects students and what alternatives are available.
3. Opportunities to discuss options with student support staff to make the transition as smooth as possible.

### 6.2 Individualised Support

The Student Support Team will work directly with students to understand students' specific needs and offer tailored advice. Whether transferring to a different course or provider, we will:

1. Assist students in selecting alternative courses that match their academic goals.
2. Provide students with guidance on how to transfer academic records to another institution.
3. Ensure students have all the necessary academic references or documentation for any transfers or applications.

### 6.3 Consultations with Affected Students

When a significant disruption occurs, iQualifyUK will offer students the opportunity to meet with the academic advisor or student support staff. These consultations will help students understand the changes and make decisions based on the individual circumstances.

### 6.4 Maintaining Educational Continuity

If any course undergoes a significant change, iQualifyUK will work to provide alternative solutions to ensure students can continue their education without losing progress. This may include:

1. Providing additional learning resources or supplementary materials to help students catch up.
2. Offering online learning options if students cannot attend in person.
3. Ensuring students have access to the necessary academic support services during any transition period.

## 7.0 Refunds and Compensation

7.1 If a student is required to be transferred to a different course or institution, the College's Tuition Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy outlines the process for refunding tuition fees and providing compensation.

7.2 iQualifyUK allocates funds within its annual budget for potential refunds and compensation. A combination of cash reserves and insurance policies ensures that students are supported financially in case of significant disruption.

7.3 Compensation claims may include:

1. Additional travel costs for relocating to another provider.
2. Lost time and opportunities if continuation of study is not possible.
3. Tuition and maintenance costs for students transferring to another course or institution.

7.4 Compensation claims will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering the College's efforts to mitigate risks and the extent to which a student's experience has been disrupted.

## 8.0 Communication, Feedback, and Review

- 8.1 The Student Protection Policy will be made available to all prospective and current students through the College website.
- 8.2 Students will be contacted by multiple methods if the Student Protection Policy needs to be implemented. The Student Support team will ensure students have all the information they need to make informed decisions.
- 8.3 Students can provide feedback on the Policy by emailing [enquiries@iqualifyuk.com](mailto:enquiries@iqualifyuk.com) or participating in meetings at the course level or with the Student Council.
- 8.4 The Student Protection Policy will be reviewed annually. Risks will be reassessed, and the Compliance Committee will validate the updated policy before publication.

## Appendix 1: Student Protection Policy (2025-2026)

No.	Risk to Non-Continuation	Risk Score	Responsible Committee
1	Institutional Closure	Negligible	Senior Management Team
2	Loss of Accreditation	Low	Academic Board
3	Loss or Restriction of External Validation	Medium	Academic Board
4	Significant Modifications to Course Content or Delivery	Low	Academic Board
5	Industrial Disruptions	Negligible	Senior Management Team
6	Unexpected Staff Departures	Low	Talent Management Committee