ICON College of Technology and Management

Student Protection Plan

1) Introduction

This Student Protection Plan ("**SPP**" or the "**Plan**") provides assurance to you (our current and future students) that ICON College of Technology and Management (the "**College**") has in place appropriate arrangements to protect the quality and continuation of study for you all. This Plan sets out our approach to protect your interests in a transparent and clear way. The SPP assures that procedures are in place to protect your interests and you have redress to the Office for Students (OfS) if you feel our SPP is not mitigating risks to your satisfaction.

We are actively supporting and encouraging widening participation and we are aware that ranges of students studying at the College may have differing needs, circumstances and are from diverse cultures. We are committed to Equal Opportunities and our SPP gives regard to the possible different needs of students sharing protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Our Plan provides the actions we are taking to mitigate these risks.

The key features of the Plan ensuring your protection to study are as follows:

a) The provision of a Risk Register Assessment underpinning support for your continued study.
b) A statement of our Financial Performance demonstrating low risk to inability to operate successfully.
c) A Business Continuity Plan in the event of unforeseen or surprising circumstances occurring.
d) A Refund and Compensation Policy in the event of no longer being able to preserve continuation of study.
e) Effective communication of the SPP on our website and appropriate mediums of communication.
f) Clear measures in place to ensure business continuity.
g) The Plan ensures that students with differing needs circumstances or characteristics are appropriately supported

2) Assessment of risks

The risk that the College as a whole will be unable to operate is very low because our financial performance is sound and we have produced both a Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register Assessment to address and mitigate all possible uncertainties and ensure the continuation of the business.

Our Risk Register covers the following areas:

- Student Recruitment
- Student learning experience
- Financial Risks
- Human Resources
- Property and Estates
- Attendance and SLC Records
- Board of Directors
- Management Board

- Statutes and Regulations
- External Policy Context
- Curriculum Change
- Information Resources

The Risk Register is measured in terms of risk likelihood expressed as Red (High Risk), Amber (Medium Risk) and Green (Low Risk) and is reviewed annually at Management Board (MB) meetings. This Plan now further strengthens the Risk Register.

3) Measures the College has put in place to mitigate a major risk to your study

Whilst the College has a Risk Register and Risk Strategy it has also produced a Business Continuity Plan (BCP), set out below. The BCP addresses business continuity in the event of a major disruption to your studies. A typical example of such a disruption would be if the ICON campus became suddenly, without warning, unavailable, or where there were to be any unforeseen long-term situations that affected the College's ability to teach you.

a) Business Continuity Plan

i. Introduction

The BCP is to be used to assist in the recovery of ICON College in general and your studies in particular, in the event of a major disruption to the College. For example, where a fire destroys most of the building or the foundations render the building to be suddenly unsafe. A major disruption is defined by the College as a significant incident threatening personnel, buildings or the operation of the College and requires special measures to be taken to restore activity to normal, as quickly as possible. The College acknowledges its responsibility to maintain the quality of all students' studies in the event of a foreseen but unexpected major catastrophe.

The College operates a Risk Strategy and Assessment to cover all other academic and personal risks to student learning, staffing, learning resources etc. Moreover, the College also has measures in place that guard against an event that brings a potential catastrophic disruption to your studies. The College recognises that a disruption of up to five days to your learning is manageable by normal measures through the implementation of a model encouraging a short period of self-study. However, in the event of a major disruption, the College has a contingency plan to deal with this, minimising the overall disruption to both staff and students.
The online classes option is available via ICON VLE.

ii. Aim

The aim of the BCP is to set out the responsibilities and actions to be taken by the College to re-instate the business operation following a major disruption quickly and efficiently. The primary goal would be to ensure little or no disruption to studies.

iii. Objectives

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- Provide for continuity of the activities essential to the College.
- Reduce to a minimum the disruption to students, staff, and services restoring them to an acceptable level.

iv. Scope of the Document

The BCP sets out details of the key recovery measure to be taken in the event of a major disruption to the key activities of the College.

v. **Activation of the Plan**

The MB will be responsible for the activation of the Business Continuity Management Plan. At the point the BCP is activated, all staff and students are to be immediately informed via email and text messages. All staff members will be contacted and advised of the current situation and what their role will be in the recovery phase. You will be contacted through your student representatives,

or individually, where possible and you will be kept up to date with actions taken.

vi. **Action to be taken**

The College has an insurance policy that would cover us financially enabling us to rent another premises in the event of a major disruption. The College also has reserves to approximately cover over six months of operations.

vii. **Students with differing characteristics or circumstances in the event of major disruption**

The College will ensure that the temporary premises are equipped with resources that will enable access for students with disabilities as well as providing learning resources appropriate for the whole gamut of student disabilities.

4) Refunds and compensation

The Refund and Compensation Policy provides clear and transparent information about refund and/or compensation in the event of our inability to maintain continuation of study. The Policy has been reviewed by the Office for Students and is available on the College website **[See Refunds and Compensation Policy]**. The Academic Board has also evaluated the policy prior to approval by the Board of Directors. Its aim is to give you full protection under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 for refunds and/or compensation, where reasonable. The policy covers the following areas:

- Refunds for students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loan 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
- A commitment to honour student bursaries, where appropriate
- Compensation for maintenance costs and lost time where it is not possible to preserve continuation of study and
- Compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students have to transfer courses or provider.

The College maintains a minimum of six months cash reserve which would be sufficient to provide either a refund or compensation to the students to whom we have identified at an increased risk of non-continuation of study. Also, the Risk Register we have produced gives us a clear indication of the likelihood and weight of each risk enabling us to be proactive if the risk is growing.

Furthermore, we have now put in place insurance arrangements to mitigate finance to provide refunds and compensation, where appropriate under the policy for those students for whom we have identified an increased risk of non-continuation of study.

4. How we communicate to our students about the SPP

We publicise our SPP to current and future students in the following ways:

- On the College website
- Covered in the induction
- Available in the College VLE

We will ensure staff are aware of the implications of our SPP through initial staff development. It will be the responsibility of each Head of Department to make staff aware of the implications for the SPP when changes are being proposed. This will also be monitored by the Academic Board which signs off changes.

We will review our SPP annually and it will iterate the staff meeting; Programme Committee; Academic Board and Advisory Board as a consultative document before being signed off by the Board of Directors.

Student representatives will be involved in the initial review of the SPP through with the Academic Board and College Consumers Affairs Group. At this point they will be informed of their responsibility to disseminate to the student body. The SPP will be tabled at all Programme Committee meetings for comment and student representatives are present when the SPP is received by both Academic and Management Boards. It is part of the terms of reference for a student representative to inform their student body of any important issues and it is always checked in Academic Board meetings that this has occurred.

Should our SPP need to be revised, we will inform our students if there are to be material changes, with an immediate meeting of all students with the MB and Heads of Department. At the meeting the students will be given a strategic plan of how changes are to be implemented with opportunities for consultation covering the effect of the material changes and dates of change to be agreed and then confirmed in writing to all students. In the event of termination of an accredited course the plan will contain clear instructions as to the 'teach out' arrangements for the course. The students will have a minimum of 30 days' notice prior to a material change being enacted. At the same time the Principal will inform all external members of the Academic and Management Boards. Management Board members may be required to act as independent advisers for the students.

If material changes need to be made and our SPP is implemented we will ensure the following:

a) Each student is individually supported by a personal tutor who will give clear and continuous advice on the effect of the changes.
b) The tutor will help the student make effective choices to mitigate the effect of the changes
c) Compensation will be agreed, where appropriate, as swiftly as possible
d) Students will have open access to the respective Head of Department and MB
e) Full advice will be provided about the choice of new options where appropriate
f) Substantial advice and support will be given by personal tutors, welfare officers, careers guidance and senior academics if the student needs to find an alternative course with another provider.

The Board of Directors (which includes three external members) will be in a position to offer independent advice.

5. Protecting students with differing circumstances, characteristics and needs

The SPP ensures that students with disabilities, whatever it may be, will be protected through continuous review and that learning and physical resources will be appropriate to support you. The College will also ensure that continuous access to the College and your studies will be of paramount importance and we will respect differing needs and

circumstances. In this way the College will continue to encourage students with disabilities that the College is a welcoming and supportive place to study.

6. **Access to any document cited in this SPP is available on the College Website.**