

Global Banking School
Oxford Brookes University
Joint Student Protection Plan

Global Banking School ('GBS' or 'the School') is committed to helping students on the Oxford Brookes University ('OBU' or 'the University') courses achieve successful outcomes from their studies. However, there may be unforeseen circumstances, often outside GBS's or the University's control, which result in changes having to be made to modules or courses.

Students studying an OBU course at GBS are covered by OBU's Student Protection Plan, which can be found at: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/about-brookes/structure-and-governance/policies-and-financial-statements/student-protection-plan/>.

This GBS-OBU Joint Student Protection Plan outlines the framework through which both institutions will operationalise the OBU Student Protection Plan for students at GBS. It is a joint statement outlining how OBU and GBS will work together to assure applicants and students that appropriate arrangements are in place to protect the quality and continuity of study. It identifies potential risks to the continuation of OBU-validated GBS courses and outlines the specific remedial actions that GBS and OBU will undertake to mitigate them.

GBS and OBU will jointly review this Plan on an annual basis.

Significant Material Change in Global Banking School's Circumstances

If a substantial change in GBS's circumstances (such as a significant course or campus closure) affects an OBU validated course, GBS will work closely with OBU to ensure students can continue and complete their studies.

The below list of significant material changes outlines some of the possible actions GBS and/or OBU would take.

(a) Institutional closure

The possibility of institutional failure by GBS on business grounds will be monitored through a risk management process. The process meets our regulatory body, the Office for Students (OfS), requirements.

GBS's Strategic Plan includes a risk analysis, reviewed annually by the Executive Board and Academic Board (which has Student Representatives as full members).

Should GBS find itself in a position where it has to close, it will consider measures, including those given below, to protect the student learning experience and student interests:

- where possible, the closure will take place in a phased manner, over a period of time to allow currently enrolled students to complete their studies ('teach-out') at GBS
- in a situation where teach-out is not possible, GBS would support students to transfer to appropriate/equivalent courses provided by OBU or another suitable higher education provider, and (where applicable) compensate students if, because of disruption to their studies, they suffer demonstrable material financial loss.
- explore the possibility of merging with another higher education provider to maintain all or part of the courses validated by OBU.

(b) Closure of part or all of the School campus

In the event that part or all of the campus is rendered unusable for teaching and learning activities for our students, GBS would consider remedies such as:

- relocating OBU courses to an alternative location. It may, for example, include renting spaces for course delivery (preferably close to the School's current premises, where possible and practicable). It may also involve making use of online teaching and learning as part of the arrangements.
- rescheduling the timetabled hours to allow all of the scheduled teaching to take part in the available facilities. It may include student contact sessions being held outside of usual scheduled teaching hours. Appropriate consultation will be conducted with all students and stakeholders who may be affected where such an approach is taken.
- delivering part or all of the course through alternative means, such as distance learning. Where such an approach is taken, the School will consider, through consultation, whether or not this is appropriate for students who would be affected.

In the event of GBS having to close significant parts of its premises, it may adopt a combination of the methods outlined above.

(c) Closure of OBU Courses

GBS has procedures in place in the event of a decision to close a current course of studies validated by OBU. Where this is likely to have a material impact on students, the School will mitigate the effects by:

- timely communication with all prospective and enrolled students to assure them that they will not be adversely affected by this decision, and provide assurance they will be able to complete their studies at GBS;
- additionally, and where possible, the provision will enable students to complete their studies where extenuating circumstances have been presented (according to the OBU's Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures), or an interruption of studies agreed;
- notifying prospective students at any stage of the recruitment and admission process. It will allow time for them to apply for the same or similar course of study at OBU or another higher education provider. GBS will support prospective students in this regard;
- OBU and GBS will manage the closure of an OBU course through a shared risk assessment process.

(d) Major In Year Changes to a OBU Course

Global Banking School consistently aims to deliver courses following the relevant Course Specification validated by OBU for the academic year in which students commenced their course.

In the unlikely event of material in-year changes to the course, due to external changes made by professional or regulatory bodies or, for example, changes in modules on offer, GBS will ensure that:

- any changes are kept to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain the existing quality of the student learning experience;
- all affected students will be notified and consulted in a timely and appropriate manner;
- the School will work with the students to ensure that any revised offer is acceptable to them and preserves their interests;

- where necessary, the School will allow students the opportunity to withdraw from the course. In such a circumstance, GBS will support students, if requested, to find a similar course.

(e) Unanticipated Loss of Key Staff

In the event of key members of staff leaving Global Banking School unexpectedly, GBS will:

- seek to fill gaps in staffing as quickly as possible; or
- redeploy current members of staff, with appropriate skills and experience, into any vacant post(s); or
- recruit externally as quickly as possible to minimise any disruption

Should the School be unable to avoid closing a course due to the loss of staff, the policy as outlined in section (c) will apply.

(f) Industrial Action by Global Banking School Staff or a Third Party

Global Banking School will consult and negotiate with any recognised trade unions. The School is fully committed to maintaining an effective employee relations culture and working with trade union colleagues to achieve reasonable solutions to matters that may arise from time to time.

It is possible that GBS and its students may be unduly affected by industrial action by a third party, for instance during a prolonged transport strike. If this or other industrial action affecting students does occur, the School will seek to:

- ensure that normal operations and services are maintained as far as possible. It may also include taking actions outlined in section (b) above;
- take all reasonable steps to fulfil its responsibilities to students by ensuring that any disruption is minimised and students are not, as far as practically possible, disadvantaged by any industrial action. It may involve, for example, providing learning materials on the VLE to support studies where students may have difficulties with attending teaching sessions on the School's premises.

(g) A decision by OBU to terminate the partnership

Should the partnership between OBU and GBS end, the partners would normally follow the process outlined in the above section on course closure.

Tuition fee refund

The GBS Student Refunds and Compensation Policy sets out the terms under which the School will make refunds and provide compensation to, and on behalf of, students. The policy is available at: <https://globalbanking.ac.uk/media/wfpn1hc4/gbs-tuition-fee-refund-and-compensation-policy-v11-dec-2024.pdf>

OBUs Student Refunds and Compensation Policy sets out the terms under which the University will make refunds and provide compensation to, and on behalf of, students. The policy is available at: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/studying-at-brookes/finance/paying-your-fees/>

Communication with Students and Staff about this Joint Student Protection Plan

Global Banking School will communicate with current and future students concerning this Joint Student Protection Plan in the following ways:

- GBS will include a copy of the latest version of the Plan on its website.
- Prospective students will be informed of the Joint Student Protection Plan at the interview.
- The Plan will be shared with newly enrolled students at their induction sessions and included on the VLE;
- Returning students will be informed of any updates to the Joint Student Protection Plan from the version provided at induction when first starting at GBS. The latest version of the Plan will be available on the VLE.

New staff will be briefed on the Plan as part of their induction to Global Banking School. Staff will be briefed and informed about the Joint Student Protection Plan on an annual basis following any revisions to the Plan.

Risk Assessment

Both GBS and OBU monitor the likelihood of these events happening as part of their approach to risk management.