



## Student Protection Plan 2025/26

### 1. What is a Student Protection Plan?

This Student Protection Plan sets out how current students and applicants for higher education courses at ArtsEd are protected if ArtsEd is unable to deliver their course. In this Plan, 'you' and 'your' mean an ArtsEd student or applicant and 'we', 'us' and 'our' mean ArtsEd.

ArtsEd is committed to supporting you to complete your studies and this Plan is designed to ensure that your interests are protected. This Plan sets out our assessment of the risks of your higher education course, campus or ArtsEd as an institution closing, and provides details of our approach should any of these events occur.

### 2. Our assessments of risks

We operate a Risk Register which records risks to the activities of ArtsEd, the likelihood of them occurring and the arrangements we put in place to minimise risks. The Risk Register is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, which is the ultimate decision-making body of ArtsEd. The Board of Trustees and our senior leadership team review and update the Risk Register regularly, which ensures that we are aware of any risks to our operations and have formulated strategies to mitigate those risks.

We have set out our assessment of the risks we consider may affect our ability to continue to deliver your course below and the measures in place to mitigate these risks.

#### a. Risk of ArtsEd closing

The risk of ArtsEd closing as an institution is **very low**. We have no intention to close as an institution. Our ability to continue to operate is reliant on maintaining income from student fees and effectively managing costs. The Board of Trustees regularly monitors financial performance and has effective budgeting procedures to manage expenditure. Recruitment to our courses is strong and applications to them significantly exceed the number of places available each year. The ratio of applications to places for 2024/25 entry for each of our courses was as follows and was at similar levels in the previous 3 years:

- BA Acting: 25:1
- BA Musical Theatre: 23:1
- CertHE Acting: 4:1
- CertHE Musical Theatre: 6:1
- MA Acting: 15:1

As a result, the risk that the number of applications drops to a level where we are unable to fill available places and maintain quality is **very low**.

Senior management regularly review scenarios in relation to student recruitment to ensure that potential mitigating action can be taken should recruitment be lower than expected. We consider our business model to be flexible and adaptable, and we have demonstrated this in recent years, when actions were taken to address significant and unexpected fluctuations in costs, notably in 2022/23 during the energy crisis. There remains a general contingency in the budget of £100k, and there remains the provision for further leavers in each of the main schools, along with a bad debt provision. The total contingency/sensitivity (assuming costs are controlled within budget) broadly equates to 14 student withdrawals in year, which management consider to be a reasonable in the current economic climate, and taking into account historical trends. We are considering ways that further efficiencies and economies of scale can be obtained between all areas of the institution, and with technological advances and consolidation, in particular in relation to admissions, we may be able to reduce our cost base in future years.

#### b. Loss of validation

Our higher education courses are validated by City St George's, University of London, which means that on successful completion of your course, you will receive an award from City St George's as the degree-awarding body. The risk that City St George's withdraws validation of our courses is **very low**. Our validation partnership with City St George's has been in place since 2001 and there is a strong relationship between our institutions. Relevant staff within each institution are in regular contact both informally and through formal governance and quality assurance procedures. The outcomes of the most recent revalidations of our courses by City St George's have been extremely positive.

In the unlikely event that City St George's withdraws validation, the validation agreement between City St George's and us would remain in place until all enrolled students complete their studies, or until other arrangements (e.g. transfer to another institution) have been made to safeguard enrolled students' best interests for the remainder of their studies.

Our BA courses are also validated as Level 6 Professional and Performing Arts Diplomas by Trinity College London enabling us to offer Dance and Drama awards (DaDA) funded by the Department for Education. The DaDA scheme provides financial support for tuition fees and living costs for around a third of our BA

students who additionally register for the Diploma. ArtEd's participation in the scheme is dependent on continued validation of the Diplomas by Trinity College London. The risk of withdrawal of validation by Trinity College London is **very low**. Outcomes of previous revalidation exercises have been positive. We also receive inspections by Ofsted for the Level 6 Diplomas and were rated 'Outstanding' at the last inspection in November 2023. However, in the unlikely event that Trinity College London withdraws validation, registered students would be able to complete their studies as the BA courses, which are identical in delivery to the Diplomas, would continue to run.

We have plans in place to build alternative sources of financial student support to mitigate the risk that the DaDA scheme is discontinued by the Department for Education in its entirety. Whilst the high number of applications to our courses means we could continue to maintain student numbers and fee income at current levels without the scheme, it plays a significant role in our commitment to widening access by supporting students from lower income backgrounds to study at ArtsEd.

ArtsEd was awarded the highest rating of 'Gold' in the most recent Teaching Excellence Framework in 2023 evidencing the strength of our higher education provision.

#### c. Closure of a delivery location

Our two BA courses and our CertHE Musical Theatre Foundation course are delivered at our campus in Chiswick, London, which has been our base since 1986. The risk that our Chiswick campus is no longer available is **very low**. We own the Chiswick campus and have no plans to close it. We undertook a major capital development programme of the buildings in 2021 and are committed to ongoing investment in our estate.

Our MA Acting course is delivered at the Catholic Centre, a hired venue within walking distance of the Chiswick campus. The hire agreement for the Catholic Centre has been in place for over 20 years. Our CertHE Acting Foundation course is delivered at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, 15 minutes away from the Chiswick campus on public transport. The hire agreement for the Lyric Hammersmith has been in place since 2018.

The risk that either the Catholic Centre or the Lyric Hammersmith is no longer available is **low** as although neither venue is owned or managed by ArtsEd, the hire arrangements are longstanding. The MA Acting and the CertHE Acting Foundation both have a duration of one academic year which is fully covered by the duration of the hire agreement with each institution. This means that current students would not be affected if it is decided by either institution or ArtsEd not to renew the agreement at the end of the current hire period. If either hire agreement is not renewed for the following academic year, which would affect applicants due to commence their courses, an appropriate alternative venue would be identified close to the Chiswick campus. Our location in West London, strong relationships with

organisations in the local community and small cohort sizes of around 30 students on each course means we have confidence that an appropriate alternative venue can be secured quickly within close proximity to the Chiswick campus.

#### d. Closure of a course

We have a successful track record as a small, specialist provider of conservatoire Acting and Musical Theatre training. Demand for places continues to be strong and there are no plans to close any of our courses in the next three years.

The risk that we are no longer able to deliver courses or material components of them through loss of key staff is **very low**. The courses are led and taught by an integrated team of academic staff comprising over 30 specialist technical tutors, enhanced by the involvement of approximately 150 freelance industry practitioners each year. In addition, we maintain strong industry links and have appropriate recruitment procedures in place, including succession planning, to enable us to replace staff as and when necessary and at short notice, if required.

#### e. Events beyond our control ('Force Majeure')

It is unlikely but possible that events beyond our reasonable control (often known as 'Force Majeure') may occur, which may temporarily affect our ability to continue to deliver courses as advertised. These events include, but are not limited to, lack of suitable staffing (e.g. due to a number of key staff leaving simultaneously), building and grounds failure, internal floods and internal power outages, lack of suitable placements or health and safety concerns. We have recovery procedures in place in key critical business areas and appropriate insurance cover to minimise the disruption to students and resume normal delivery as soon as possible should such events arise. These include, for example, offsite IT backups to enable secure data recovery and IT infrastructure which allows us to function remotely for a period. Our response to restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic enabled us to test and refine these procedures. In-person teaching was resumed as soon as possible with appropriate safeguards in place, and student satisfaction remained high and comparable with previous years during this period. We were also commended for our approach by our validating body, City St George's. This experience gives us confidence in our ability to mitigate the impact of an event beyond our reasonable control on your studies.

### 3. Our general approach to mitigating risks to your studies

The measures we have in place to manage specific risks to your studies are set out in Section 2 (Our assessment of risks) above. Our general approach to mitigating the impact of a risk materialising that results in course closure or non-delivery of a course in part or in full are set out in this section. You should also refer to Section 4 (Financial matters) and the [Student Terms and Conditions](#).

If we close a course that you are studying on or for which you have accepted an offer, our intention, wherever possible, is to 'teach out' the course until you have completed your studies. If 'teach out' is not possible, we will support you to identify and transfer to a comparable course at another UK Higher Education provider, wherever possible.

If an event happens that results in us not being able to deliver all or a material part of your course as advertised, we will take all reasonable steps to minimise the disruption to you and to provide suitable replacement learning opportunities as soon as possible. This may include, for example, moving to online delivery temporarily as we did during the Covid-19 pandemic, hire of alternative venues, and replacement teaching at a later date. The [Student Terms and Conditions](#) set out that where we are unable to preserve continuation of study temporarily, we will make arrangements to transfer you to another suitable provider.

#### **4. Financial matters (fee refunds and compensation)**

In the event that we are unable to preserve continuation of study for a course temporarily, and it is not possible to transfer you to another suitable provider or a transfer is not acceptable to you, as stated in the [Student Terms and Conditions](#) we will consider whether any refunds or compensation may be due to you according to the [Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy](#).

If we are unable to deliver a course permanently, and teaching out the course or transfer to another provider is not possible, or a transfer is not acceptable to you, our [Terms and Conditions](#) set out that we will refund all tuition fees paid directly to us for the part of the course which cannot be delivered in that academic year. We will also consider if any compensation is payable to you in accordance with the [Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy](#).

The [Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy](#) sets out the processes that would enable fees to be refunded to students, sponsors, or the Student Loans Company, as appropriate. This information is provided to applicants and offer-holders as well as students enrolled on our courses.

Compensation claims will be considered on a case-by-case basis through our [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

#### **5. How we communicate with students about this Student Protection Plan**

We provide applicants and students with access to our Student Protection Plan alongside our [Student Terms and Conditions](#) and our [Fee, Refund and Compensation Policy](#). These are published on our website and agreed to when an applicant accepts an offer of a place on a course.

Our Student Protection Plan is reviewed annually. We consult with current students and student representatives when reviewing the content of our Student Protection Plan before it is considered for approval by the Board of Trustees.

If the Student Protection Plan needs to be implemented, we will communicate with affected students using their ArtsEd email address in addition to any verbal communication. We will communicate with any affected prospective students using the email address that they provided in their application to ArtsEd. We aim, where possible, to notify affected students and prospective students within five working days of identifying that this Plan needs to be implemented.

Should we need to implement the Plan where we are unable to deliver one or more of our courses for reasons within our control, we would provide students with a notice period. This notice period would be dependent on the specific circumstances of the course closure, but we would endeavour to manage the closure in a timely manner. We would take reasonable steps to provide a notice period that enables students to complete their studies or transfer to a suitable alternative programme.

In implementing the Plan, we would:

- a. set out the actions we would take to identify alternative provision.
- b. create a plan to work with and support students affected, taking account of the needs of specific groups of students. The plan would include communications, as well as individual and collective meetings with students.
- c. provide students with support from our Student Support Services, including tailored support depending on the specific needs of a student.
- d. work with student representatives to create a plan to support the affected students.
- e. signpost the availability of independent advice.
- f. provide written information to confirm the position.
- g. confirm the process for any formal complaints about the implementation of the Student Protection Plan.
- h. make provision for any financial compensation that is appropriate and relevant to any significant impact arising from a transfer of programme or provider or other relevant costs.

## **6. Contact point and questions**

If you have any queries about the Student Protection Plan, please send an email to [hecouseoffice@artsed.co.uk](mailto:hecouseoffice@artsed.co.uk).