

Student Protection Plan for the 2020/21 Academic Year

Metanoia Institute is one of the United Kingdom's leading providers of specialist Higher Education in the disciplines of psychotherapy, counselling psychology, counselling and, more recently, coaching and organisational development. Metanoia Institute values its long-standing reputation for providing education of outstanding relevance and quality and we aspire to work in partnership with our students in a learning environment which strongly encourages the mutually beneficial exchange of ideas, observations and experience.

Founded in 1983, Metanoia Institute is committed to a well-established ethos, defined by an understanding that no single approach to therapy is significantly more effective than any other, and all have something to offer the practicing clinician. The Institute's portfolio of study programmes continues to support the development of a coherent philosophical, professional and ethical base for clinical practice and to enable students to become authoritative in the critical evaluation of philosophical paradigms and value systems in relation to therapeutic work.

Metanoia Institute's Vision 2020 is to invest in the life of individuals, organisations and communities through excellence in training, practice and research in the psychological therapies. Metanoia Institute's Mission is fourfold; to offer high quality humanistic and integrative programmes of study in the professional fields of counselling, psychotherapy, counselling psychology, supervision and organisational development through the provision of a wide range of opportunities; to support research in the development of professional knowledge; to work closely with relevant professional bodies as well as our partners in the university sector; to provide lower cost counselling and psychotherapy services for the benefit of the general public.

1. Introduction, risk assessment and scope

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires all higher education providers to produce and publish a Student Protection Plan which articulates how a provider will preserve the continuation and quality of study for students. In developing this Plan, Metanoia Institute has considered the range of potential scenarios set out by the Office for Students and has, for each, assessed the risk and impact, however unlikely the scenario. Towards that end, this Plan sets out a range of potential scenarios which, if realised, could impact upon continuation of study for students. For each scenario the Plan includes a range of measures that would be considered to mitigate the impact on the continuation of study for students, should the scenario be realised.

When you accept an offer and register to study with Metanoia Institute, we fully expect to be able to deliver your chosen programme through to completion of your studies however, in rare circumstances, factors may occur that mean this delivery will no longer be possible. In 2019/20 Metanoia Institute intends to undertake a process to achieve Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP), meaning that once successful, the Institute will be able to award its own portfolio of taught degree qualifications. Currently, in June 2019, Metanoia Institute remains a well-established, secure,

collaborative partner with Middlesex University, having reconfirmed the institutional partnership for a further 6 years from 2019 and achieved re-validation for all core MSc Psychotherapy programmes from 2019. Metanoia Institute has extended its relationship with Middlesex University in order to mitigate any risk of jeopardizing the validity or delivery of any of our qualifications during this period of TDAP scrutiny. Should Metanoia Institute be delayed in achieving TDAP in the expected timescale, the Middlesex University partnership remains accessible and current in order to support our Students through to completion of their studies as necessary.

Research degrees at Metanoia Institute are part of our joint provision with Middlesex University. For the avoidance of doubt, the joint provision portfolio remains unchanged by any developments towards TDAP by the Institute. The Middlesex University Academic Regulations apply in all cases and as the awarding institution, Middlesex University has ultimate responsibility for assuring the academic quality and standards of this provision. As the delivery partner, Metanoia Institute is responsible for the learning experience through this programme and for the purposes of continuation of study in the event of any of the following scenarios occurring, the Institute's Student Protection Plan would apply.

As mentioned above, our Student Protection Plan provides you with further details of potential risks and confirms how we manage and respond to these risks to protect your interests as a Student with the Institute. We publish our Student Protection Plan on our public-facing website for easy access by Students and prospective applicants alike. The Plan is updated on an annual basis and updates are published accordingly.

Metanoia Institute has well established procedures for assessing risk and mitigating against any risk factors or perceived issues in a responsive, timely manner. The Institute operates internal monitoring and review procedures to identify relevant risk-factors and pre-empt any programme level issues that have the potential to affect delivery and Student experience. The Institute-wide risk registers and operational plans secure oversight of risk-factors from a strategic level and are monitored regularly by the Institute's Board of Trustees.

In the event of any of the risks identified in this plan materialising, Metanoia Institute is committed to preserving the continuation of study for all current students and minimising any disruption and/or disadvantage. The Institute is committed to communicating and consulting with students as early as possible should any of the risks materialise, and students will be provided with support and guidance as appropriate. Sometimes it may be necessary to make minor changes or adjustments to programmes of study and other services and facilities which do not amount to changes to programme aims or programme learning outcomes. Minor changes may include, for example, changes to schedule of taught sessions or alterations to finer detail of some module assessments). The procedures for this are set out in the Institute's Programme Modification Policy and Templates.

It is our opinion that the risks noted below are relevant in terms of student protection considerations. The Institute looks to maintain its reputation as a reliable, high-quality training provider for HE and professional programmes, securing longevity and good-standing for our programme portfolio and student applicant base. Metanoia Institute values its experienced and diverse student body noting that as a training provider recognised for Professional Development and sector-specific accreditation-

based training, the importance of brand security and reputational reliance is of paramount importance.

2. Potential scenarios which could represent a risk to the continuation of study

The range of potential scenarios and/or risks to the continuation of study for Students are set out below. It is acknowledged that if realised, the impact on each Student experience may differ in terms of their individual needs and circumstances. As a result, the list below indicates measures that Metanoia Institute would expect to put in place should the risk materialise and proposed changes to relevant processes and procedures which may be developed/ amended as necessary for each individual. Additionally, the likelihood of these risks affecting current provision at the Institute has also been indicated below.

The potential risk that:

- Metanoia Institute may be unsuccessful at maintaining the necessary Degree Awarding Powers under the probationary period offered under the Office for Students (OfS). This is considered to be medium risk.
 - The Institute has a strong track record of delivery of high quality academic and professional training programmes and qualifications and has achieved successful outcomes from external quality assessments including those undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB's). In this way, Metanoia Institute is assured of its continued readiness to operate as an independent academic awarding power and has prepared a well-considered and sustainable model within which to frame relevant academic operations. By taking external advice; a carefully planned period of development and a well-devised portfolio of evidence to support external scrutiny activity, the Institute is solidifying its position in this regard.
 - In parallel to this process of preparation, the Institute has chosen to maintain an academic partnership relationship with Middlesex University, the Institute's long-standing collaborative and joint provision delivery partner. The periodic renewal of the Institutional partnership was refreshed in 2019 and the programme-level re-validation activity has been maintained and updated over recent years to ensure validated coverage for all taught and research awards during this period of transition towards DAPs.

NOTE: All registered students, staff and placement providers will be fully informed of any changes to programme management between Metanoia Institute and Middlesex University with a statement of intent regarding contingencies for affect parties as necessary. This will include the confirmation that in advance of any transition phase, Students will be offered opportunities to continue studies leading to an award by either Awarding Partner including named exit awards for completion at Levels 5-7 as appropriate.

- Metanoia Institute may fail to maintain Awarding Partner Validation. This is considered to be a low risk.
 - Metanoia Institute has ensured additional security (from 2019) within the collaborative and joint- partnership relationship with Middlesex University as detailed above.
 - It is acknowledged that this could have a high financial investment cost if a new partner was required. Additionally, the Institute recognises the potential impact on staff motivation concerning academic/ student enhancement and may in turn affect the Institute’s ability to attract highly qualified academic, research active staff.
 - Currently contingency planning is embedded within all contractual arrangements with Validating Collaborative and Joint provision partners containing guidance to ensure that there are clear plans for making staff contact details, teaching learning and assessment materials and student assessment and progress information available via electronic media to the University Link Tutor as necessary.
 - Specifically, the signed validation agreement between Middlesex University and the Institute confirms that “Contingency plans are concerned with protecting the interests of students on collaborative programmes delivered by partners unable to continue to offer MU awards. The intention of the contingency plans is to put in place arrangements that would allow such students to complete identical or similar University awards”.

NOTE: The Institute notes that the long-term risk for Doctorate programmes is mitigated by the validating partner, Middlesex University as part of the partnership agreement for Joint programmes.

- The Board of Trustees may fail in their statutory duties, powers, and responsibilities. This is considered to be a low risk.
 - Recognised as an institutional risk; this risk-factor is mitigated against by the regular meetings of the Board of Trustees (BOT); its sub-committees Staffing and Remuneration (SARSC) and Finance, Audit and Risk (FARSC); BOT skills audit and training activity and support directly from the CEO.
- Metanoia Institute may face a loss of designation/ accreditation by relevant HE sector regulatory bodies (OfS) or PSRB’s (UKCP, BACP, BPS, HCPC, EATA). This is considered a low risk.
 - Recognised as both programme-level and Institutional-level risk. In order to reduce this risk, the Institute recognises the care, consideration and oversight required in forward planning and supporting such review events. Metanoia Institute has invested in a substantial professional support staff element across all programme and strengthened committee governance and reporting mechanisms to ensure relevant oversight of all relevant submissions. The Quality and Standards Committee facilitate discussion and decision making to ensure that all documentary evidence is fully approved and review events are well-managed, thorough and representative of the Institute’s commitment to excellent in this area.
- The Institute’s staff community (academic and professional) may have insufficient capability or capacity to manage workload (failure to forward plan) or to support the student journey appropriately to ensure excellent in their individual learning journey. This is considered a

medium risk.

- The Institute operates a Workforce management plan, incorporating Staff reviews/ anticipating up-skilling and ensuring appropriate staff profiles.
- It is acknowledged that the Institute's recruitment and staff management processes need to support activity to maintain excellence in teaching (recruiting experienced supervisors; ensuring access to IT applications; relevant marketing and promotion of the branding and ethos of the Institute) – in 2019 this is in place through revised Person Specification/ Job Descriptions to support allocated research time; workload monitoring via staff:student ratio calculations and an established commitment to relevant PSRB standards (clinical practice commitment support for all academic staff).
- Metanoia Institute may not meet demand for new qualifications incorporating current research/ new study modes/ integration of online programmes or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity. This is considered to be low risk.
 - It is recognised that failure to maintain high quality teaching and research activity could impact on student recruitment and retention. The Institute's reputation would be negatively affected if programmes do not remain current and relevant to sector-employment opportunities.
 - Failure to take on new technology where appropriate and the opportunities that come with this; failure to adequately expand into the on-line market regarding CPD and on-line training to make the training relevant and accessible to a wider audience for example, could negatively affect the reputation of the Institute.
 - Metanoia Institute mitigates against this issue through programme development and modification panels (with external viewpoints and invited service user engagement for currency and relevance) whilst adhering to PSRB re-accreditation and monitoring in terms of sector standards for our programmes.
 - Additionally, Senior and Programme team Staff remain current and responsive to sector demands through the maintenance of their own clinical practice (PSRB requirements) and professional memberships and networks.
- The Institute may fail to retain or attract highly qualified staff, resulting in a reputational and quality risk. This is considered a medium risk.
 - Metanoia Institute mitigates against this issue through investment in Human Resources (HR) and CPD activity; through regular salary reviews; an in-house staff development activity; supportive and friendly working environments; succession management planning and access to external support for both CPD and staff development programmes.
- Metanoia Institute's infrastructure may fail to support programme growth. This is considered to be low risk.
 - The Institute's Executive Committee are alert to the resource and infrastructure needs to develop programme cohorts; increase qualifications portfolio and maintain necessary study and research activity.
 - Programme monitoring and internally scrutinised programme development activity has been introduced to support an evidence-based approach to necessary strategic planning. This ensures that forward-planning can be assured to support any increase in

student numbers; growth in demand for placements, supervisors, support staff etc.

- The Institute may identify weak leadership among Programme Leaders due to new members who may struggle to satisfactorily engage with the leadership tasks which are central to the role. This is considered to be low risk.
 - This risk is mitigated against by strong recruitment processes, staff reviews, regular programme leader's meetings to support and induct new members and create supportive peer team. Full time FH to help with induction and management.
- Metanoia Institute may failure to recruit high quality external examiners. This is considered to be low risk.
 - The Institute maintains professional memberships and networks in order to identify suitable candidates in advance of External Examiner's end of tenure. The Institute operates a shadow External Examiner Management Strategy during the current operational relationship with Middlesex University, preparing this method of support for operation once DAPs are achieved.
- Metanoia Institute may fail to maintain financial sustainability, insolvency, and liquidity. This is considered to be low risk.
 - Metanoia Institute seeks to maintain a robust financial position in order to generate the cash necessary for investment in staff and students. Furthermore, against a backdrop of an uncertain economic and political climate, the Institute is conscious of the need to maintain a reserve that is sufficient to withstand the financial impact of operating in a higher risk environment.
 - The outlook for Metanoia Institute remains positive, despite the presence of risk and uncertainty in the UK Higher Education sector. A strong cash balance of approximately £2,700,000 is further reinforced by the Institute's ownership of two freehold properties, which have no debts secured against them.
 - Both budgeting and forecasting are principally derived from new and continuing students. This invaluable exercise helps inform decisions concerning resource allocation with the view of enhancing student experience.
 - The Institute is implementing a financial strategy that supports the need:
 - To generate a surplus in order to generate the cash necessary for investment in people, buildings and technology in order to enhance student experience.
 - To achieve value for money in all its activities without compromising quality.
 - Financial procedures are guided by adherence to the Institute's Financial Operations Manual with payment authorisation by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Quarterly Management Accounts are maintained along with necessary budget reviews including programme-level activity; Faculty-wide activity and an annual review of reserves for the Institute. The Director of Finance maintains a regular assessment of financial hardware and software requirements.
 - The Institute is always able to meet short term financial obligations and manage long term projects. The liquid assets continue to cover short term liabilities. Creditors are paid on a timely basis.

- The Institute's budget is prepared on a cautious basis to mitigate any unforeseen financial risks, with the emphasis on responsibility budgeting. Metanoia Institute's budgetary planning happens annually and is the responsibility of the Director of Finance in collaboration with the CEO and the Faculty Heads as principal budget holders. Budget meetings are held with the Faculty Heads and CEO and are reviewed in detail by the Finance, Audit and Risk Sub Committee and subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees.
- The Institute may fail to attract a diverse student population. This is considered to be a medium risk.
 - Those from oppressed groups will not be attracted to or cannot afford to attend our programmes. This can be mitigated by access to suitable student finance on all degree programmes, Bursaries and Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) DSA is available to students on degree awarding programmes; offering different types of programme delivery, e.g mid-week, weekends, evenings etc. Advertising widely and the Institute being seen to be active on equality fronts, such as attendance at Pride, use of the website to show commitment to anti oppressive practice, wide representation of students and staff on committees etc.
- The Institute may be unable to secure appropriate teaching, learning and assessment standards across each Faculty, affecting student experience. This is considered low risk.
 - This risk is mitigated against through regular training activity and Programme Team support for Teaching and Learning issues. The Institute also operates a Peer Review scheme to support individuals. Each Programme Team benefits from both External Examiner oversight and scrutiny and internal monitoring procedures hosted by Quality Assurance Staff and considered through plenary sessions to share best-practice and identify course level or Institute-wide issues.
- Metanoia Institute's arrangements with placement providers (e.g., employers/mentors etc) may fail to meet the high-standards of provision required by Programme Teams. This is considered to be medium risk.
 - Recognised as both a potential communication and operation consideration, the Institute mitigates against this issue through monitoring activities and placement oversight by qualified and experienced members of staff.
 - Student expectations are managed and anticipated through detailed induction processes and tutor-led guidance sessions. Handbooks and Programme materials ensure suitable preparation and accurate information sharing.

3. Information about the policy in place to support Students; facilitate transfer; refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and provide compensation where necessary in the event of non-continuation of delivery

In the event that the Institute ceases to offer programmes, the following will apply:

- Refund for students in receipt of tuition fee loans from the Student Loans Company – students whose fees are covered by the Student Loans Company are entitled to the deposit being

reimbursed on providing evidence of the loan. Should a programme no longer continue, course fees will be refunded to the Student Loans Company, removing all financial liability for the student.

- Refund for students who pay their own tuition fees and/or sponsorship – contracts are issued annually, signed by the student, and returned with a deposit or full payment. Should a programme be withdrawn or cancelled, the deposit and/or fee paid will be refunded to the student or sponsor. The Institute will assist with an APL application and/or facilitate a transfer to a similar institution for continuation of studies, as requested.
- Payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course – the Institute will reimburse any reasonable travel costs due to a change in location of programmes.
- Commitment to honour student bursaries – Bursaries are issued on an annual basis and reduce fees due by the student. Should a programme be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, these will become inapplicable. Students will be reimbursed the agreed contracted fee for the course, after taking into account the bursary allocation.
- Compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students have to transfer courses or provider – Metanoia Institute maintains a Tuition Reimbursement/Protection Insurance Policy with Chubb Limited brokered by Endsleigh Insurances Limited to provide refunds and compensation expressed as a percentage of student tuition fees when unforeseen circumstances arise for either the student or the tuition payer, which prevents the student from being able to continue their studies/attendance (e.g. death, accidental death, accident and sickness disability, critical illness and involuntary unemployment). This is a group policy with Metanoia Institute as the policy holder and students effectively its members. Currently, Endsleigh Insurances are negotiating on behalf of the sector to ensure that this policy for 2019/20 will be suitable and fit for purpose; Metanoia Institute is awaiting the outcomes of those discussions at this time (July 2019).
- In the event a Student wishes to transfer from Metanoia Institute to another provider, the process for registering an intention to transfer out of Metanoia Institute into another Institution begins with discussions with the relevant Programme Leader. Please see Student Transfer Policy. The Institute will provide support for the Student relating to possible providers for continuation of study; support for reference materials and/ or interview preparation required for onward study; to facilitate any outstanding discussions with Finance; Library; Academic Staff as necessary to fulfil closure of study by agreed end dates (as stated in withdrawal confirmation). Any Students due to receive an Interim Award for completion of modules or meeting exit award requirements for a particular programme, will be automatically submitted to the next Assessment, Progression and Achievement Board. Once confirmed, a certificate and transcript will be provided. Students without an Interim Award but with Completed Modules can request a partial Transcript. This transcript will provide details on all assessment and module study undertaken by the student whilst registered on their current programme, and will include the level of study, the number of credits and the grades achieved (as applicable).

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

Once approved, we will share our Student Protection Plan with the wider student body and members of the public, prospective new applicants and other stakeholders, via the Institute's website. The document will have achieved student and staff approval at this stage. It is our intention to share regulatory submissions and policy development tasks with Student oversight (via Committee representatives and/or Lead Student Representatives).

Additionally, Student Representatives will take part in training and guidance for information sharing in relation to these revisions and how to answer any relevant questions about this sector and relevant sector (and PSRB) developments as required.

The implications of OfS remain as a standing agenda time on our senior committees to ensure information sharing with students remains in focus for each meeting.

We also ensure that staff are fully aware of the implications of our Student Protection Plan when they propose course changes in regards to timescale/ consultation/ impact assessment.

We inform our students if there are to be material changes to their course in advance, with student consultation activities being advertised, plus follow up team meetings where developments can be shared. Additionally, materials are circulated for review. It is Institute Policy to provide a minimum notice period of one term (or one study block depending on the structure of the programme) in advance of any major or material changes to programme structures or assessment arrangements. This is set out in the Institute's Programme Review and Modification Policy and supported by our validating partners / accrediting bodies requirements for submission of proposals for change.

In the event of programme closure, Metanoia Institute will support students through clear communication of the change in any responsibilities in regard to their programme of study. The Institute will host relevant faculty and staff to facilitate programme completion and professional staff support will be made available to all students, signposted by the Institute. Where external student support becomes necessary, Metanoia Institute remains committed to releasing relevant student and staff information as required, with approval and relevant consents, to ensure continuity and suitability of the study offer made available through any contingency plan. Additionally, Metanoia Institute has detailed access arrangements and networks for students to remain in contact with suitable study support and guidance through third party provision and professional partnership organisations if required.