



Provider's name: Futureworks Training Ltd.

Provider's UKPRN: 10022087

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	Minor updated wording in sections 4b, 4e, 4f, and 5	August 2022	Executive Committee	
	Edits to clean up paras involving working with UCLan to better reflect the nature of the contract and relationship.	August 2024	Executive Team / UCLan	
	Reappraisal of risk framework and ratings. Updated wording around contractual relationship with UCLan.	September 2024	Executive Team	
	Further reappraisal of risk framework and ratings.	October 2024	Executive Team	
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	Miscellaneous typographical edits and version control issues.	January 2025	Executive Team	

Student Protection Plan

1. Introduction

This plan sets out the actions Futureworks will take, in co-ordination with its validating partner, the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), to ensure that students are protected in the event of a material change to Futureworks' operations.

A material change may include the decision to close one or more courses, or a decision to cease operations altogether. A material change may, however, be triggered by decisions taken outside of Futureworks control, such as loss of designation/registered status with the Office for Students, or the decision by a validating partner to not renew the delivery one or more courses. In any such circumstance, protecting the student interest is key to this plan, and Futureworks will attempt to ensure continuity of study wherever possible.

2. Consumer Rights

Students are recognised as consumers and, through this plan, Futureworks seeks to maintain its firm commitment to communicating with its students in an open and timely manner, providing clear information, advice and guidance at all stages of the student journey, particularly in the event of planned (or unplanned) changes to programme delivery.

3. Measures

Wherever possible, Futureworks will take reasonable steps to avoid implementing material changes during the academic year and, in any event, will always seek to inform students of any changes as early as possible. Where change is unavoidable, Futureworks will take the following actions, wherever possible, to minimise any disruption caused:

- adjusting and/or extending the academic calendar, to allow students the necessary time to complete their year of study and receive academic credit for their work to date (or, in the case of students in their final year, to receive their intended exit qualification)
- work together with UCLan to identify any opportunities to mitigate the material change through modification of the programmes



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- facilitating the transfer¹ of students to another Futureworks degree programme
- facilitating the transfer¹ of students to a UCLan degree programme
- aiding students that wish to transfer¹ to another provider

4. Risk analysis and specific measures

This plan utilises a risk framework promoted by the University of Manchester. Each risk analysis that follows contains a simple assessment of the likelihood of that risk materialising.

a. Institutional Closure/Market Exit

Futureworks maintains a Strategic Plan, available on the Futureworks website, which sets out a range of ambitious goals and priorities for the coming years. Futureworks is committed to an enhancement led approach to its higher education delivery for many years to come; however, as with all businesses, it is always possible, however unlikely, that a series of events might occur which may cause the Board to take the decision to exit the market, for example, through a major change in the creative industries, unforeseen financial difficulties, or through some catastrophic event which would render the business unviable.

Futureworks' contract with the University of Central Lancashire provides for a "teach-out" period, lasting until the end of the academic year, which would enable students on all courses to complete their year of study at Futureworks. As the validating partner, UCLan would ensure that students receive academic credit (or awards, as appropriate) for their study at the end of the teach-out period. In the event that it is not possible to offer a full teach-out period, Futureworks has in place an agreement with UCLan which is designed to minimise any disruption to students by facilitating the transfer of students onto a comparable UCLan degree programme – either at their campus in Preston, or at one of their many partner institutions located in the Greater Manchester/Lancashire area.

In any event, Futureworks would work closely with the University to ensure that all students were able to continue their studies during the following academic year(s), and has developed a robust plan in partnership with UCLan to give students a range of options, including facilitating transfer to other higher education providers. Futureworks would seek to compensate students where financial loss has occurred as a result of the disruption to their studies in accordance with consumer law.

Students should refer to the Futureworks Refund & Compensation Policy² for more information.

¹ Futureworks Student Transfer Policy is available on the Futureworks website
<http://futureworks.ac.uk/ofs/studenttransferpolicy.pdf>

² Futureworks Refund and compensation policy is available on the Futureworks website
<http://futureworks.ac.uk/ofs/refundandcompensationpolicy.pdf>



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The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) In the event that Futureworks encounters serious financial difficulties, the Board has mapped out a detailed range of measures which the business can take to reduce expenditure *without* materially affecting the student experience.
- 2) As a small privately-owned, family-run and non-unionised business, Futureworks is able to act and react quickly to changes in the political and commercial environment – decisions can be made and approved rapidly, and action taken, to either mitigate a potential threat or to offset the cost of that threat through savings.
- 3) Futureworks is on excellent terms with its landlords, and has considerable flexibility with regards its arrangements for both campus buildings; Futureworks is able to expand or contract in size (and therefore in costs) on a flexible basis, up-or-downsizing as demand requires.
- 4) Futureworks has been trading since January 2007 and has a long-standing and successful track record of adapting to adverse changes in the higher education market.
- 5) Futureworks lenders have indicated they would be willing to extend additional credit to the business to support it in the short-to-medium term.
- 6) The shareholders of the business, being family owned, are committed to the long-term success of Futureworks and are prepared to explore a range of possibilities should the need arise.

Futureworks recognises that institutional closure *is* possible, however it is the opinion of the Board that such an occurrence would be unlikely to happen.

Likelihood Score	Description
1	Rare.
2	Possible.
3	Likely.
4	Very likely.
5	Almost certain.

b. Closure of a specific facility

Futureworks operates a single campus, comprised of a range of learning spaces spread over a single building. This provision is supplemented by a second site, located in nearby MediaCityUK, which is known to students as “Futureworks Studios” – designed primarily as a filmmaking location due to its high ceilings and ample set-building space. Where closure of a specific facility or building is deemed necessary because of, for example, remedial works, or through a programme of refurbishment/renovation, Futureworks would aim to perform such works during periods of non-teaching, e.g. throughout the summer period, or through the Christmas or Easter breaks.



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In the event that teaching is not possible at campus buildings, Futureworks will move to provide teaching online in the short term or where a specific aspect of Futureworks

provision is rendered unusable for activities involving students because of, for example, health and safety concerns resulting from a natural disaster (such as flooding), Futureworks would seek to relocate its provision to an alternative location – either by shifting provision from one Futureworks building to another, or through hiring appropriate teaching and/or studio space nearby. Futureworks maintains a Business Interruption Insurance Policy to mitigate the costs associated with such action and employs a Disaster Recovery Plan³ to facilitate an expedient and measured response to any such scenario.

The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) Futureworks is presently exploring options to bring the functionality of the MediaCityUK site closer to the main Riverside campus to make travel and the movement of equipment less burdensome for staff and students, and improving access to Futureworks' facilities.
- 2) The relocation of Futureworks Studios to another site is a consideration in Futureworks' financial scenario planning.

Futureworks considers that it is probable that it will be successful in its negotiations with the landlords of both sites. Therefore, the Board assesses that at this early stage it is "likely" to close the MediaCityUK facility at some point over AY24/25, after the spring assessment period (i.e. over the summer, ready for September 2025 intake)

Likelihood Score	Description
1	Rare.
2	Possible.
3	Likely.
4	Very likely.
5	Almost certain.

c. Expiry of property lease/invocation of break clause

Both Futureworks buildings are rented from landlords which whom Futureworks has lease agreements which do not expire for many years (10yrs/7yrs).

The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) Break clauses are included in both contracts which permit *only* Futureworks to terminate the contracted periods early.

As a reliable and long-standing tenant with an excellent reputation, Futureworks considers that it is extremely unlikely that either landlord would take action to terminate existing agreements out of contract.

³ Futureworks Disaster Recovery Plan is available on the Futureworks website <http://futureworks.ac.uk/ofs/disasterrecoveryplan.pdf>



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Likelihood Score	Description
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2	Possible.
3	Likely.
4	Very likely.
5	Almost certain.

d. Course closure

Futureworks has in place procedures to manage course closure and to mitigate the impact of this on students. Futureworks is contractually obliged to teach out students on a given course through its agreements with the University of Central Lancashire, and so any decision to close a programme of study would not affect students enrolled on the course. However, where there is a perceived material impact on the students, Futureworks would aim to mitigate this by communicating with the student body to assure them that the decision to close the course would not adversely affect their learning experience, academic life or career potential.

Futureworks would notify UCAS and any existing applicants for the course about this decision, and would seek to ensure that any ongoing applications for the course would be processed in accordance with UCAS deadlines. Where appropriate, applicants would be offered an alternative course of study at Futureworks.

The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) Futureworks' small and specialist nature allows for smaller classes than many larger providers would be in a position to support, whilst still maintaining a viable operation. Futureworks has previously run classes with as few as three students, where it has been necessary to do so, and even in these circumstances it has not been necessary to close a course.

Futureworks has no plans at this time to close any courses, and would not do so during an academic year. However, we recognise that an intake of just 1 or 2 students would make a course unviable and we may, in such circumstances, seek to defer applications to the following year or to close a course (temporarily or permanently) whilst further options are explored.

Likelihood Score	Description
1	Rare.
2	Possible.
3	Likely.
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e. Withdrawal of registered status with the Office for Students

If Futureworks is unable to access student support (from, for example, Student Loan Company) because of the withdrawal of registered status by the Office for Students, Futureworks would, depending on the specific circumstances, seek to appeal the decision at the earliest opportunity.

Recognising that such a process may occur at some time, we would work closely with UCLan, as our validating partner, to protect and support our students through

this process to ensure the continuation of their studies and to ensure the uninterrupted provision of student finance to both students and applicants.

Our preferred option would be to work with UCLan to register every student – new and old – as a student of the partner university (known as operating under an subcontracting arrangement), but who would continue to study at Futureworks in the usual way until such time as Futureworks' registration is reinstated.

The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) Futureworks maintains a policy of maximum compliance and at all times seeks to ensure that all regulatory requirements are met and satisfied in full in a timely manner.
- 2) Our track record of compliance with the regulator since their formation in 2017 is excellent.
- 3) Futureworks has robust arrangements in place to ensure ongoing compliance, including an active Board of Directors, an Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and a dedicated compliance team, led by the Vice Principal, to ensure that all matters relating to regulatory compliance are fully understood and adhered to fastidiously.
- 4) Futureworks' Board has no plans to actively deregister with the regulator.

Subsequent to the above, Futureworks' assesses the risk of deregistration as "possible". However it is the opinion of the Board that such an occurrence would be unlikely to happen.

Likelihood Score	Description
1	Rare.
2	Possible.
3	Likely.
4	Very likely.
5	Almost certain.

f. Non-renewal of validation / termination of partnership



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Futureworks has been in partnership with the University of Central Lancashire for 16 years, and in this time both parties have worked together to develop a close and productive working relationship in which the provision of support, assurance and development have been mutually beneficial.

Nevertheless, should the University decide to terminate the partnership, the contract between both parties incorporates terms which provide for the teach-out of students on Futureworks courses, subject to the usual rules and regulations.

The risk below is calculated based on the following factors:

- 1) Futureworks has recently signed a further 5 year agreement with the University of Central Lancashire.
- 2) The University has expressed a desire to continue to work with Futureworks.
- 3) Futureworks' student outcomes and reputation remain very strong.
- 4) Futureworks and the University are soon to embark upon a lengthy and detailed programme of curriculum review, to set the partnership and degree courses up for a further period of collaboration into the future.

Subsequent to the above, Futureworks' assesses the risk of termination of the partnership as "possible".

Likelihood Score	Description
1	Rare.
2	Possible.
3	Likely.
4	Very likely.
5	Almost certain.

5. Contribution, approval and publication

This plan has been created in partnership with Futureworks student partners, the Board of Directors, the Academic Board and the Futureworks Executive team. It has been approved by the University of Central Lancashire and is available to stakeholders via the Futureworks website.