

IBT College

Student Protection Plan



Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: Internation Business & Technical College

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Student protection plan for the period 2025 to 2026

Introduction:

At IBT College we hold students central to our organization as such this plan will set out the measures IBT College will take to protect student and prospective student interest and ensure continuation of studies. This Student Protection Plan has been developed in line with guidance from the DHERST and the Higher Education and Research Act 2020 to protect students' interests in the case of material change, e.g., programme changes, suspensions, closures, or institutional closure.

To support and ensure ongoing transparency in this process we will continue to include student consultation and representation in our own decision-making.

We are committed to communicating any changes to you as early as possible, setting out clear information and options. We will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption and to enable you to complete your studies as intended. However, where this is ultimately not possible you may, for example:

- be offered the opportunity to move to another programme.
- be offered a modified version of the same programme.
- be provided with assistance to switch to a different provider.
- be offered a financial refund and/or compensation (for cases where it is not possible to preserve the continuation of study or where study is disrupted) in accordance with our Refund and Compensation Policy available in our admission terms and conditions.

Where you are required to transfer programme, or move to another provider, there may be implications for your student finance arrangements. If you are affected, the Head of College will contact you and provide detailed information, advice and guidance based on this Plan, the Student Contract and the Refund and Compensation Policy taking account of your individual circumstances.

Where decisions are required on individual or collective circumstances, brought about by certain events outlined in this Student Protection Plan, the Governing Body will convene the Student Contingency Panel, consisting of senior staff, members of the Board of Governors and Student Representatives, to assess the circumstances and recommend action to be taken. You will be informed of the timing of this Panel meeting and any decisions taken within 24 hours of the completion of the Panels' assessment.

This Student Protection Plan in line with guidance from the DHERST and the Higher Education and Research Act 2020 serve to protect students interests and detail the steps we would take where significant material changes had to take place affecting the quality and/or continuation of your study, such as (but not limited to):

- disruption of programme delivery.
- the unanticipated departure of key members of staff.
- the cessation of programme delivery, likely cessation, or change of delivery mode.
- major changes in year to programme content.
- changes to regulatory framework affecting a specific programme and loss of accreditation from regulatory bodies.
- a decision to close IBT College or part of IBT College.

This Plan applies to Higher Education students studying at IBT College.

IBT College will review this Plan at least annually, in consultation with Student Representatives, and update and amend as required. We also reserve the right to amend this Plan from time to time based on legal or regulatory change affecting you or us or best practice in the higher education sector.

Risk Levels

IBT College Risk and Compliance Panels carry out assessment to decide how likely significant material changes, that may impact the continuation of the business and/or the academic delivery of a programme, are to occur. From this a Risk Register is created, which is maintained and updated by the Panel. This informs the Contingency and Business Continuity Plan, Student Protection Plan and IBT College Risk Management Plans.

Under each heading we have indicated how likely the event is to occur by assigning it a Risk Level. Risk Levels can be **High** (likely to occur during the academic year), **Medium** (unlikely to occur during the academic year) or **Low** (very unlikely to occur during the academic year).

It is important to note that whilst IBT College will plan for a wide range of scenarios many of these are very unlikely to happen. IBT College undertakes risk assessments in each department and regularly reviews them. There are processes to escalate risks through IBT College's governance structures to ensure that interventions to mitigate them takes place. IBT College assesses the risk of the occurrence of the material changes listed above in relation to its financial stability and business planning.

The following section details the likely steps that would be taken in the unlikely event that any of these significant material changes occurs.

Risk of Significant Material Change:

The inclusion of specific risks does not in itself indicate a likelihood of them occurring but ensures that IBT College has a contingency plan in place to ensure the continuation of studies in all foreseeable events. Disruption to Physical Study Space/Environment: Disruption of studies due to unforeseen circumstances such as loss of premises (fire, flood, etc.), loss of utilities, IT and telephone service failures, staff shortages, or external events like pandemics or industrial action can pose risks to business continuity. IBT College has formulated a comprehensive contingency plan to address such disruptions, including the following measures:

Contingency

- **Alternative Premises:** IBT College has secured a suitable facility in PNG to serve as an alternative location in case of a disruption to the current campus.
- **Online Learning:** A robust online learning platform will be activated to ensure continuity of studies even in the absence of physical classrooms.
- **Backup Systems:** Comprehensive backup systems will be in place to minimize the impact on students and ensure seamless continuation of academic activities.

Likelihood of occurrence: Medium

Permanent or Temporary Loss of Key Staff:

Unplanned loss of staff, whether due to unexpected circumstances or planned changes such as redundancies or restructuring, can impact program delivery. IBT College has developed strategies to mitigate these risks, including:

Contingency

- **Staff Redundancy Plans:** A structured approach to handle staff redundancies, including reassignment of responsibilities and recruitment of alternative staff if necessary.
- **Student Communication:** Transparent communication with students regarding staff changes and their potential impact on programs.
- **Alternative Staffing Arrangements:** Provisions for recruiting externally or assigning responsibilities to other current staff members to avoid disruptions in teaching and support services.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Medium**

Changes in Curriculum and Program Content:

Changes in curriculum or program content, while unlikely during the academic year, may be necessary to align with industry developments or regulatory requirements. IBT College has established procedures to manage such changes with minimal disruption to students, including:

Contingency

- **Consultation with Students:** Involving students in decision-making processes related to curriculum changes and ensuring transparency throughout.
- **Quality Assurance:** Ensuring that any changes maintain the required quality of education and experience for students.
- **Transfer Options:** Providing students with options to transfer to similar programs or receive support to continue their studies elsewhere if required changes are not suitable.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Low**

Discontinuation of Individual Programs or Modules:

The Academic Board oversees decisions regarding program or module discontinuation, with a focus on minimizing the impact on students. IBT College's approach includes:

Contingency

- **Teaching Out:** Allowing current students to complete their programs if discontinuation occurs, with support and guidance provided.
- **Alternative Study Options:** Offering students access to similar programs within IBT College or facilitating transfers to other providers if necessary.
- **Student Consultation:** Involving students in decision-making processes and ensuring their needs and preferences are considered.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Low**

Withdrawal of Partnership or Awarding Body Agreements:

In the unlikely event of a partnership or agreement ceasing, IBT College will prioritize student interests and continuity of studies. Contingency measures include:

Contingency

- **Completion of Studies:** Ensuring existing students can complete their studies within IBT College or through alternative arrangements.
- **Transfer Options:** Facilitating transfers to similar programs at partner institutions or other suitable providers.
- **Collaborative Arrangements:** Working closely with awarding bodies or partners to manage transitions effectively and maintain quality education standards.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Low**

Loss of Registration for Student Support Purposes:

IBT College is committed to maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements to minimize disruptions to student support services. Contingency measures include:

Contingency

- **Collaboration with Authorities:** Working with relevant authorities to ensure students receive necessary support during any registration-related issues.
- **Financial Compensation:** Providing financial compensation or support to affected students if disruptions result in financial losses.
- **Communication:** Prompt communication with students regarding any changes or disruptions affecting student support services.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Low**

Closure of the College: While unlikely,

the possibility of college closure is addressed through strategic planning and collaboration with local institutions. Contingency measures include:

Contingency

- **Teaching Out:** Gradual closure to allow students to complete their studies.
- **Transfer Options:** Facilitating transfers to alternative programs or providers.
- **Financial Compensation:** Providing compensation to students affected by the closure, if applicable.
- **Student Communication:** Ensuring clear communication with students throughout the closure process.

Likelihood of occurrence: **Low**

Reimbursement:

In cases where students are affected by unforeseen events or disruptions caused by IBT College, reimbursement or compensation policies will be implemented to address any financial losses or inconveniences experienced by students.

Student Protection Plan Activation: In the event of activating the Student Protection Plan, IBT College will swiftly communicate with affected students, provide alternative premises if necessary, and activate contingency plans outlined in this document to ensure minimal disruption to students' academic journeys.

Student Protection Plan activation

Should this Student Protection Plan be activated IBT College will:

- Contact all students affected within 2 working days of decision or event that will affect the continuation of their studies. (Student contact will include emails, text messages and notifications on the website)
- In case of location change we undertake to keep alternative premises in POM area
- Activate contingency plans as set out in this document.

END

