

A16.4 SWEu Student Protection Plan

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1 Introduction

SAE Southwest Europe (SWEu) is committed to provide exemplary teaching and programme delivery to ensure the best student outcomes and experience. However, there may be unforeseen circumstances which may have a significant impact on the Institute's ability to operate normally.

SAE SWEu comprises The Netherlands, France, Belgium, Greece, Italy and Spain - six countries under different legislations with 7 campuses in total. Although unforeseen circumstances may happen in one country it is unlikely that all six countries will be affected at the same time.

A Student Protection Plan has been established to assure students that suitable procedures and action plans are in place so that studies can continue, if an unlikely event should happen.

This plan is published on the SAE website in the regulations pages and also promoted in the student handbook and campus guides.

2 Plan Purpose and Scope

2.1 Purpose

This Plan applies to all SAE SWEu students studying SAE Institute programmes or awards, and at all campuses providing collaborative programmes or operations with the Institute's validating partners, and should be read in conjunction with other student policies, in particular:

- A09 Student Progression, Transfer and Graduation policy
- A14 Complaints
- A16 Student Support policy

2.2 Scope

SAE Institute aims to encourage and support students throughout their studies to ensure that they achieve their full potential, by providing a supportive learning environment. This is in tandem with our Student Support Strategy which outlines our commitment and business strategy in relation to student support.

The Student Protection Plan has been established to ensure business resumption for unlikely significant events or changes to ensure procedures are in place to protect our students' learning. Such events may include global pandemic, Institute or campus closure, programme suspension, loss of designation and other material changes. Other events that may trigger this plan into action include, but are not limited to:

- Suspension of a programme.
- A significant change to an offered programme.
- A strategic business decision to close a campus, multiple campuses or the Institute as a whole.
- A temporary or permanent closing of a campus due to fire or other accidents.
- Loss of the ability to sponsor international students.
- Loss of designation, resulting in the ability to access student support.
- Loss of accreditation from awarding bodies.
- Unanticipated departure of key members of staff during critical periods in the academic year.
- Withdrawal of a programme.
- Global events, such as a pandemic outbreak, etc.

In some cases, a flexible approach may need to be undertaken in order to progress a scenario outlined in this plan. In a case where flexibility is introduced, our aim is to protect students as described, but the Institute may adopt alternative or additional procedures where necessary, and with consideration of the impact on teaching delivery and quality in mind.

3 Student Protection Plans

3.1 Decision to Discontinue a Programme

In the event that the Institute decides to discontinue a programme due to a strategic decision or other influence, either across the Institution or specifically at campus level, measures are in place to protect students. If possible, these include, and are not limited to the following:

- Enrolled students will complete the programme in its entirety and to the teaching commitment set out by the Institute.
- Students can be offered another programme.
- Facilities and campus areas will be maintained to the commitment set out by the Institute.
- Students will be offered support and guidance to transfer to another SWEu/UK campus.
- Students will be offered support and guidance to transfer to another European higher education provider.
- Under formal agreements signed with SAE, students will be able to continue study on an identical or equivalent award offered by university partners.

3.2 Major Change to a Programme

In the unlikely event that the Institute decides to implement a major change to a programme that significantly changes the original overview as set out in the Institute's prospectus, measures in place to protect students include, and are not limited to the following:

- Changes will be minimised where possible to not degrade the student experience or teaching quality of the programme.
- Students will be consulted before significant changes are made.
- Students will be offered any additional classes.
- Students will be offered support and guidance to transfer to another SWEu/UK campus, or where necessary, another European higher education provider.

3.3 Closing of a Campus or the Institute as a Whole

SAE SWEu is committed to ensuring that the business is run successfully within compliance of HE regulatory bodies and frameworks. This is to ensure the successful stability and growth of the Institute as a business.

In the unlikely event that a business decision is made, or the Institute has no other viable option but to close a campus or the Institute as a whole, the following measures are in place including, and not limited to:

- In case of closure of the Institute, arrange for students to transfer to another higher education provider, supporting students to understand their options and make an informed choice, and ensure that administrative arrangements are in place to facilitate such transfers. The Institute will ensure that students will be guaranteed access to evidence of their academic achievements in the future.
- Ensure that the remaining teaching weeks of the trimester or academic year will be successfully delivered with the same quality that the Institute is committed to and receive an exit award or credit to recognise their academic achievement; and/ or
- Students will be offered support and guidance to change to another SAE campus, or where this is not possible, another higher education provider.
- Students will be offered support and guidance with financial support.
- Under formal agreements signed with SAE, students may be allowed to continue to study on an identical or equivalent award offered by university partners.
- Any complaints will be handled and responded to in accordance with our student Complaints policy (A14).
- Any requests for refunds or compensation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, including the cover of any financial costs incurred.

3.4 Closing an Aspect of a Campus

In the event that SAE SWEu decides to close an aspect of an individual campus or where it is rendered unusable by students, measures are in place including, and not limited to:

- Revise the timetable to re-appropriate other rooms on campus to suit the needs of the programme or module.
- Rent of a similar or appropriate space or facility within suitable distance of the campus.
- Offer support and guidance to change to another SAE campus or higher education provider.

- Deliver some of the programme content online, recorded lectures, etc.
- Offer academic and additional pastoral support, including remote access to lectures, resources, teaching and support staff, etc.

3.5 Loss of International Sponsorship License

If the Institute loses its ability to sponsor international students or continue to sponsor current international students enrolled on our programmes with a student visa, measures in place include, and are not limited to the following:

- Where applicable, offer support and guidance to move the student to an SAE Institute campus in their home country.
- Assisting with the visa process to swap to another European higher education provider.
- Offer support with relocating the student back to their home country.
- Offer support to continue a programme once in their home country via online learning.
- Support the student by providing documentary evidence which would allow for the continuation of their studies.

3.6 Loss of Designation

If the event that the Institute loses designation status and students can no longer receive funding, measures are in place including and not limited to the following:

- Work with HE regulators to ensure that enrolled students can receive funding for the remaining academic year of their course.
- Signpost students to alternative funding.
- Offer flexible payment plans for students to pay their fees directly.
- Support students to continuing studies by providing the necessary documentary evidence.

3.7 Loss of accreditation or validation

The Institute will ensure that re-accreditation with partners (University of Hertfordshire or another validating partner) are adequately planned in advance, and early dialogue takes place to ensure that both parties are prepared and includes any negotiations so that a loss of accreditation is unlikely.

Should the Institute lose validation or any other accreditation, measures are which include, and not limited to:

- Arrange for students to be taught out on the remainder of the programme.
- Arrange for students to transfer to another higher education provider.
- Request prospective students to consider deferring their places until the Institute can find an alternative partner in a reasonable timeframe.

3.8 Loss of key members of staff

In the event where a key member of teaching staff unexpectedly leaves, the following options for the continuation of study are in place, and not limited to:

- Arrange for temporary cover using a lecturer from within the campus, or from a pool of temporary Lecturers.
- Source expertise externally, and hiring a replacement permanent Lecturer, or on a short-term basis via a fixed-term contract.
- Offer an alternative module that can be taught by another Lecturer to students, subject to mutual agreement.
- If necessary, adjust the timetable to accommodate a newly appointed lecturer teaching the sessions. This may include the option for students to join classes with another group on the same course, who are at the same point in study, and are studying modules which are taught across all programmes.
- Consider other ways that support ongoing student progression, including offering flexibility and extensions to assessments.
- In extreme or unavoidable cases, the short-term postponement of classes may be inevitable. If this is the case, the Institute will aim to ensure that additional student support and resources are available.
- Staff consultation will always be provided, in conjunction with HR, should any changes to staff or staffing restructure be needed.

3.9 Student Support for Necessary Transfers

All students will be supported during the process of transferring, whether this is to another course or to another higher education provider. This will include the provision of an academic transcript, support through credit transfer and SAE's Accreditation of Prior Learning.

The Academic Quality Manager will oversee these activities with the support of campus staff. They will also ensure that all relevant staff are adequately trained to support students and aware of this Student Protection Plan and the operational processes and implementation.

3.10 Student Support During a Pandemic

The 2020 outbreak of coronavirus has demonstrated the impact and significant change in the way of life for students and staff due to a global pandemic, and the Institute is committed to be supportive and flexible during such times of significant uncertainty.

The health and safety of all staff and students is of paramount importance, and all actions and activities will be made with this primary consideration in mind. The Institute will strictly adhere to and follow all dictates and guidelines from the government (both central & regional) and the Department of Education.

During such times, and where learning on campuses may not be possible, alternative ways of delivery and offering additional student support may include:

- Consideration and implementation of alternative delivery and assessment methods/approaches.
- Agreeing extensions to deadlines, where appropriate and approved in line with Office for Student guidelines and the validating university partner.
- Additional mental and well-being support to be offered by SAE's student support team, with signposting to support and resources that may be available such as professional medical expertise, etc.
- Additional learning support and pastoral engagement activities.
- Considerations and actions that support a significant impact on an individual students' ability to access and participate in ongoing teaching delivery and learning,

i.e., access to necessary software, remote online access, assessment extensions, etc.

- Regular communications to inform and advise of any impact or potential impact to study, teaching delivery, assessment, and access to facilities.
- Implementation of Campus Safe Working/ Studying protocols and training.

4 Approvals and History

This policy will be reviewed once a year to help ensure that the plan is effective. Students and staff shall be consulted.

Students may provide feedback on this plan at any time by contacting their local Campus Manager.

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Approved by:	Steffan Davies, General Manager SAE UK/SWEu