

## Bloomsbury Institute Limited – Specific ongoing conditions of registration

During the initial registration and assessment process the Office for Students (OfS) has imposed two specific ongoing conditions of registration.

### 1. Specific ongoing condition of registration imposed in relation to Condition B3 (Quality and standards)

#### Reasons for the imposition of the specific condition

Bloomsbury Institute Limited was registered by the OfS on 29 October 2020 because it satisfied each of the relevant initial conditions of registration. The OfS’s judgement in relation to initial condition B3 (quality: student outcomes) was finely balanced and in reaching its view that this condition was satisfied the OfS placed weight on, amongst other things, improved performance for continuation in the most recent year of data such that performance was above the numerical baseline set by the OfS.

The OfS’s assessment of future risk for condition B3 (quality: student outcomes) is ‘significantly increased’ and the OfS has therefore imposed significant mitigating requirements to ensure that the interests of current and future students, and the interests of the taxpayer, are protected. The primary reasons for this risk assessment are:

- a. The provider’s performance has been below the baseline for continuation for its integrated foundation year courses and, without a significant and sustained improvement in performance, it is at increased risk of being below the numerical baseline in future.
- b. The provider’s track record does not offer strong evidence that it is able to deliver credible actions that lead to a sustained improvement in continuation rates.

To mitigate this significantly increased risk, the OfS has imposed two specific ongoing conditions of registration:

- Specific Condition B3A – student continuation targets
- Specific Condition B3B – commitments relating to student continuation

#### Specific Condition B3A – student continuation targets

##### Production and approval of student continuation targets

B3A.1 The Provider must produce, for submission to the OfS for approval, credible targets with clear milestones for how the Provider aims to improve and sustain levels of Student Continuation for all of its current and prospective students on each Relevant Course over time (hereafter “Provisional Student Continuation Targets”).

B3A.2 The Provider must submit the Provisional Student Continuation Targets to the OfS by 30 November 2020 for approval, and the following provisions apply to such approval:

- (a) if the OfS determines that the Provisional Student Continuation Targets appear to be insufficient to address Regulatory Risks, it will issue a direction to the Provider that requires

the Provider to amend the Provisional Student Continuation Targets in accordance with instructions given, and by a date specified, by the OfS;

- (b) where a direction has been issued pursuant to paragraph B3A.2(a), the Provisional Student Continuation Targets are deemed to have been amended in accordance with the direction, and approved by the OfS, on the calendar day immediately after the date specified in the direction (however, such deeming does not in any way affect the ability of the OfS to take further regulatory and/or enforcement action if the direction was not, in fact, complied with);
- (c) if the OfS otherwise decides to approve the Provisional Student Continuation Targets on the basis that they appear to be sufficient to address Regulatory Risks, they will come into force on a date specified by the OfS to the Provider in writing;
- (d) where Provisional Student Continuation Targets are approved (or, as the case may be, deemed to have been approved) under paragraph B3A.2, they are hereafter referred to as the “Student Continuation Targets” for the purposes of this condition.

#### **Publication of student continuation targets**

B3A.3 Within five working days of the date Student Continuation Targets are approved (or, as the case may be, deemed to have been approved) under paragraph B3A.2 above, the Provider must publish (and, thereafter, maintain the publication of) the Student Continuation Targets in a prominent position on the Provider’s website under an equally prominent statement drafted precisely as follows:

“The Office for Students (OfS) is the independent regulator of higher education in England. It has imposed a regulatory requirement for Bloomsbury Institute Limited to publish and meet targets which aim to improve the continuation rates of its students.

Continuation rates are a way of measuring the proportion of students who are still studying in higher education a year after they began their course. The higher a provider’s continuation rate, the more of its students are still studying in this way.

The OfS has imposed this requirement because continuation rates at Bloomsbury Institute Limited have historically been below the minimum acceptable level required for registration with the OfS. This minimum acceptable level is designed to protect students from low quality courses that deliver weak outcomes and the OfS considers that Bloomsbury Institute Limited needs to improve the number of its students who continue their studies.”

#### **Requirement to provide an evaluation report etc to the OfS**

B3A.4. This paragraph applies in respect of the last working day of each calendar month and in circumstances where the Provider could reasonably be considered to have grounds to suspect at any time during that day that one or more of the Student Continuation Targets may not be met at the Student Continuation Assessment Date.

B3A.5. Where paragraph B3A.4 applies, unless the OfS otherwise directs that a longer period of time applies (after receiving a request for additional time from the Provider), the Provider must:

- (a) within three working days of the day referred to in paragraph B3A.4, inform the OfS in writing that it has grounds to suspect that one or more of the Student Continuation Targets may not be met at the Student Continuation Assessment Date; and

- (b) within thirty working days of the day referred to in paragraph B3A.4, produce and submit to the OfS a detailed report in writing which contains:
- (i) a clear articulation of why the Provider suspects that one or more of the Student Continuation Targets may not be met at the Student Continuation Assessment Date;
  - (ii) a thorough identification and evaluation of the reasons as to why the Provider suspects that one or more of the Student Continuation Targets may not be met at the Student Continuation Assessment Date; and
  - (iii) in respect of all matters that could reasonably be considered as being within the scope of each of the reasons provided in response to the requirements of paragraph B3A.5(b)(ii), a thorough explanation and evaluation of whether the measures the Provider is required to implement and deliver under specific condition B3B were relevant those matters and, if so, insufficient to address them.

### **Compliance**

B3A.6 The Provider must take all reasonable steps to comply with:

- (a) Student Continuation Targets; and
- (b) any direction issued by the OfS pursuant to paragraph B3A.2(a) or paragraph BA3.5.

### **Definitions for condition**

B3A.7 For the purposes of this condition:

- (a) “Designated Body” means the body designated under Schedule 6 to the Higher Education and Research Act 2017;
- (b) “Regulatory Framework” means the document published by the OfS under section 75 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017;
- (c) “Regulatory Risk” means risks related to compliance with initial and ongoing condition of registration B3 which are set out or otherwise described in a final decision to register the Provider or any supplementary document;
- (d) “Relevant Course” means any first degree course that includes an integrated foundation year; and
- (e) “Student Continuation”:
  - (i) covers the circumstances where, for the purposes of data submitted to the Designated Body, a student could (irrespective of the precise definitions contained in guidance or other documentation used by the Designated Body), in effect, validly be recorded as being in one of the following categories:
    - having qualified at undergraduate level for the Relevant Course on or before the Student Continuation Assessment Date; or
    - still studying for a qualification at undergraduate level in respect of the Relevant Course at the Student Continuation Assessment Date; or
    - having qualified at undergraduate or postgraduate level on any other course on or before the Student Continuation Assessment Date; or

- still studying for a qualification at undergraduate or postgraduate level on any other course at the Student Continuation Assessment Date; or
- having Transferred to a course at undergraduate or postgraduate level at another provider and still studying on that course at the Student Continuation Assessment Date; and

(ii) is otherwise to be interpreted in accordance with initial and ongoing condition of registration B3, the Regulatory Framework, and the contents of any related documents issued to the Provider before or at the time of the final decision on registration;

(f) “Student Continuation Assessment Date” means, in respect of each student on any Relevant Course, the date of the day which is immediately after the day which is twelve months and fourteen days after the date the student first enrolled on that course; and

(g) “Transferred” is to be interpreted in accordance with section 38 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017.