1. INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines the support arrangements for students in the School of Music and Fine Art (SMFA) at the Medway campus. The business case for the closure of SMFA has been presented to Council and will not be further considered in this document. The support arrangements for students reflect the University’s commitment that, notwithstanding the proposal to close courses within the School over the next three years, any proposed closure will not impact negatively on students within the School, who should continue to experience the full range of academic and professional services available before the closure was announced. There are a number of issues of concern to students and these will be addressed in turn.

This document details relevant contact information for students, which is also available on the student Fact Sheet.

2. INQUIRIES FROM PARENTS OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The School Administration Manager, Brigid Carroll, will be the main point of contact in the School to answer inquiries from parents or members of the public.

Inquiries from parents or members of the public will be referred to a generic email address and a central University telephone number. These are:

Contact email address: smfaenquiries@kent.ac.uk

Contact Telephone Number: 01227 816575

Any inquiries from the press must be referred directly to the Press Office in Corporate Communications (contact telephone number 01227 (82)3100)

3. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITHIN SMFA

Alex Williams, Student Support Officer, will be available to support all students within the School or refer students to central services, as and when required.

Alex’s contact details are:

Contact email address: A.D.C.Williams-2@kent.ac.uk

Contact Telephone Number: 01634 888830

4. CENTRAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

It is acknowledged that students may be emotionally upset or distressed by the closure of courses within the School. Student Services would encourage any students with welfare issues to contact the Master’s Office in the Medway Building or those requiring counselling to contact wellbeing staff in the Gillingham Building. The following arrangements are in place to support all SMFA students.
SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND FINE ART: STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

Welfare Concerns: Refer to the Master for Medway

Email: MedwayMastersOffice@kent.ac.uk
Telephone: 01634 888807

Counselling: Drop in service: available at Gillingham Building, Ground Floor, Room G0-05. Between 2.00pm to 3.00pm daily. The drop in service at Medway will be reviewed on a regular basis.

In non-emergency cases students will be able to book an appointment by:

Email: Medwaycounselling@kent.ac.uk
Telephone: 01634 202984

In cases of emergency students should use the telephone number listed above.

GK Unions: GK Union staff are available to offer advice. Kent Union’s officer team is there to represent your academic interests and ensure that students’ continue to get the best possible student experience at Medway. KU representatives can be contacted at: KUMedway@kent.ac.uk

5. YOUR COURSE

The University is committed to ensuring that the quality of education we provide meets the expectations of SMFA students, who should not experience a reduction in the social or academic facilities currently available at the Medway campus. The University intends to retain academic and support facilities at the Dockyard to teach-out SMFA courses and will continue to offer a range of module choices to students.

6. STUDENTS WISHING TO TRANSFER COURSE OR WITHDRAW AND TRANSFER TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION

The University is committed to ensuring that all SMFA students remain on course and complete their academic studies. We recognise that some students may wish to:

i) Transfer internally to another course within the University; or
ii) Transfer to a course at another higher education institution; or
iii) Intermit or withdraw from their academic studies.

Any student wishing to transfer will be strongly advised to discuss their options with the School’s Student Support Officer, Alex Williams, in the first instance. His contact details can be found in section 3 above.

Students wishing to transfer to a similar course at another higher education institution will be given a list of alternative providers. This list will be made available from the Student Support Officer in SMFA, upon request. Students wishing to transfer are strongly advised to complete their current academic year, as the academic credit achieved for the year may be used to support transfer to another institution.

In addition successful completion of the year, in line with the academic requirements of the course, will enable a student to achieve an exit award from the University. The exit awards are:
SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND FINE ART: STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

- Certificate of Higher Education (successful completion of the first year of the course) or
- Diploma of Higher Education (successful completion of the second year of the course).

7. CONTINUATION OF STUDIES POST 2019

The University will put in place contingency plans for the teaching-out of courses post 2019, to ensure that all registered students (including part-time students, those taking a year out on placement, studying abroad or requiring a period of intermission) are able to complete their studies. This may entail recruiting suitable academic and support staff to replace those who may leave the University before students’ studies come to an end.

8. STUDENT EXTENSIONS AND CONCESSIONS

Student extensions and concessions will be dealt with in the normal way, in line with the School’s written procedures on extensions and concessions.

9. STUDENTS CURRENTLY STUDYING ABROAD OR ON PLACEMENT

A separate email communication will be sent to SMFA students who are currently intermitting, studying abroad or are on a placement year, to offer support, explain the situation and provide reassurance that the University will put in place contingency plans for the teaching-out of their courses.

10. RESEARCH STUDENTS – SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS

SMFA has a number of research students and the University is committed to ensuring that this particular group of students are also supported, irrespective of any changes in the School. Any research student concern or request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In circumstances where a member of staff from SMFA, who is also an internal research supervisor, decides to leave the University there will be a number of options available to the student. The University will fully support any option that is in the best interests of the research student. The options include:

i) Finding an alternative research supervisor within the University; or

ii) The existing research supervisor continuing to supervise the student as an external supervisor. This would require the consent of both the research student and the existing research supervisor. The terms of engagement for this arrangement would need to be agreed beforehand; or

iii) In cases where the research supervisor is taking an academic post at another institution the research student may decide to transfer to the same institution, with the agreement of the research supervisor and the host institution.
11. GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS (GTAS)

The bursaries of GTAs will be protected until the completion of their research degrees. Every effort will be made for GTAs to be found academically-relevant types of work, including teaching.

12. STUDENT FEES

Students who decide to intermit, transfer to another institution or withdraw from their academic studies will be considered, where applicable, for a full or partial of refund of their 2016/17 University tuition fees. Each student request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students are strongly advised to stay with the University of Kent and complete their degree course.

13. STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The University of Kent will continue to fund all scholarships awarded to SMFA students that remain registered with the University, in line with our published terms and conditions.

14. SCHOOL AMBASSADORS

The University will seek to find alternative work for Student Ambassadors employed by the School.

15. STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYABILITY

SMFA students will be asked what further support is required in relation to their general student experience at Medway and an action plan will be drawn up to address any concerns or issues, where possible. The University has set aside a fund to support student experience activities/initiatives over the next three years, managed jointly by the Head of School of SMFA, Dr Paul Fretwell, and Kent Union President, Rory Murray. This fund will also be used to meet any reasonable and verifiable travel expenses for students’ attending interviews at other higher education providers.

The Careers and Employability Service meets annually with representatives from SMFA to agree School-based employability initiatives and to provide any support required by the School. In addition to this the Careers and Employability Services will provide the following.

- Specific group and one-to-one workshops on job applications and CV clinics
- One-to-one help with job hunting

The Careers and Employability Service operates a drop in service 2pm -3pm Monday to Friday during term time and will provide additional drop-ins at a time that is most appropriate for students in the School.

16. PARTNER COLLEGE STUDENTS

The experience of partner college students will not be affected by the proposed changes within the School. The University is in direct contact with the relevant institutions.
17. FURTHER INFORMATION AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Further information is available on the University web site, which also includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which will be reviewed and added to on a regular basis after the web site goes live on 28 November 2016.

The web site can be found at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/smfa-changes/

Updated February 2017