

Regulatory case report for RTC Education Ltd, the University of Greater Manchester and Buckinghamshire New University: Conditions B1, B2 and B4

Summary

This case report explains the regulatory judgement of the Office for Students (OfS) in relation to a quality assessment of business and management courses delivered by RTC Education Ltd (trading as Regent College London). These courses were delivered through a partnership arrangement and lead to qualifications awarded by the University of Greater Manchester (formerly known as the University of Bolton) and Buckinghamshire New University ('the awarding partners').

The report also considers the compliance of these providers with ongoing conditions of registration B1, B2 and B4.

In it, we explain our findings and why we have decided that RTC Education Ltd and the University of Greater Manchester breached conditions B1, B2 and B4, and Buckinghamshire New University breached conditions B2 and B4.

Background

We require all registered higher education providers' courses to meet conditions that relate to quality and standards. The detailed requirements of these conditions can be found in our regulatory framework.¹

As a result of our general monitoring, in May 2022 we opened an investigation into the quality of business and management courses delivered by RTC Education Ltd. The college was acting as a delivery provider for:

- BSc (Hons) Business Management and BSc (Hons) Business Management with foundation year subcontracted from, and awarded by, the University of Greater Manchester (the 'BSc Business Management courses')
- BA (Hons) Business Management and BA (Hons) Business Management with foundation year subcontracted from, and awarded by, Buckinghamshire New University (the 'BA Business Management courses').

We appointed an assessment team, consisting of three academic expert assessors and a member of OfS staff. The team was asked to give its advice and judgements about the quality of the business and management courses delivered by RTC Education Ltd.

¹ See Regulatory framework for higher education in England - Office for Students.

We published the quality assessment report setting out the assessment team's advice and judgements in October 2024.² The report represents the conclusions of the assessment team who carried out its assessment during the 2022-23 academic year. Through its activities, the team identified six areas of concern that could relate to compliance with the OfS's conditions of registration:

- **Concern 1:** The assessment team found that excessive time was dedicated to assessment support. Teaching often relied heavily on PowerPoint slides and lacked sufficient academic explanation. Feedback on assessments was not reliably provided within expected timeframes. In addition, reading materials were not consistently up-to-date, and inconsistencies in published module schedules undermined the coherence of the courses. Concern 1 relates to condition of registration B1.
- **Concern 2:** The assessment team found that the college's academic staffing was not adequate. In particular the assessment team identified that staff numbers had not kept pace with student growth, and a high proportion of teaching was delivered by staff on casual contracts, which contributed to frequent changes in module tutors. These staffing issues led to disruption in teaching, and inconsistent information being provided to students. Concern 2 relates to condition of registration B2.
- **Concern 3:** The assessment team found that the student support staffing model used by the college was frequently over capacity, with high staff turnover. The model was not deployed in a way that met the specific academic needs of the student body. The assessment team identified that students often experienced fragmented and limited continuity in academic guidance and insufficient access to subject-specific expertise. Concern 3 relates to condition of registration B2.
- **Concern 4:** The assessment team found that the physical learning environment was not consistently adequate to support students in successfully participating in their studies. Specifically, teaching rooms lacked appropriate furniture, with tablet chairs in use that did not meet the needs of students. This hindered students' ability to use laptops and take notes effectively during classes. In addition, the availability of quiet and group study spaces was insufficient, limiting opportunities for independent learning and collaboration. Concern 4 relates to condition of registration B2.
- **Concern 5:** The assessment team found that students were not consistently provided with access to adequate physical or digital library resources. Students were informed that the college operated with a digital focus and did not maintain a physical library. However, the assessment team identified that for a number of modules, core reading materials were not available digitally, and students were not consistently able to access recommended texts. In some cases, students were directed to use local public libraries, which was not considered a satisfactory alternative due to limitations in availability and accessibility. Concern 5 relates to condition of registration B2.
- **Concern 6:** The assessment team found serious concerns with assessment practices. In particular, the assessment team found that students were frequently encouraged to submit full drafts of summative coursework for feedback prior to formal submission, a practice prohibited by the awarding bodies and one which undermined the integrity and independence of student

² See OfS Quality assessment report – RTC Education Ltd.

work. Excessive teaching time was also dedicated to assessment support, reducing the challenge expected at higher education level. Further concerns were raised regarding academic integrity. Some staff were found to have encouraged students to paraphrase content to reduce similarity scores on plagiarism detection software, and in some cases directed students towards the use of artificial intelligence tools or essay mills. There were also instances where students were given advance access to summative assessment questions. Additionally, the assessment team identified examples of marks awarded to students that were excessive and did not appear to reflect those students' performance. Concern 6 relates to condition of registration B4.

During and after the assessment, we engaged with the college to understand its views on the assessment team's concerns. The OfS also engaged with the awarding partners before the publication of the assessment report. As part of this engagement, the college and its two awarding partners explained the progress that had been made since our assessment in relation to the concerns set out in the report. We carefully considered the content of the quality assessment report, and the information given during the course of the engagement in reaching our decisions.

Relevant OfS conditions of registration and OfS regulatory finding

Our view is that the concerns raised by the assessment team represent breaches of general ongoing conditions B1, B2 and B4 for RTC Education Ltd.

Where courses are delivered through partnership arrangements, both the delivery provider and the awarding partner are responsible for compliance with our conditions of registration relating to the quality of courses.³ Following consideration of the context of RTC Education Ltd's partnerships, and the evidence base that related to each partner, we have decided that the concerns raised by the assessment team also resulted in:

- breaches of B1, B2 and B4 for the University of Greater Manchester
- breaches of B2 and B4 for Buckinghamshire New University.

Condition B1

This condition requires the delivery provider and awarding partner to ensure that students 'receive a high quality academic experience' including (but not limited to) ensuring that each higher education course provides an appropriate level of educational challenge, is effectively delivered and requires students to develop relevant skills.

Educational challenge means a challenge that is no less than the minimum level of rigour and difficulty reasonably expected of the higher education course, in the context of the subject matter and level of the course.

Effectively delivered means the manner in which the higher education course it is taught, supervised and assessed (both in person and remotely) including, but not limited to, ensuring:

- i. an appropriate balance between delivery methods, for example lectures, seminars, group work or practical study, as relevant to the content of the course; and

³ Regulatory framework paragraphs 332B, 332C, 332E, 332W, 332X, 332Z, 335F, 335G and 335I.

- ii. an appropriate balance between directed and independent study or research, as relevant to the level of the course.

Relevant skills means the knowledge and understanding relevant to the subject matter and level of the higher education course; and other skills relevant to the subject matter and level of the higher education course including, but not limited to, cognitive skills, practical skills, transferable skills and professional competences.

OfS judgement on condition B1

RTC Education Ltd

We have judged that RTC Education Ltd has breached condition B1. Based on the evidence gathered by the assessment team and presented in its report, we consider that there were legitimate concerns about educational challenge, effective delivery and the development of relevant skills in the business and management courses delivered by the college.

The assessment team found that the level of educational challenge was not appropriate to the level of the courses delivered. Too much time was spent helping students pass assessments. This excessive assessment support resulted in a level of rigour and difficulty that was less than the minimum reasonably expected of an undergraduate degree in business and management.

The excessive focus on assessment support also meant the college had not ensured that courses were consistently effectively delivered, with a lack of appropriate balance between directed and independent study. The assessment team also observed an overreliance on PowerPoint slides and videos, with limited explanation of concepts and issues relevant to the subject matter. In addition, the timeframe for providing summative assessment marks and feedback varied between modules and was often outside the expectations set in the awarding partner's policies. The assessment team considered that students frequently did not receive timely feedback that would support their learning. As a result, the manner in which courses were taught did not consistently support effective delivery.

As a result of the excessive assessment support and the way in which courses were delivered, the college did not consistently require students to develop relevant skills. The assessment team found that students were not consistently supported to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to the level of study.

We consider that it would have been reasonable to expect RTC Education Ltd to ensure, through the delivery of its business and management courses, that the level of challenge was no less than the minimum level of rigour and difficulty reasonably expected of the course, that there was an appropriate balance between directed and independent study, and that it had required students to develop and demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills.

University of Greater Manchester

Having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership, and the balance of evidence that related to the BSc Business Management courses awarded by the University of Greater Manchester, we have also judged that the University of Greater Manchester has breached condition B1. While the concerns were identified in the delivery partner's provision, as the awarding partner for the BSc Business Management courses it was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the quality of those courses. We consider that it is reasonable to expect the awarding partner to

have identified the shortcomings in educational challenge, effective delivery, and the requirement to develop relevant skills identified by the assessment team through its oversight mechanisms, but it did not.

Buckinghamshire New University

Having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership and the balance of evidence that related to the BA Business Management courses awarded by Buckinghamshire New University, we have judged that it is not necessary or proportionate to make a judgement against Buckinghamshire New University in respect of condition B1.

Condition B2

One requirement of this condition is that providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that students receive 'resources and support which are sufficient for the purpose of ensuring a high quality academic experience for those students, and those students' success in and beyond higher education'.

Resources include, but are not limited to, 'the staff team that designs and delivers a higher education course being collectively sufficient in number, appropriately qualified and deployed effectively to deliver in practice' and 'physical and digital learning resources that are adequate and deployed effectively to meet the needs of the cohort of students'.

OfS judgement on condition B2

RTC Education Ltd

We have judged that the college has breached condition B2. Based on the evidence gathered by the assessment team and presented in its report, we consider that there were legitimate concerns about the sufficiency of academic staff, and the adequacy of physical and digital resources, in relation to the business and management courses delivered by the college.

The assessment team found that academic staff levels were too low, with increasing reliance on staff employed on casual contracts, and frequent changes in module tutors. These factors had a considerable impact on students, including a lack of clear and consistent information about assessments, modules and course structure, as well as delayed access to essential learning resources. The team also found that variation in the timely provision of assessment marks and feedback, discussed under B1 above, was linked to insufficient academic staffing. We consider that it would have been a reasonable step for the college to ensure that the impact on students of changes in academic staffing was minimal, but it failed to take the necessary actions to achieve this.

The assessment team also identified concerns about the adequacy of physical or digital library resources provided to students on the relevant courses. The college did not provide a physical library service or facilities. Students were informed that it had a 'digital focus'; however, the assessment team observed that core texts included on module reading lists were not always accessible to students digitally. Although guidance was provided on using local physical public libraries, or the libraries of its awarding partners, this was not considered satisfactory due to large student cohorts, limitations in availability of relevant reading materials and because it may have involved students being required to travel a significant distance. We consider that it would have

been reasonable for the college to ensure consistent access to core reading materials for its students, but it did not take sufficient steps to do so.

Classroom facilities were also found to be inadequate, with students raising repeated concerns about the lack of appropriate desks, tables and chairs. These issues were well known to staff but had not been addressed at the time of the assessment. The team also found that there were not enough spaces for quiet individual study or group work. Students reported difficulties in accessing suitable environments to complete further reading or assessment tasks.

These factors were particularly significant given the characteristics of the student cohort, many of whom were mature students or admitted via non-standard entry routes and therefore likely to have higher academic support needs.

We have not made any additional findings of non-compliance with condition B2 relating to the sufficiency of the student support staffing model based on the information contained within concern 3 of the quality assessment report. The evidence we considered demonstrated that the assessment team's concerns were legitimate, and that at the time of the assessment the college was at increased risk of non-compliance with condition B2 due to the issues identified by the assessment team. However, we consider that the actions that the college has taken since publication of the quality assessment report are likely to be effective at addressing the concerns.

University of Greater Manchester

Having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership, and the balance of evidence that related to the BSc Business Management courses awarded by the University of Greater Manchester, we have also judged that the university has breached condition B2. While the concerns were identified in the delivery partner's provision, as the awarding partner for the BSc Business Management courses, it was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the quality of those courses. The University of Greater Manchester did not ensure that students received sufficient resources. We consider that it is reasonable to expect the awarding partner to have identified concerns related to staffing, the lack of core texts and classroom provision through its oversight processes, but it did not.

Buckinghamshire New University

Similarly, having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership, and the balance of evidence that related to the BA Business Management courses awarded by Buckinghamshire New University, we have also judged that the university has breached condition B2. While the concerns were identified in the delivery partner's provision, as the awarding partner for the BA Business Management courses, it was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the quality of those courses. Buckinghamshire New University did not ensure that students received sufficient resources. We consider that it is reasonable to expect the awarding partner to have identified concerns related to the lack of core texts and classroom provision through its oversight processes, but it did not.

Condition B4

This condition includes requirements for a provider and awarding partner to ensure that students are assessed effectively, that each assessment is valid and reliable, and that awards are credible at the point of being granted and when compared with those granted previously.

Assessed effectively means that providers must ensure that students are assessed in a challenging and appropriately comprehensive way for the subject of the higher education course. This includes that assessment should provide appropriate stretch and rigour for the level of the course and test relevant skills.

Credible awards must, in our opinion, reflect students' knowledge and skills, including that assessment takes place in a way that results in students demonstrating knowledge and skills in the way intended by design of the assessment.

Reliable means that an assessment, in practice, requires students to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a manner which is consistent as between the students registered on a higher education course and over time, as appropriate in the context of developments in the content and delivery of the higher education course.

Valid means that an assessment in fact takes place in a way that results in students demonstrating knowledge and skills in the way intended by the design of the assessment.

OfS judgement on condition B4

RTC Education Ltd

We have judged that the college has breached condition B4. We consider that the assessment team identified legitimate concerns in respect of the effectiveness, validity, reliability and credibility of assessment practices in the business and management courses delivered by the college.

The assessment team found that students often received feedback on full drafts of summative assessments prior to submission through a practice referred to by the assessment team as 'first marking'; this was not permitted under the assessment policies of the awarding partners. It also found that some academic staff encouraged students to paraphrase content to reduce similarity scores (scores generated by plagiarism detection software that indicate whether an assessment contains copied or unoriginal content). In more serious cases, staff directed students towards the use of artificial intelligence tools and essay mills, in ways which seriously undermined academic integrity. Concerns were also raised about the provision of advance access to summative assessment questions, which the assessment team considered inappropriate and likely to compromise the fairness and rigour of assessment. The team also found that, in some cases, marks awarded to students appeared to be excessive and not justified by their performance. These issues were further compounded by the excessive assessment support described under the judgement for condition B1. We consider that the college should have ensured that students on its business and management courses were assessed in a challenging and appropriately comprehensive way, but it failed to take the necessary actions to achieve this.

These practices also meant that assessment did not consistently provide appropriate stretch and rigour for the level of the courses and did not test relevant skills.

These practices also meant that students were not consistently required to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the way intended by the design of the assessment, meaning that assessment was not always valid. Additionally, the lack of a consistent policy on draft feedback meant that students received varying different levels of support through feedback on assessment drafts. This meant that assessment was not always reliable.

In relation to the credibility of awards, the practices described above meant that the college did not ensure that awards reflected students' knowledge and skills.

Each of the findings of the assessment team was considered serious when viewed in isolation; however, taken together, the overall body of evidence was substantially concerning.

University of Greater Manchester

Having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership, and the balance of evidence that related to the BSc Business Management courses awarded by the University of Greater Manchester, we have also judged that the university has breached condition B4. While the concerns were identified in the delivery partner's provision, as the awarding partner for the BSc Business Management courses it was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the quality of those courses. The University of Greater Manchester did not ensure that students were assessed effectively, each assessment was valid and reliable, and that the relevant awards it made were credible. We consider that it is reasonable to expect the awarding partner to have identified shortcomings in assessment practices, but it did not.

Buckinghamshire New University

Similarly, having considered our regulatory requirements, the context of the partnership, and the balance of evidence that related to the BA Business Management courses awarded by Buckinghamshire New University, we have also judged that the university has breached condition B4. While the concerns were identified in the delivery partner's provision, as the awarding partner for the BA Business Management courses it was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the quality of those courses. Buckinghamshire New University also did not ensure that students were assessed effectively, each assessment was valid and reliable, and that the relevant awards it made were credible. Though we note the balance of evidence that related to its courses was not as significant as the other awarding partner, we consider that it is reasonable to expect it to have identified shortcomings in assessment practices, but it did not.

Regulatory intervention

In considering our regulatory response following these findings, we have weighed up the relevant intervention factors and our general duties.⁴

We have also focused and placed significant weight on the particular academic needs of the provider's cohort of students. This included placing weight on the principle that when the academic needs of a cohort of students are greater, the number and nature of the steps needed to be taken by a provider are likely to be more significant. We have also considered the scale and impact of the breaches we have found. The concerns raised by the assessment team were serious, due to the

⁴ See Regulatory advice 15: Monitoring and intervention - Office for Students and Higher Education and Research Act 2017.

nature of the concerns identified by the assessment team and the scale of provision in scope of our assessment.

RTC Education Ltd

We have found a breach of B1, B2 and B4 at RTC Education Ltd. The college has engaged positively with us during the quality assessment and has provided comprehensive and detailed information about the actions it has taken, or is taking, in response to the report. As well as examining evidence gathered during the assessment and in the assessment report, we have carefully reviewed the information submitted by the college since the publication of the report as part of our assessment of compliance, and when weighing up the appropriateness of our intervention.

Our view is that the actions described by the college may be appropriate to remedy its non-compliance with conditions B1, B2 and B4. Its plan was detailed, wide ranging, and relevant to the concerns identified by the assessment team. It included actions such as improvements in staff onboarding, support and training, a revised approach to teaching and learning, investment to modernise facilities and the opening of a new physical library. It also included improved processes to monitor assessment, detailed guidance for staff and students on acceptable academic practices, and periodic review of assessment results to identify any patterns of marks that were not justified by students' performance. However, given the significance of the original concerns, strong evidence that the proposed actions have effectively remedied the breaches is particularly important.

Using our risk-based approach to regulation, we have determined that it is appropriate that we place the college under enhanced monitoring. As part of this, the college must provide regular updates on its progress in implementing the actions it has identified. We will monitor this progress closely. We will also carry out a further quality assessment. This further assessment will include, but will not be limited to, the college's business and management provision. We consider that the further assessment will establish whether, in practice, the breaches that have occurred have been remedied. Until this further assessment confirms that the college is compliant with all its ongoing conditions of registration, we have also decided that the college is not eligible to apply for New Degree Awarding Powers.

When considering how we could best address the breaches of conditions, we considered whether further interventions would be a more effective way to deliver the intended outcomes for students. While more significant interventions were an option, we judged that the imposition of additional or alternative interventions on the college may not improve outcomes for students beyond the changes already being made following our assessment. We consider that our intervention may result in increased regulatory burden for the college; however, we consider this to be proportionate to the circumstances.

University of Greater Manchester

We have found a breach of B1, B2 and B4 at the University of Greater Manchester. The university has provided information about the actions it has taken, or is taking, in response to the report. We have considered these actions as part of our assessment of compliance, and when considering the appropriateness of our intervention. We have also carefully considered the significant weight of evidence from the assessment that related to its BSc Business Management courses.

We have also considered the university's role as an awarding partner that has subcontracted its courses to a delivery partner. As an awarding partner, it plays a critical role in maintaining strong oversight, safeguarding quality and protecting the interests of those students taught through the partnership.

Finally, we considered the university's history of regulatory compliance and noted it is currently subject to enhanced monitoring following a breach of condition B2 as a result of a quality assessment into its own business and management courses. It is also at increased risk of a future breach of conditions B1 and B4 in relation to its partnership activity as a result of a separate quality assessment of another delivery partner.

While the university has outlined a range of actions in response to the report, and we recognise the progress made, its plan does not include all the measures necessary to address the specific regulatory risks that we judge to remain. Important gaps remain in relation to several key areas. These gaps mean that additional, specific requirements are necessary to ensure that the university takes the targeted actions required to address the regulatory risks identified.

When considering how we could best address the breach of conditions, we looked at what the most appropriate, effective intervention would be to deliver the intended outcome for students. While more significant interventions were an option, we have decided to impose a specific ongoing condition of registration on the university, aligned to an identified area of non-compliance with the B conditions. We judged that this would be the most effective intervention available to us, and that it is likely to encourage targeted action by the university to improve the level of assessment support, feedback and resources that the BSc Business Management students receive. We consider that in this case the regulatory burden is proportionate to the circumstances. The specific ongoing condition is designed to allow the university to demonstrate ongoing improvements to both the OfS, and to its students.

The terms of the specific ongoing condition of registration require the university to take actions that result in effective oversight of the BSc Business Management courses and address the concerns in the quality assessment report that have led to the breaches of conditions B1, B2 and B4.

- Actions that the university is required to take that are relevant to its compliance with **condition B1** include the effectiveness of its oversight mechanisms to ensure that the level of assessment support maintains an appropriate balance between directed and independent study, and that delivery methods enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Actions relevant to the university's compliance with **condition B2** include the effectiveness of its oversight mechanisms to ensure that changes in module tutors are managed in a way that promotes continuity and maintains a high-quality learning experience for students.
- Actions relevant to the university's compliance with **condition B4** include the effectiveness of its oversight mechanisms to ensure that academic staff are supported to deliver assessments in a way that maintains credibility and prevents students from gaining an unfair academic advantage, and that marks awarded to students are clearly and consistently justified by students' performance.

The full terms of the specific ongoing condition of registration are set out in Annex A below.

The university is required to report to the OfS on the detail of the actions it has taken in response to the requirements of the specific ongoing condition.

As part of the monitoring of this specific ongoing condition, as discussed above, we will undertake a further quality assessment of RTC Education Ltd. This further assessment will include, but will not be limited to, the BSc Business Management courses subcontracted by the University of Greater Manchester. We consider that the further assessment will establish whether, in practice, the breaches found at the university have been remedied.

Buckinghamshire New University

We have found a breach of B2 and B4 at Buckinghamshire New University. The university has engaged positively with us during the quality assessment and has provided detailed information about the actions it has taken, or is taking, in response to the report. We have considered these actions as part of our assessment of compliance, and when considering the appropriateness of our intervention. We have also carefully considered the weight of evidence that related to its BA Business Management courses. We noted that some concerns found by the assessment team did not relate to its courses. We considered that concern 3, concern 4, concern 5 and part of concern 6 were related to the BA Business Management courses.

We have also taken into account that the university decided to terminate its contract with RTC Education Ltd in May 2025. This means that no new students will be registered on the courses reviewed by the assessment team from May 2026. We consider this action to significantly lower the risk related to this partnership. We note though that the university still has an obligation to ensure that students currently studying on the relevant BA Business Management courses receive a high quality education.

Overall, we considered that Buckinghamshire New University has responded to the concerns of the assessment team in a manner consistent with its responsibilities as the awarding partner. The actions it told us it had taken, or was intending to take, were sufficiently reassuring given the limited scope of the university's future partnership with the college. They were clearly related to the concerns identified by the assessment team and its responsibility to oversee the courses it was subcontracting to RTC Education Ltd. Its actions included conducting campus visits to review teaching and learning facilities, classrooms and furniture, identifying and resolving missing core texts, and training to provide module leaders with a clear understanding of assessment and expectations for student learning. We consider that the steps taken by the university have remedied its breach of condition B2 and B4. However, we consider that the university remains at increased risk of a future breach of condition B2 and B4 in relation to its partnership activity. This is because the university did not identify or prevent the breaches concerning the BA Business Management courses delivered in partnership with RTC Education Ltd prior to our assessment. We will continue to closely monitor this risk.

While regulatory interventions were an option, we have decided to take no further regulatory action against the university. When coming to this judgement, we did not want to impose an intervention that was any more burdensome for the university than was needed to address the areas of concern and to incentivise future compliance. We have decided, therefore, that the OfS does not need to intervene. Doing so would not be in line with our risk-based approach to regulation, or an effective use of OfS resources.

Annex A

University of Greater Manchester: Specific ongoing condition BB

The University of Greater Manchester (the Provider) became registered by the Office for Students (OfS) on the 29 October 2018.

The University of Greater Manchester is an awarding body and subcontracting partner to a delivery provider that was selected for an assessment into the quality of its Business and Management Courses in 2022. The University of Greater Manchester subcontracted delivery of its BSc (Hons) Business Management and BSc (Hons) Business Management with foundation year (the “**BSc Business Management courses**”) to this delivery provider. As the awarding body and subcontracting partner, the University of Greater Manchester is required to comply with the provisions of the quality conditions of registration where it is the awarding body for a course, whether or not the provider has any other role in the design or delivery of that course. The assessment was limited to lines of enquiry that were within the scope of ongoing conditions of registration B1, B2 and B4.

Further to the assessment into the quality of business and management courses it subcontracted to the delivery provider, the OfS has deemed the University of Greater Manchester to be in breach of condition B1, B2 and B4. The OfS has therefore imposed requirements to ensure that the interests of current and future students, and the interests of the taxpayer, are protected.

The primary reason for this is:

- The University of Greater Manchester has not exercised sufficient and effective oversight of the **BSc Business Management** courses it subcontracted to its delivery provider to ensure that students registered on those courses receive a high quality academic experience and the resources necessary to support their success in and beyond higher education. This includes ensuring that each course provides appropriate educational challenge, is effectively delivered, and enables students to develop relevant skills; that students are assessed effectively, with assessments that are valid and reliable; and that awards granted to students are credible.

To remedy the breaches and mitigate future risk the OfS has imposed specific condition BB. The specific condition specifies action the University of Greater Manchester must take and is required to report on to the OfS.

BB Notice to take further action to ensure appropriate oversight mechanisms and ensure a high quality academic experience

BB.1 The Provider must, by no later than Thursday 14 January 2027, implement and deliver all of the measures set out or otherwise described in the **Relevant Document**.

BB.2 The Provider must, by no later than Thursday 14 January 2027, identify and implement additional actions that result in effective oversight of its **BSc Business Management courses** delivered by the **delivery provider**. To effectively address the risks to compliance with condition B1, B2 and B4, these actions must ensure that:

BB.2.a (relevant to condition B1):

- i. the level of assessment support maintains an appropriate balance between directed and independent study.
- ii. the level of assessment support ensures students are enabled to demonstrate knowledge and understanding relevant to the subject matter and level of the course.
- iii. delivery methods enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding relevant to the subject matter and level of the course.

BB.2.b (relevant to condition B2):

- i. changes in module tutors are managed in a way that promotes continuity and maintains a high-quality learning experience for students.

BB.2.c (relevant to condition B4):

- i. academic staff are supported to deliver assessments in a way that maintains credibility and prevents students from gaining an unfair academic advantage.
- ii. marks awarded to students are clearly and consistently justified by students' performance, with oversight mechanisms in place to ensure the reliability of assessment.

BB.3 The Provider must ensure that the actions taken under this condition are approved by the governing body and are consistent with any future regulatory requirements introduced by the OfS relating to subcontractual arrangements, including any new general ongoing conditions of registration that may come into effect.

BB.4 The Provider must keep complete and accurate records of the actions taken in accordance with **BB.1** and **BB.2** until the OfS has completed its further assessment as set out in **BB.7** below. Any such records must be provided to the OfS on request.

BB.5 The Provider's compliance with this condition does not in any way affect the ability of the OfS to take regulatory and/or enforcement action in respect of the Provider's compliance with any other condition of registration, including (but not limited to) ongoing conditions B1, B2 and B4.

Timing, reporting and monitoring

BB.6 By Tuesday 14 July 2026, the provider must submit to the OfS details of the actions that it has identified, and a short update of progress pertaining to the requirements of **BB.1** and **BB.2**.

BB.7 By Thursday 14 January 2027, the Provider must be ready to co-operate with a quality assessment of the delivery provider and the Provider. The timing, scope and methodology of the quality assessment will be determined by the OfS at the time and will be informed by relevant information available to the OfS. The assessment will include (but may not be limited to) the **BSc Business Management courses** subcontracted by the Provider to the delivery provider. The scope will include (but may not be limited to) the Provider's compliance with condition BB.

BB.8 If, following this assessment, the OfS judges that the Provider remains in breach of, or is at increased risk of breach of ongoing Condition B1, B2 and/or B4, the OfS reserves the right to take further regulatory action.

Definitions

BB.9 For the purposes of this condition:

BSc Business Management courses

Means the BSc (Hons) Business Management and BSc (Hons) Business Management with foundation year subcontracted to the **delivery provider**.

Delivery provider

The provider that delivers **higher education courses** to students on behalf of another higher education provider (the **subcontracting partner**). In this case the delivery provider is RTC Education Ltd.

Higher education course

To be interpreted on the basis set out in general ongoing condition B1.

Relevant document

Means the tabs titled 'UGM Risk Management Plan' and 'UGM Oversight Monitoring' in the document submitted to the OfS on Monday 27 October 2025 bearing the title "UGM (RTC) Risk-Management-Monitoring Plan.27.10.25".

Subcontracting partner

When a body with degree awarding powers (the awarding body) allows another provider (the **delivery provider**) to deliver all, or part, of a **higher education course** on its behalf. The awarding body (the **subcontracting partner**) retains responsibility for ensuring that regulatory requirements are met for all such students, just as it must for those it teaches directly.