

Student Protection Plan

Provider's name: **New City College (NCC)**

Provider's UKPRN: **10006963**

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Student protection plan for the period 2018-19

1. An assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for your students, how those risks may differ based on your students' needs, characteristics and circumstances, and the likelihood that those risks will crystallise

The College's HE Provision breaks down into two distinct groups.

Firstly, there is our own in-house provision, which is delivered across our three main campuses. This amounts to over 50 students on a mixture of one and two year programmes. On the basis that the College has "Good" financial health as assessed by the ESFA, there is no reason for this provision to be considered at risk. We judge the provision as low risk.

We are in consultation with another college regarding a possible merger. We consider the risk of a possible merger affecting continuation of study as low.

Within curriculum teams we have a number of appropriately qualified staff who can teach on our higher education programmes. Therefore, we consider the risk of being unable to deliver provision due to staffing issues as low.

Secondly, there is a large partnership arrangement with UK College of Business and Computing (UKCBC) that covers approximately 2500 students on two year higher national programmes. This provision is delivered at various UKCBC locations. We judge the level of risk as low to medium as we do not have direct day to day control of delivery at the partner institution. The biggest risk is if UKCBC fails to meet the regulatory requirements (Office for Students/HEFCE and the awarding organisation, Pearson) and is no longer able to continue to deliver our programmes.

To mitigate risk, a member of the NCC HE Quality department has day to day oversight of partner provision. This remit includes, but is not limited to, monitoring of partner quality assurance provision, student admissions & attendance, lesson observations via quality monitoring audits, and meeting with Pearson external examiners. The partner is required to follow the College's Internal Quality Assurance Stages (IQA). Monitoring activities are based on an annual monitoring schedule.

The outcomes of these activities are discussed at six weekly partnership meetings where we review all relevant quality and student data, via a dashboard, and discuss concerns about current performance, trends and emerging issues. Any issues raised are recorded within an ongoing action plan which is monitored and reviewed at the subsequent meetings. The partnership meetings are supplemented by quarterly senior management meetings, attended by both parties, where the issues from the partnership meetings are reviewed.

We believe this process minimises the risk that the provision will fail without us being able to make alternative arrangements in advance. We carry out our data checks on underlying records and if these indicate any issues that cannot be rectified we will restrict their ability to recruit students through the partnership and intervene in respect of the provision.

2. The measures that you have put in place to mitigate those risks that you consider to be reasonably likely to crystallise

For our own students, we do not believe there is an increased risk.

For the students with UKCBC, we believe the quality monitoring process and the periodic meetings provide an effective means of managing in-year changes. In addition, we have a comprehensive contract which allows for an annual review of the partnership including the right for either party to terminate if there are concerns about the effectiveness of the arrangement. The contract also limits the partner's ability to recruit above an agreed level without our express consent, which means we have to be satisfied that they have the resources to support the proposed level of activity.

As part of our annual review, we also obtain their following financial information:

- last audited financial statements;
- most recent management accounts;
- budget for the forthcoming year.

Should we conclude that the partner could no longer continue the provision, we would seek to engage the key staff to allow us to complete the delivery of the programmes and negotiate with landlords to secure the appropriate accommodation.

3. Information about the policy you have in place to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to your students and to provide compensation where necessary in the event that you are no longer able to preserve continuation of study

The website links to our refund and compensation policy, higher education terms and conditions and fees policy are:

<https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/downloads/docs/Higher-Education-Refund-and-Compensation-Policy.pdf>

<https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/downloads/docs/New-City-Coll-HE-terms-and-conditions.pdf>

<https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/downloads/NCC-Fees-Policy-2018-19.pdf>

The College's financial strategy is to maintain a "Good" financial health and ensure that it has sufficient working capital to meet its obligations as they fall due. Currently, the College has negligible net debt and only a small part of its estate is given as security. Therefore, there is capacity to secure additional working capital by way of loan from the College bankers, should the need arise.

We have significant cash reserves, net current assets and appropriate working capital which would be sufficient to provide refunds and compensation for those students for whom we have identified as at an increased risk of non-continuation of study.

4. Information about how you will communicate with students about your student protection plan

We will publicise our policies and procedures covering the student protection plan, as well as the plan itself to current and future students by publishing it on the College website and the VLE. Student induction will also cover the student protection plan.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the implications of our student protection plan when they propose programme changes through a number of ways; this includes policies and forms (Closure and Withdrawal of HE Provision, Programme Discontinuation Form), which are available on the staff intranet. There is information available on programme closure within the higher education staff handbook. The HE Quality department provides support and guidance, as necessary.

NCC policies, procedures and guidance documents are made available to our partner institution and we have oversight of our partner's policies and procedures.

For students at our partner institution, there will be a link to the NCC website higher education web page containing information on the student protection plan. In addition, student induction at our partner institution will cover the student protection plan.

Please provide a statement about how you will work with your current students in the development of your student protection plan.

Our students will be involved in our review through the staff-student liaison forums as well as through programme boards. A student representative is also a member of the College's Higher Education Committee (HEC) where policy decisions are discussed and agreed. Feedback on the student protection plan from students at our partner institution will be gathered through the partner's student experience meetings and then discussed at the partnership meetings.

Please provide a statement about the arrangements you will put in place to communicate with affected students should your student protection plan need to be implemented.

We will inform our students, including those at our partner institution, if there are to be material changes to their programme initially through a meeting with students and then via a letter to each student. We will give students 25 days' notice when we need to make material changes to their programme.