



## Student Protection Plan 2021-22

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**PROVIDER'S NAME** NCH at Northeastern Limited

**PROVIDER'S UKPRN** 10048199

### INTRODUCTION

1. NCH at Northeastern Limited (NCHNL) trading as New College of the Humanities (the 'College') is committed to ensuring that registered students can complete their studies to the best of their abilities by having robust resource planning and management procedures. Where changes are required to the resourcing of programmes or courses, the student experience and expectations are a priority during the modification procedures.
2. Risks that students will not be able to complete their chosen programme of study, due to programme or course closure, is considered very low risk by the College. Due to the nature of the programmes delivered at the College and the pedagogical approach that is central to the founding values of the College, closure of programmes/courses due to small numbers is very low.
3. This Plan has been put in place by the College to set out risks, as assessed by the College, to its registered students and the overall risk to continuation of study. It also includes the mitigation measures put in place and/or planned by the College to minimise or manage these risks.
4. The measures set out in this Plan are in addition to students' statutory rights which are unaffected by this Plan.

### COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

5. This Plan will be published in the College's Academic Handbook, which is available on the College website. It can be found [here](#).
6. The College's website is the key on-line resource about the College for prospective students. All prospective students are directed to this site where this plan is included in the Policies and Procedures page, General section, Student Welfare.
7. This Plan is reviewed by NCHNL Board annually, and any changes that the College has made, how that has affected the risks associated with non-continuation, and how that would need to be reflected in an updated Student Protection Plan are included.
8. As part of that review, the College will engage with the NCH Student Union to understand the view from the student body and how it needs to be updated. For wider consultation, the Plan would be tabled at the Teaching, Learning and

Enhancement Committee where student representatives would be included in the discussions.

9. The College will notify the students affected individually, of any changes which may impact their studies in a timely manner with as much notice as possible.
10. Advice and support will be offered by the Student Wellbeing Team as well as by the relevant members of faculty.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

#### RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS UNABLE TO OPERATE

11. The risk that the College would be unable to operate is considered to be **low**.
12. NCHNL Board also does not consider this likely to crystallise.<sup>1</sup> This assessment of risks and their mitigation is part of the College's Risk Management Strategy which is operationalised in a Risk Register and is reviewed and updated by the NCHNL Board annually.
13. With the acquisition of the College by Northeastern University, the College faces the future with financial security. The College has a robust financial planning process that allows for sensible forecasting of projected student numbers and the resource implications are reviewed through staff consultation. Additionally, Northeastern University have provided a financial undertaking to NCHNL Board to ensure that NCH has sufficient financial and other resources available to it, to comply with all its regulatory requirements and obligations.
14. Financial risk is managed through the Risk Management Strategy, and more specifically the Financial Management Strategy, which provides the College with a robust, and where practicable, transparent framework for financial decision-making. This also enables the College to identify potential risks, to the College and the sector, and mitigate appropriately providing further assurance of the College's long-term sustainability.

#### RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS UNABLE TO DELIVER PROGRAMMES/COURSES DUE TO CLOSURE OF BUILDINGS

15. The risk that students are unable to complete their programme or course due to closure of individual sites closure is **low**.
16. The College currently delivers its programmes at Devon House, St Katherine Docks, London, that is leased from the St Katherine Docks.
17. If, when this lease is up for renewal, the landlord decides that it does not wish to renew the lease, the College would need to secure new premises locally. However, this is considered a low risk because the College has been a good tenant. If the lease is not renewed, the College will seek to find suitable alternative accommodation in Central London. This is again considered a low risk as there is a

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<sup>1</sup> NCHNL Board – NCHNL Board is the Board of Governors of NCHNL. NCHNL (NCH at Northeastern Limited) is the limited liability company established under English and Welsh Law through which the College operates.

deep and active rental market in this area and the College has good relations with local property agents.

18. The College considers that there is no immediate risk that the main campus would close. As a single campus institution, there is no risk of programmes being moved to an alternative campus unlike institutions with multiple locations.
19. The Facilities Strategy provides a framework to prepare contingency plans surrounding building issues. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within the strategy.

### **RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS UNABLE TO DELIVER PROGRAMMES OR COURSE DUE TO ITS INFRASTRUCTURE**

20. The risk that registered students will be unable to complete their programme or course due to IT infrastructure failure is **low**.
21. The College uses a third-party contractor to provide support and maintenance for the College servers and IT equipment. In addition, there is an on-site IT technician to provide support to students and staff for the delivery and operations of the programmes.
22. The College's communications infrastructure has Google technology and resources underpinning them and provide the College with industry leading capabilities as well as high security management.
23. The key on-line teaching resource used is Canvas and the College therefore has their industry leading capabilities, such as server maintenance and security management.
24. The resourcing of the IT facilities is managed through the Financial Management Strategy and Facilities Strategy, which includes generating contingency planning. On-going investment in infrastructure is maintained to ensure continuity and quality of service.

### **RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS UNABLE TO DELIVER PROGRAMMES OR COURSES DUE TO ORGANISATION RESTRUCTURING**

25. The risk that registered students are unable to complete their programme or courses due to organisational restructuring is **low**.
26. The College has robust planning and management strategies. There might be a requirement to review activities, which leads to a restructuring of the organisation. The College will ensure as little disruption as possible to students during the transition period and the reorganisation will be monitored throughout the process.

### **RISK THAT THE STUDENTS WILL BE UNABLE TO COMPLETE THEIR PROGRAMMES OR COURSES DUE TO CONCERNS REGARDING ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS**

27. The risk that registered students will be unable to complete their programme or course due to concerns regarding academic quality and standards, which may lead to loss of validation agreements or sanctions by the Office for Students, is **low**.

28. The College was granted degree-awarding powers in February 2020 and has robust internal regulations and procedures in place for oversight of design, approval, monitoring and review of its programmes and courses.<sup>2</sup> The regulations and procedures follow the UK Quality Code themes and the Regulatory Framework for Higher Education.

### **RISK THAT PROGRAMMES AND COURSES WILL BE CLOSED DUE TO CURRICULUM REVIEW**

29. The risk that registered students will be unable to complete their programme or course due to curriculum review is **low**.
30. The faculty review regularly the curricula to ensure that the research informing the programmes and courses is up-to-date and relevant for the subject. The method of delivery and assessment are also under regular review to ensure that they are fit for purpose, i.e. appropriate to enable the registered student to achieve the learning outcomes.
31. The procedure for modifying programmes or courses is clearly defined in the College's Academic Quality Framework Chapter 4: Programme and Course Approval and Modification.
32. The College has a Temporary Suspension of Programme Policy which outlines the procedure should the College be in a position to suspend the delivery of a programme. It includes how the College communicates and supports prospective and registered students during the procedure.

### **RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS NO LONGER ABLE TO DELIVER MATERIAL COMPONENTS OF PROGRAMMES**

33. The risk that the College is no longer able to deliver material components of the programmes is **low**.
34. The College has robust planning and resource allocation policies in place to ensure that programmes can be delivered to the highest of standards. All academic planning and resource allocation decision making reflects the programme delivery.

### **RISK THAT THE COLLEGE IS NO LONGER ABLE TO RECRUIT OR TEACH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

35. The risk that the College is unable to recruit or teach international students is **low**.
36. The College has clear and robust procedures for the recruitment and admissions of international students. This policy is supported by a dedicated page on the College's website to support international students with their applications.
37. The College has a good compliance history and has a low visa refusal rate.

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<sup>2</sup> The College was granted time-limited Degree awarding Powers in February 2020, which was then review and unlimited Degree Awarding Powers was granted in August 2020.

38. The attendance monitoring and support for international students continues throughout their studies and the College has not had to report any of the international students to the UKVI for non-attendance.

### **RISK OF LOSS OF OFFICE FOR STUDENTS REGISTRATION**

39. The risk that registered students will be unable complete their programme due to the loss of registration with the Office for Students is **low**.
40. The College has robust strategies, policies and procedures to be compliant with the Office for Students, but in the event of the College's registration being suspended, withdrawn or not successfully renewed, and depending on the circumstances of de-designation, the College will appeal the decision and/or make a new application for designation with a view to the restoration of its registration for the next academic year.

### **LOSS OF KEY STAFF**

41. The risk that registered students will be unable to complete their programme due to the loss of key staff is **low**.
42. The College has been able to retain faculty successfully and turnover is therefore at a level that does not impact the student experience but rather ensures that new ideas and experiences are added to the academic body. The senior academic management have been in post for over five years, which has provided continuity and stability during the evolution of the College
43. Where key faculty are lost, the College will seek to ensure that the student experience is not disrupted by looking to fill gaps in the immediate term from existing resources and in the longer-term reassigning or recruiting new faculty.
44. Both these approaches ensure that faculty with the right skills and expertise are in place. The location of the College means that there is a deep and liquid market for both permanent and fixed-term members of faculty and professional staff.

### **OTHER CATASTROPHIC ISSUES**

45. The risk that registered students will be unable to complete their programme due to other catastrophic issues is **low**.
46. The College has a Disaster Recovery Plan in case of issues affecting the College's ongoing operation, such as accessing the building or other issues that could impact the student experience. This is reviewed and updated every two years.

### **REFUNDS AND COMPENSATIONS**

47. In the event that the College was unable to preserve continuation of study for students, it would seek to provide appropriate compensation to students.
48. The College has a Cancellation, Withdrawal, Refund and Compensation Policy which is published on the College website. The College's Terms and Conditions are also on the College's website. These two documents cover the College's liability.

**FEEDBACK**

49. If you wish to provide feedback on this Plan, please contact the College's [Registry](#), or if you do not feel that this has been properly dealt with, you should refer to the [Complaints Procedure for Students](#).

| <b>Title: Student Protection Plan</b>                              |  |                |       |   |                           |
|--|--|----------------|-------|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Approved by: NCH at Northeastern Limited Board of Governors</b> |  |                |       |   |                           |
| <b>Approved by: Office for Students</b>                            |  |                |       |   |                           |
| Version number   | Date approved  | Date published | Owner | Location  | Proposed next review date |
| 4.0  | October 2021   | October 2021   | CEO   | Academic Handbook; Policies and Procedures; General | June 2022                 |
| 3.0  | June 2020  | June 2020      | CEO   | Academic Handbook                                   | June 2021                 |
| 2.0  | March 2020   | March 2020     | CEO   | Academic Handbook                                   | February 2020             |
| 1.0  | February 2019  | Not published  | COO   | Academic Handbook                                   | February 2020             |
| Referenced documents   | Risk Management Strategy; Risk Register; Financial Management Strategy; Academic Quality Framework 4 Programme and Course Approval and Modification; Temporary Suspension of Programme Policy; Disaster Recovery Plan; Cancellation, Withdrawal, Refund and Compensation Policy; Terms and Conditions; Complaints Procedure for Students |                |       |   |                           |
| External Reference Point(s)  | UK Quality Code Theme: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access; Regulatory Framework for Higher Education  |                |       |   |                           |