



Academic Quality Framework

Chapter 7 Academic Regulations for Degree Apprenticeships Part B – Admissions and Registration

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7.10 ADMISSION OF LEARNERS

Admission is the process through which an individual (the applicant) applies to become a learner of the College.

Each applicant is considered on their own merits in line with the College's Admissions Policy, the requirements of an apprenticeship and the entry requirements specific to each programme of study.

The admission of a learner is at the College's discretion, and is based on the reasonable expectation that the learner is able to:

- Show the ability to be a learner at Higher Education (HE) Level.
- Complete the objectives of the programme of study.
- Achieve the standard required for the award.
- Undertake the End-point Assessment within each apprenticeship successfully.

An applicant must fulfil specific entry requirements for the apprenticeship programme and subject to be studied prior to entry, which normally include specific educational Levels and/or qualifications that align with the academic Level of the programme and subject to be studied, a required level of written and spoken English, and other pre-requisites as agreed at programme approval.

Applicants are admitted to study and can become learners of the College as part of their apprenticeship on condition that their employer has:

- Signed and returned the contract for services with the College.
- With the learner, signed and returned the Commitment Statement, setting out the programme of learning in the apprenticeship.
- Provided a copy of the Apprenticeship Agreement to the College, also signed by the learner.

The learner has, in addition to the return of the core documentation list above and fulfilling all entry requirements satisfactorily before the start date of the programme for which they have applied:

- Submitted certificates for the prior achievement of English and maths at Level 2 or agreed that a UK Nasic equivalent exists for their qualifications held or that a programme to reach this level during the first year of their apprenticeship has been agreed.
- Received confirmation of a place on the programme for which they have applied from the Admissions Team.
- Confirmed their place on the programme with the Admissions Team.
- Attended and completed all registration, and induction events and procedures.
- Agreed to comply with the College's academic regulations, rules, code of conduct, policies and other procedures as approved by Academic Board, and/or NCH at Northeastern Limited (NCHNL) Board.

- Agreed to comply with, by signing the document to the roles and responsibilities for learners and set out in the Commitment Statement.

Learners are required to disclose all facts and information that might be relevant to their application for admission.

The College reserves the right to withdraw an offer of admission to undertake an apprenticeship with the College, or cancel any acceptance of such an offer, where the offer has been made as a result of using false or misleading information, or non-disclosure of information, in support of the application. Such learners will be removed from the apprenticeship and all costs of delivery at this point will remain with the College - employers will not receive a refund of their contributions, or any government co-funding. Any credits or awards that the apprentice has achieved may be withdrawn.

The College establishes arrangements for learners with disabilities to be supported and assessed as appropriate and will make reasonable adjustments as required to enable disabled learners to follow the programme of study on which they register.

Applicants with a disability are encouraged to declare their disability to the College during the application process under the Additional Learning Support section. Once declared, Student and Academic Services (SAS) will work with the apprentice to agree a support plan for the duration required. This plan will form part of the Commitment Statement and will be reviewed at the Tri-partite reviews each term to confirm that this support is effective.

7.11 LEARNER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Apprenticeship Funding Rules, the College publishes detailed information on the qualifications and pre-requisites required for admission to its programmes on its website and in Programme Specifications.

Applicants must comply with the selection and admission processes outlined in [AQF 8 Student Recruitment and Admissions](#).

7.11.1 Minimum Entry Qualifications for Undergraduate Awards in an apprenticeship

The minimum entry requirements for undergraduate awards are shown in the table below.

Table 7.3

Undergraduate Award	Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	Three A-Levels (or equivalent)

The College may also accept evidence of experience in appropriate employment as qualifying the applicant for entry.

7.11.2 Minimum Entry Qualifications for Postgraduate Awards in an apprenticeship

The minimum entry requirement qualifications for postgraduate awards are shown in the table below.

Table 7.4

Postgraduate Award	Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications
Postgraduate Certificate	Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Postgraduate Diploma	Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Taught Master's Degree	Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)

7.11.3 Minimum Qualifications for Apprenticeships

The minimum entry requirement for an apprenticeship is outlined in the ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules, including 'right to work' requirements.

7.12 LEARNER REGISTRATION

Learner registration is the process whereby new and existing learners are formally confirmed as students of the College.

A learner must complete registration when they commence their programme of study, and re-register annually as and when required throughout their programme of study.

Learner registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a learner who has been accepted onto, or is currently studying, a programme of study at the College, and the provision of a declaration acknowledging their obligations to the College, and compliance with the College's regulations, policies and procedures.

The binding contractual commitment takes place when the learner registers on the College's information system following the provision of personal and academic information electronically and/or in person.

Every learner must complete registration (or Re-registration for continuing learner) within the first four weeks of their programme start date (or the first day of their academic year for a continuing learner).

7.13 PROGRAMME REGISTRATION

Programme Registration takes place as part of the registration process (see section 7.12) and occurs when the learner registers on the College's information system.

Where circumstances are reasonable, the College reserves the right to alter programmes of study as circumstances may require. This will be processed and approved through the appropriate Programme and Course Approval and

Modification procedure contained in the [AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modification](#).

Learners are expected to complete their programme of study within the 'practical period' dates set out in the Commitment Statement, with the time for their EPA where this is needed also specified in their Commitment Statement. The normal period of time as designated at the programme approval and as stipulated in the Programme Specification is set out below,

A learner must have successfully completed their programme within the approved maximum registration periods specified in Table 7.5 below. Learners will work to the dates agreed with their employer for their apprenticeship and set out in the Commitment Statement

Table 7.5 Maximum length of registration period

Traditional Qualifications	FHEQ Level	Indicative FT Length (years)	Full time Maximum Registration (years)	Indicative PT Length (years)	Part time Maximum Registration (years)
Certificate of Higher Education	4	1	3	2	4
Diploma of Higher Education	5	2	4	4	6
Bachelor's Degree or Honours Degree	6	3	5	6	8
Postgraduate certificate	7	1	2	1	2
Postgraduate Diploma	7	1	2	2	4
Taught Master's Degree	7	1	2	2	4

Learners are considered to have exited their programme of study and have concluded their registration with the College once they have been conferred with an award by the appropriate Progression and Award Board (PAB).

The College's aim is to support learners to successfully achieve their apprenticeship. Tri-partite reviews between apprentice, Apprenticeship Advisor and employer line manager will discuss progress and evidence of growing skills, and where progress is not to plan, all parties will agree an action plan. Ultimately a learner may lose the right to continue on an apprenticeship programme of study, have their registration with the College terminated, and be withdrawn from the College where:

- The learner's ongoing progress and academic performance has been considered by PAB and it has made the academic decision that the

learner has failed to make sufficient academic progress on their programme of study.

- The learner has not completed registration by the published date for end of registration for new or continuing learners as appropriate.
- The learner is absent from their programme of study without agreement of the College on grounds of absence, and is therefore assumed withdrawn.
- The learner has demonstrably not engaged with their programme of study.
- The outcome of the investigation of an academic offence, or of the presentation of false or misleading documentation, or the non-disclosure of information, recommends that the learner be withdrawn from their programme of study, their registration be terminated and they be withdrawn from the College.
- The Master has accepted a recommendation that the learner's registration be terminated on disciplinary grounds under the terms of the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

All circumstances likely to result in an end to an apprenticeship will be discussed with the learner and employer before decisions are made. Learner's whose studies are terminated and are withdrawn from the College as a consequence of any of the above, must formally apply for re-admission if they wish to return to a programme of study with the College. The circumstances of the learner's withdrawal from the College will be taken into account when their application is considered.

7.14 LEARNER INDUCTION

7.14.1 New Learners

The College is aware that the start of an apprenticeship is a challenge to balance work, study and home life. The College provides an induction programme that aims to ease the transition and to help prepare learners for the requirements placed on them as part of their apprenticeship. This will explain how to manage and prepare for on the job learning at work, their off the job learning led by the College, and the self-determined elements which the apprentice must lead themselves.

7.14.2 Continuing Learners

has responded to the feedback from learners in the last academic cycle. The College believes that it is very important to 'close the feedback loop' with learners, so they can see what actions the College has taken in response to the points raised.

7.15 MONITORING LEARNER PROGRESSION

The academic progress of learners throughout their programme is determined by progression criteria that are agreed at programme approval. For the progression criteria, please see Assessment Regulations.

Progression criteria ensures that learners fulfil the requirement of each Level/phase of their programme before being permitted to progress to the next Level/phase.

Learners progression between Levels/phases is agreed and confirmed by the PAB (see [AQF12 Assessment Boards](#)).

Learners' progression throughout their time at the College is monitored using a number of mechanisms, including:

- Formative assessment.
- Collections.
- Regular monitoring of learner's attendance.

For learners, in addition to academic progress monitoring, progression also includes checking that the learner is achieving planned levels of off the job learning required by the apprenticeship as set out in the Commitment Statement. This termly discussion between Apprenticeship Advisor, line manager and learner will also confirm whether the apprentice is keeping pace with their plan of learning at work and is meeting the competency progression points as part of their apprenticeship.

7.16 LEARNER ATTENDANCE

All learners are expected to maintain their required off the job learning hours set out in their Commitment Statement, and maintain their academic progress, registration, and attendance. Any long-term absence period must be discussed with the line manager and approved before being raised with the Apprenticeship Advisor. Only a formal written agreement between the line manager and the College for a Break in Learning (BiL) can pause an apprenticeship.

Every learner registered with the College on a programme of study is expected to attend and engage with all scheduled learning opportunities, undertake independent learning and complete all assessment requirements, as confirmed through the programme approval procedure and in line with the learning plan set out in the Commitment Statement

Learners attendance at scheduled learning opportunities is monitored through the use of attendance registers, which are produced and maintained by the Student and Academic Services.

Faculty are responsible for completing and monitoring registration for their classes and should raise any issues concerning the attendance of learners with the relevant Programme Director.

Non-attendance is used as a measure of learners' engagement with their apprenticeship and can sometimes indicate when learners are experiencing difficulties with balancing work, home and study. Identifying learners with a low level of attendance enables the College to implement appropriate support measures and solutions to address issues that may be affecting a learner's attendance, and thereby increase the learner's likelihood of success.

Where a learner is unable to attend or will knowingly be absent from a scheduled teaching session, they should follow the procedure for notifying the College in the Commitment Statement.

Learners must also observe their employers' reporting requirements. The College will inform employers of all learner absences.

For learners, attendance at scheduled learning is part of the requirements of the apprenticeship programme compliance to achieve the minimum number of off the job learning hours specified in the apprenticeship Commitment Statement.

Where a learner is absent from planned learning for whatever reason the learner and Apprenticeship Advisor must make arrangements to replace the learning as quickly as possible. Failure to do so may result in a learner losing traction with their apprenticeship very quickly and being unable to catch up. Learner absence must be notified according to the process and requirements set out in their commitment statement. Ultimately if the Learner has not met then minimum 20% off the job requirements there will be unable to complete their apprenticeship and as a result, achieve their underpinning degree.

7.17 SUSPENSION OF STUDIES AND LEARNER WITHDRAWAL

In exceptional circumstances an employer may agree that their learner may to suspend their studies and return at a later, or withdraw from their programme, at any point during their programme. For apprentices this decision cannot be made without their employer's approval in writing, and the request must come from their employer.

A learner who is considering suspending their studies or withdrawing from their programme should speak with their Apprenticeship Advisor to ensure that they receive the appropriate support and advice, There are very specific arrangements that must be made for apprenticeship where the learner is either suspending their apprenticeship, this is known as a Break in Learning, or withdrawing.

Learners who permanently withdraw from their programme must return (as appropriate) their:

- ID Cards
- Borrowed books and/or other resources

Where a learner withdraws or has been withdrawn from the College, the PAB will consider the learner's performance and the credits they have achieved to date and confer the highest award for which the learner is eligible. A learner receiving an award in this way may be subsequently considered for re-admission under the arrangements for Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy.

7.18 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

The College's Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy recognises learners' previous qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience and achievements.

All learners must undergo an Initial Needs Assessment as part of their application, which explores and seeks evidence for prior learning.

The College's Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy enables learners to demonstrate and provide evidence for their prior learning and to gain exemption from all or part of the apprenticeship learning programme. This will result in a reduced price for the employer

Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy may comprise of the accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) and/or accreditation of prior experiential or otherwise un-assessed learning (APEL).

Procedures for considering RPL applications for each specific programme are contained within the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Guidance, which are approved by Academic Board, and which provide applicants with additional guidance and information on RPL applications.

Approval of prior learning credits must be set out in the Commitment Statement, clearly indicating which elements each apprentice is exempted from. This may be all or part of a module.

For all programmes, credit for prior learning (whether certificated or experiential) may count towards the requirement of a named or unnamed award, up to a specified limit as shown in the table below:

Table 7.6

Award Applied for	Maximum number of credits normally considered through RPL	FHEQ Level
Certificate of Higher Education	60	4
Diploma of Higher Education	120	4
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	120 60	4 5
Postgraduate Certificate	30	7
Postgraduate Diploma	60	7
Master's Degree	90	7

7.19 LEARNER SUPPORT TO STUDY

While many learners may have access to workplace wellness or other support services, the College also offers support where visible signs of ill health (including mental health difficulties, psychological, personality, or emotional disorders) may have an impact on the functioning of individual learners, and the wellbeing of others around them. Learners would usually access their employers' services but the College also has a duty of care to respond appropriately.

The College has a Support to Study Policy which outlines the procedure and support available. It is designed to offer a consistent and confidential support service.

For further details, please refer to the College's [Student Welfare Policy](#).

As part of the application process for apprenticeships there is specific provision made to ensure that anyone wishing to be a learner is able to successfully progress and complete an apprenticeship regardless of any health circumstances. The Additional Learning Support assessment conducted as part of the application process will result in action plan for learner agreed between them and Apprenticeship Team. This will be put in place before the apprenticeship starts. This plan will be reviewed at the tripartite meetings to ensure that it is effective.

7.20 CONDUCT

The College is a community that expects its learners and staff to behave professionally and respectfully to each other, the public and College property at all times.

The [Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#) defines the conduct expected of learners. The Staff Handbook (available on the human resources platform) defines the behaviour expected of staff. These documents are there to ensure that a pleasant and supportive environment for study and work is provided for all.

The following policies are in place should any misconduct need to be reported:

- Bullying and Harassment.
- Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
- Public Interest Disclosure (whistleblowing) Policy.

7.21 COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The College encourages learners and employers to resolve academic and non-academic issues of concern on an informal level where possible. This process is set out for learners and employers in their respective complaints policy.

Support for learners and staff (as specified in policy documents) is provided where required in case of conduct, complaint or discipline matters.

Both learner and employer may also raise issues with the Education & Skills Funding Agency, who are responsible for the funding and regulations relating to apprenticeships, as noted in the Commitment Statement.

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1.0	September 2020	October 2020	Head of Quality Assurance	Academic Handbook; Academic Quality Framework; AQF7 Academic Regulations; Academic Regulations for Degree Apprenticeships	August 2021
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External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code; Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies.				