Academic Quality Framework

Chapter 7 Academic Regulations for Taught Awards Part B: Admissions and Registration

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7.10 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

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

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

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

- Show the ability to be a student at Higher Education (HE) Level
- Complete the objectives of the programme of study
- Achieve the standard required for the award

An applicant must fulfil specific entry requirements for the 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 students of the College on condition that they have:

- Fulfilled all entry requirements satisfactorily before the start date of the programme for which they have applied
- 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, orientation 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
- Paid the required tuition fees

If someone is under 18 years old when they are expected to register and become a student of the College, formal consent is required from those legally responsible for them. This must be through a consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian to confirm their approval.

Applicants 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 study at 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 students will have no right to a refund of their fees, and any credits or awards they have achieved may be withdrawn.

The College establishes arrangements for students with disabilities to be supported and assessed as appropriate and will make reasonable adjustments as required to enable disabled students 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 admissions process or as soon as possible thereafter.

7.11   ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The College publishes detailed information on the qualifications and pre-requisites required for admission to its programmes on its website and in Programme Specifications.

Satisfying the indicated entry requirements does not guarantee an applicant a place on the programme for which they have applied. Applicants must comply with the selection and admission processes outlined in AQF8 Student Recruitment and Admissions and Admissions.

7.11.1 Minimum Entry Qualifications for Undergraduate Awards

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

Table 7.3

Undergraduate Award	Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications
Certificate of Higher Education	Three A-Levels (or equivalent)
Diploma of Higher Education	Three A-Levels (or equivalent)
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

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)

The College may exceptionally accept evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience as an alternative to the minimum entry qualifications as shown in the table above.

7.11.3 Minimum English Qualifications for All Awards

Applicants with English as a second language, or whose previous education has not been delivered in the English language, are required to provide evidence of their proficiency in English.

Students requiring a visa to study in the UK will be required to provide evidence of specific English as appropriate to comply with the policies published by the UK Home Office (UK Visas and Immigration). Further information on this can be found here.

7.12   STUDENT REGISTRATION

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

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

Student registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a student 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, including payment of tuition fees, and compliance with the College's regulations, policies and procedures.

The binding contractual commitment takes place when the student registers on the College's student information system following the provision of personal and academic information electronically and/or in person and paying all they owe or part of the tuition fees with an agreed payment plan.

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

No person is recognised as being registered as a student of the College (and is therefore not a student) until:

- Tuition fees have either been paid in full for the current academic year, or other arrangements have been approved for that payment of fees which are acceptable to the College

- All other fees and sums due to the College incurred in the previous academic year or academic period have been discharged in full

7.13   PROGRAMME REGISTRATION

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

The establishment, delivery and continuation of programmes of study are subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance.

Where circumstances are reasonable, the College reserves the right to discontinue or temporarily suspend a programme, to divide, discontinue or combine courses or classes, to vary the time or place of classes, and to alter programmes of study as circumstances may require. The minimum number of students required for a course to run is four to six. 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.

Programme structures are subject to annual review. All courses comprising a programme of study are listed in the relevant Programme Specification and are offered subject to the constraints of the timetable, the availability of specialist staff, and any restrictions on the number of students who may be taught on a particular course.

Students are expected to complete their programme of study within the normal period of time as designated at the programme approval and as stipulated in the Programme Specification.

Students must have successfully completed their programme within the approved maximum registration periods specified in Table 7.5 below.

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

Students 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).

A student may lose the right to continue on a programme of study, have their registration with the College terminated, and be withdrawn from the College where:

- The student's academic performance has been considered by PAB and it has made the academic decision that the student has failed to make sufficient academic progress on their programme of study

- The student has not completed student registration by the published date for end of registration for new or continuing students as appropriate

- The student is not in good financial standing with the College and has failed to make acceptable arrangements to pay what is owed

- The student is absent from their programme of study without agreement of the College on grounds of absence, and is therefore assumed withdrawn

- The student 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 student 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 student's registration be terminated on disciplinary grounds under the terms of the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures

A student whose studies are terminated and is 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 student's withdrawal from the College will be taken into account when their application is considered.

7.14 STUDENT INDUCTION

7.14.1 New Students

The College is aware that the start of a student's experience of Higher Education is a critical and sensitive period. The College provides an induction programme that aims to ease the transition and to help prepare students for their academic and social experiences.

Induction for all new students includes a welcome to the College by the Master; introduction to key personnel including the Registrar; SAS; Heads of Faculty; and Course Leaders to introduce students to the courses of study they are about to embark upon. There are also sessions on library services, IT and facilities, and the Quality Team.

Student induction is normally complemented by social events including a Freshers' Fair, and a welcome event hosted by the College's Student Union.

7.14.2 Continuing Students

Continuing students are provided with a modified induction programme, which introduces them to the next Level/phase of the programme they are undertaking.

This covers areas such as regulatory changes, changes to support, and how the College has responded to the feedback from students in the last academic cycle. The College believes that it is very important to 'close the feedback loop' with students, so they can see what actions the College has taken in response to the points raised.

7.15 TIMETABLING OF COURSES

Courses are timetabled in line with the College's Timetable Policy, which provides a framework for professional staff involved in the preparation and production of the teaching timetable, and aims to:

- Support the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning in appropriate accommodation
- Provide access to timely and accurate timetabling and room booking information
- Optimise utilisation of teaching space
- Ensure that a single, central system contains a live, up-to-date record of all teaching and learning activities which uses the College's resources, and which is available on-line 24 hours a day, seven days a week

7.16 MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESSION

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

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

Student progression between Levels/phases is agreed and confirmed by the PAB (see AQF12 Assessment Boards).

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

- Formative assessment
- Collections
- Regular monitoring of student attendance by SAS

7.17 STUDENT TRANSFER

A student who is registered on a programme may be permitted to transfer to another programme via the Change of Programme Policy. Informal advice regarding this issue can be sought from SAS.

Any student wishing to transfer from one programme to another programme should, in the first instance, discuss their circumstances with the appropriate Head of Faculty (i.e. the Head of Faculty for the major subject to which they wish to transfer).

Students wishing to transfer to another institution should formally withdraw from their programme (see section 7.19 on Suspension of Studies and Withdrawal) and apply directly to that institution.

7.18 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to maintain their academic progress, registration, and attendance, and have any absence period approved as an agreed interruption to their study on a programme.

Every student 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 Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy and the Postgraduate Attendance Policy (Tier 4).

Student attendance at scheduled learning opportunities is monitored through the use of attendance registers, which are monitored by SAS.

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

Non-attendance is used as a measure of students' engagement with their studies and can sometimes indicate when students are experiencing difficulties with their studies or personal life. Identifying students with a low level of attendance enables the College to implement appropriate support measures and solutions to address issues that may be affecting a student's attendance, and thereby increase the student's likelihood of success.

Where a student 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 Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy or the Postgraduate Attendance Policy (Tier 4).

Students must also observe the reporting requirements of their funding bodies or sponsors as appropriate.

Students who have a Tier 4 Visa sponsored by the College must abide by the attendance regulations for visa students which is included in the Undergraduate Student Attendance Policy or the Postgraduate Attendance Policy (Tier 4). Their attendance is monitored by the Visa and Immigrations Manager. If a visa student fails to attend 10 consecutive contacts, they must be reported to the UKVI and sponsorship of their visa will be withdrawn.

7.19 SUSPENSION OF STUDIES AND STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

Students may elect to suspend their studies and return at a later date (normally in exceptional circumstances), or withdraw from their programme, at any point during their programme.

A student who is considering suspending their studies should follow the Break in Studies Policy, and a student who is considering withdrawing from their programme should follow the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy to ensure that they receive the appropriate support and advice, including financial implications and complete the required procedures as necessary.

Students who suspend their studies surrender eligibility to apply for and participate in student schemes or discounts, including Council Tax exemption and student travel or photo card schemes, for the duration of the suspension of their studies. Eligibility is restored following their return to study upon receipt of a completed Student Registration Form.

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

- Student ID Cards
- Borrowed books and/or other resources

Where a student has been unable to fulfil the specific regulations of the programme of study, but has fulfilled the College's Academic Regulations for progression, the College, on the recommendation of PAB, may withdraw the student from the programme of study for which they were originally registered, and transfer them to an alternative programme.

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

7.20 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

The College's Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy demonstrates its commitment to supporting widening participation, and to acknowledging and recognising students' previous academic experience and achievements as appropriate.

The College operates a transparent and responsive system for the recognition of prior learning, which considers all students equally (full-time, part-time, home and international).

The College's Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy enables students to demonstrate and provide evidence for their prior learning and to join programmes at an appropriate stage commensurate with their prior academic achievements. It also enables the College to prepare students for subsequent parts of the programme appropriately.

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

Approval of prior learning credits must be completed as part of the admissions process and prior to registration on a programme of study.

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	4
	60	5
Postgraduate Certificate	30	7
Postgraduate Diploma	60	7
Master's Degree	90	7

7.21   STUDENT SUPPORT TO STUDY

There is a growing awareness of the need for Higher Education Providers to respond appropriately to situations where visible signs of ill health (including mental health difficulties, psychological, personality, or emotional disorders) may have an impact on the functioning of individual students, and the wellbeing of others around them. Students who present with difficulties should, wherever possible, be considered from a supportive perspective.

The College is committed to promoting positive student attitudes towards students with physical and/or mental ill health.

The College also has a duty of care to respond appropriately where there are substantial concerns relating to a student's health and wellbeing, and the impact that may have upon the individual and/or other members of the College community.

The College has a Support to Study Policy which outlines the procedure and support available where a student's health and wellbeing deteriorates to the point where they may not be fit to study, including where they may be at risk of harm to themselves and/or others. It is designed to ensure a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.

The College aims to support students with physical and mental ill health to enable them to fulfil their potential and complete their chosen programme of study. For further details, please refer to the College's Student Welfare Policy.

7.22   CONDUCT

The College is a community that expects its students 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 students. 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. Should the behaviour not be at the level expected at the College, disciplinary procedures will be initiated as appropriate.

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

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

7.23   COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The College encourages students and staff to resolve academic and non-academic issues of concern on an informal level where possible. However, if this is not possible, established complaints and grievance procedures, such as those outlined in the Staff Handbook and the Student Complaint Policy, may be used to report and seek redress for both academic and non-academic issues.

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

Title: AQF7 Academic Regulations for Taught Degrees – Part B					
Approved by: Academic Board					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Location	Proposed next review date
2.0	September 2020	September 2020	Head of Quality Assurance	NCH Academic Handbook; Academic Quality Framework	August 2021
1.0	June 2019	-	Head of Quality Assurance	-	August 2021
Referenced documents	AQF2 Teaching and Learning; AQF9 Student Guidance and Learner Support; Admissions Policy; AQF8 Student Recruitment and Admissions; AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modifications; AQF12 Assessment Boards; Student Attendance Policy; Student Registration Form; Recognition for Prior Learning; Recognition for Prior Learning Guidance; Support to Study Policy; Welfare Policy; Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures; Guidance on Conduct of Viva Examinations; Internal Examiner's Report; Assessment Handbook; Extenuating Circumstances Policy; Academic Misconduct Policy; External Assessors Guidance; Variance to Academic Regulation Form; Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards; Break in Studies Policy; Academic Appeals Policy; Assessment Peer Review Form; Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy; External Assessor Guidance; Plagiarism Policy.				
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code; Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies.				