



Policy on

HE Withdrawals

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Approved by

HE Academic and Quality Standards Board

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New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact records@newdur.ac.uk

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments, and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

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1. Scope

This policy covers responsibilities for the management of student withdrawals from NCD Awarded and Externally Validated HE programmes. It will ensure that the College complies with the law and expectations of students and external partners including regulatory and awarding bodies.

2. Responsibilities

The Vice Principal for HE is responsible for ensuring a policy is in place defining responsibility for the procedures and management of HE Withdrawals.

The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring this policy is maintained, monitored and disseminated, ensuring responsibility for procedures are clearly assigned.

The Registry Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that procedures which adhere to the law, College policy and the rules of any validating or external awarding bodies are written, monitored and promoted to all staff.

CIS are responsible for processing requests for withdrawals as described in the HE Withdrawals Procedure.

Finance are responsible for initiating data checks as described in the HE Withdrawals Procedure.

Programme Teams are responsible for monitoring and recording engagement and attendance to allow them to identify where a student is not attending/engaging as described in the Student Engagement in Learning Policy and the HE Withdrawals Procedure.

Access Fund are responsible for ensuring bursary funding is adjusted in the case of a student withdrawal.

3. Relationship with existing policies and regulations

In addition to meeting the requirements of funding, validating and awarding bodies, this policy should be read in the context of the following College policies and procedures:

- Refund and Compensation Policy for HE
- Student Engagement in Learning Policy
- HE Quality Manual
- Academic Registry Policy
- HE Access Fund Policy

4. Identifying prospective withdrawals

Students must be invited to withdraw from their programme and should not be withdrawn without their consent being established.

The Programme Team will check student engagement across their programme prior to the SLC census points as required by the Student Engagement in Learning Policy. These checks must be done in December and March of each academic year to ensure this is completed prior to tuition fee liability points for NCD students.

The Last Date of Engagement should be the date when the student ceased to participate in learning activities. These include attending lectures or scheduled events and submitting assignments. This change of status should be able to be evidenced by email or postal correspondence with the Programme Team in order to protect the student from fee liability and the College from loss of income.

5. Withdrawing students

The withdrawal and appeals process will ensure the recording of any key dates which are used to establish liability for fees. Students must be made aware of any potential liability for fees.

A student must not be withdrawn without being given recourse to an appeal to ensure fairness of the process. An appeal will only be acceptable if received within 30 days of the final confirmation of withdrawal being sent.

Template letters will be used to ensure all students are presented with the same opportunity to re-engage with their programme or to appeal their Last Date of Engagement.

In any case, receipt of a written request from a student will trigger the process for withdrawal and the process will be initiated by the Programme Team.

The student must receive correspondence from Registry confirming their final withdrawal and Last Date of Engagement.

Students who are in the appeals process at the time of an Assessment Board will be identified to the Chair of the Assessment Board by Registry.

6. Strategic Suspensions

A Strategic Suspension of Studies is a type of temporary withdrawal which may be used by the College during the HE Withdrawal or Tuition Fee Sanctions process to protect against breach of the Student Loans Company Service Level Agreement. If

used it may be a precursor to a full withdrawal and the student must be made aware of the financial implications relating to their situation in writing in advance.

7. Exceptions

Where a student is deceased it is expected that the Programme Team will inform CIS so that the student record will be flagged to ensure correspondence will not be sent. The student will be presented to the Assessment Board if they have achieved.

In an emergency where the College workflow system is unavailable, a student may also be withdrawn by the submission of a CIS Data Capture Amendment Form.

In a situation where the Last Date of Engagement is disputed internally, the Vice Principal for HE and the Academic Registrar will agree and record an outcome.

Apprentices will be withdrawn from their Apprenticeship programme under the FE Withdrawals Policy but from their HE programme under this HE Withdrawals Policy. The apprentice must have the same right of appeal and receive the same correspondence as all other HE students. There must be a process in place to co-ordinate both withdrawals to ensure that whilst Office for Students conditions of registration are observed the College does not breach any ESFA funding rules. In addition, a student should be able to withdraw from their Apprenticeship and remain on the HE programme if they wish.

In an event where the annual ILR R14 is due, the Head of CIS will withdraw a student where evidence exists that a withdrawal should have been processed in the months prior.

8. External Partners

It is expected that any external partners will apply this HE Withdrawals Policy and Procedure, either by direct adoption or by mirroring the requirements in their own policy.

The External Partner will check student engagement across their programme prior to their own relevant tuition fee liability points.

The External Partner will be expected to make a withdrawal request to the College using a CIS Data Capture Amendment Form. The Last Date of Engagement must be provided, along with an assurance that the appeals process has been applied.

In any case, receipt of a written request to the College from a student studying with an external partner must trigger the process for withdrawal. If a CIS Data Capture Amendment Form is not received from the Partner within 2 weeks of the College notifying them, the College will complete the form, agreeing a Last Date of Engagement with the student. Any financial loss incurred due to the procedure not being followed will be borne by the partner.

9. Record keeping

Records of HE student withdrawals will be held on the Assessment Board records permanently. Records of the process of withdrawal will be held for 6 years after the student's programme has ended.

10. Evaluation and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.