



Policy on

HE Withdrawals

Approved

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by

Senior Leadership Team

Policy Title	HE Withdrawals Policy
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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.

Other policies and procedures mentioned in this document will be published internally and externally in these locations:

[Website](#)

This policy has been assessed for its compliance with the principles of the OIA Good Practice Framework.

Equality Impact Assessed: June 2026

Accessibility Check: June 2026

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Peter Morrison

peter.morrison@newdur.ac.uk

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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 relevant NCD and Open University (OU) Academic Regulations 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;
- ensuring this policy is maintained, monitored and disseminated; and
- ensuring responsibility for procedures are clearly assigned.

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.

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 Fees Sanctions Policy

4. Identifying Prospective Withdrawals

Students must be invited to withdraw from their programme and should not be withdrawn without their consent being established. Exceptions would exist where students do not comply with the College's Terms and Conditions.

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 to ensure this is completed prior to tuition fee liability points for 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.

If a student doesn't attend for a period of 4 consecutive weeks this will be considered non-engagement. The withdrawal procedure will commence from this point.

In addition, where students are identified as being at risk of academic failure due to persistent non-submission of assessments they will be identified for withdrawal by an appropriate board or committee.

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 10 College 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, Last Date of Engagement and their right to appeal.

6. Withdrawal Appeals

A student will have 10 College days after receipt of their final withdrawal letter to appeal in writing on the basis of:

- Dispute over last date of attendance/engagement;
- Extenuating circumstances not previously disclosed; and
- Maladministration.

Students will be instructed to submit a formal appeal, supported by independent evidence, to HE Admin within 10 calendar days from the date of the final withdrawal letter.

HE Admin will co-ordinate an Appeal Panel at the request of the Vice Principal for Higher Education at the earliest opportunity which will consist of:

- A senior member of the HEDU team, either the Director of Higher Education or the Assistant Principal for Higher Education;
- The relevant Programme Leader; and
- A senior member of a subcontracting partner (if applicable).

The HE Administration Team will provide the Panel with the evidence provided by the student and any other relevant information they hold. Appeals will be determined by considering the student's ability to re-engage, following the College's Student Engagement in Learning Policy.

The outcome of an appeal will fall into one of the categories:

- a) Evidence is accepted and the student is able to re-engage as per the Student Engagement in Learning Policy;
- b) Evidence is accepted and the student is able to re-engage, subject to a learning agreement being put in place with the student that requires a certain level of engagement;
- c) Evidence is accepted but it is not feasible for the student to re-engage at that point. A Suspension of Studies will be offered to the student in these circumstances; or
- d) The evidence is not accepted and the withdrawal is upheld.

Academic Registry will make a record of the outcome of the appeal and will notify the student and CIS accordingly.

There will be no recourse to appeal for international students who have been withdrawn for breach of UKVI regulations.

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

7. 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.

8. 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 will consult the relevant parties to 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 coordinate both withdrawals to ensure that whilst Office for Students conditions of registration are observed the College does not breach any Department for Education (DfE) funding rules.

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

9. External Partners

It is expected that any external delivery 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. Withdrawal letters will be provided as detailed in the HE Withdrawals Procedure. A Last Date of Engagement must be provided, and the appeals process must be 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 outlined in the procedure. The Assistant Principal for HE Partnerships will complete a change request and provide the Last Date of Engagement. Any financial loss incurred due to the procedure not being followed will be borne by the partner.

10. 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.

11. Evaluation and Review

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