POLICY / PROCEDURE TITLE		DATE OF APPROVAL
NCG International Attendance & Engagement Policy		February 2025
APPROVED BY	**VERSION NO.**	**VALID UNTIL**
HE Quality and Standards Committee	6	February 2028

OWNER	International Compliance Officer		
GROUP EXECUTIVE LEAD	Deputy Principal, Executive Lead HE		
DOCUMENT TYPE	Policy ☒	Group Procedure ☐	Local Procedure ☐
PURPOSE	The purpose of this document is to provide instruction on the overview and management of attendance monitoring relating to those students who require a Student Route / Tier 4 student visa.		
APPLICABLE TO	All NCG employees, as well as consultants, vendors, agency workers, contractors, service users, trainees/students, volunteers and/or any other parties who have a business relationship with NCG [amend as appropriate].		
EQUALITY ANALYSIS COMPLETED [POLICIES ONLY]	Yes ☒	No ☐	N/A ☐
	(If EA not applicable, please explain)		
KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY	1. This policy outlines NCG's approach to attendance monitoring for sponsored students in line with the requirements of the sponsor duties for Student route sponsor license holders. 2. It details the interventions required to support retention which is a requirement of NCG's sponsor licence.		
EXPECTED OUTCOME	Readers are expected to understand the organisational position on international compliance and to know their responsibilities in relation to the policy and comply with the terms of the policy.		

MISCELLANEOUS	
LINKED DOCUMENTS	• UKVI Compliance Policy • NCG Attendance Management Policy
KEYWORDS	• Attendance

	• Student • Application • Visa

Equality Impact Assessment

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			
	Yes	**No**	**Explanatory Note if required**
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in Section 2?	☒	☐	The answer to this must be YES
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?	☐	☐	
Age	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Disability / Difficulty	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Gender Reassignment	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Marriage and Civil Partnership	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Race	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Religion or Belief	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Sex	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
Sexual Orientation	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/ phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	☐	☒	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	☐	☒	The answer to this could be yes or no as positive action is lawful. However, an explanation must be provided for clarity.
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	The policy author has consulted with peers and appropriate groups of people in the group and through the Policy Review Council.		

1. INTRODUCTION

NCG, and its member colleges, has the expectation that all students achieve 100% attendance and punctuality.

Students should attend all classes punctually according to their signed Learning Agreement and course timetable. This gives them the best opportunity to be successful in their studies. It is a requirement of NCG's Student Sponsor status that UKVI is informed of significant periods of student non-attendance. Reporting periods of unauthorised non-attendance to UKVI is mandatory.

As a student sponsor, NCG is required to implement and operate a robust attendance and engagement policy for its sponsored Students. Any student sponsored under the UKVI Student licence who fail to engage with their programme of study, as set out in this policy, will be reported to UKVI and will be withdrawn from their programme of study, unless there are exceptional extenuating circumstances.

To be clear –where a student is reported to the UKVI as a result of failing to engage, where there are no extenuating circumstances, this will result in the student's Tier 4/Student leave being curtailed (cancelled).

NCG's definition of academic engagement activity is as follows:

- Attending required lectures, seminars or tutorials.
- Undertaking required laboratory work.
- Undertaking research or fieldwork.
- Submitting essays, assignments and attending examinations.
- Academic engagement related to dissertation draft, feedback and submission.

Contact is maintained throughout the programme of study via electronic registers. For the avoidance of doubt, there are no periods during term-time where students have "no taught elements".

2. UNPLANNED ABSENCE DUE TO EMERGENCY OR ILLNESS

If a student needs to miss a session as listed above, they should:

- Contact the Programme Leader or relevant member of academic staff as soon as possible to explain the unplanned absence before the start of the relevant lecture or session.

- Provide a medical note from their GP if the absence is longer than one calendar week and illness is the reason for the absence or suitable alternative evidence for absence if not related to illness.

3. PLANNED ABSENCE

- Discuss the matter with the Programme Leader or relevant member of academic staff in advance of any unavoidable planned absence.
- Complete an application for authorised absence form, obtain the Programme Leader's or alternative member of the academic team signature and submit it to the NCG International Compliance Officer. This will be subsequently shared with the International Office, Newcastle College.
- The NCG International Compliance Officer will check that the planned absence has been inputted correctly into registers.

4. ALL ABSENCE INCLUDING AUTHORISED

For all absence including authorised, the student is responsible for:

- Catching up on missed work by viewing missed sessions / notes via Teams.
- On return to College the student should discuss any outstanding work and make arrangements to catch up with their programme lead or Lecturer (HE).
- For all unreported absences the curriculum team is responsible for contacting the student to discuss the absence, for the purposes of this policy, this is a Stage 1 intervention (see appendix A).

5. STUDENT RE-ENGAGEMENT

Re-engagement activities will fall into the following stages;

Stage 2

Students studying at RQF Levels 3-5 who have an attendance record of less than 85% in a given month and students studying at RQF Level 6 and above who fail to attend for two consecutive calendar weeks, will be contacted by the NCG International Compliance Officer to discuss their absence and the

requirements for re-engagement and attendance will be outlined. For the purposes of this policy, this is a Stage 2 intervention (see appendix A)

Stage 3

Following the above intervention if the student does not re-engage they will be required to attend a documented re-engagement meeting with the NCG International Compliance Officer. For the purposes of this policy, this is a Stage 3 intervention (see appendix A)

Stage 4

Following the re-engagement meeting if the student remains non-engaged, they will be required to attend a risk of withdrawal meeting with the NCG International Compliance Officer and Head of International. For the purposes of this policy, this is a Stage 3 intervention (see appendix A)

To support the above process, The NCG International Compliance Officer will use a variety of Source reports to view and monitor attendance including exporting a fortnightly MIA report from the Source, illustrating international students who have missed up to 35 days. The report also includes the last date the student attended class. Once the report has been reviewed, the NCG International Compliance Officer will contact students who are at risk with the appropriate action that is required.

If the International Compliance Officer has concerns over academic performance during this time, a relevant member of staff from the academic team will also be required to attend.

Students could be at risk of being withdrawn from the programme and reported to UKVI if their attendance does not improve. The decision to authorise any period of absence is at the discretion of the programme leader, personal tutor or lecturer and will be in line with either this policy and/or NCG HE Academic Regulations. For example, if a student will be absent for a-prolonged period, perhaps because they are ill, the programme leader may decide that this is authorised. It is important to note however that in making this decision, the programme leader will consider whether or not the student will then be able to

re-engage with their studies on return, without repeating a previous period of study.

Any authorised absence in excess of 2 weeks must be reported to the NCG International Compliance Officer. In cases where a student is unable to engage with their studies due to illness or personal circumstances and where the absence prohibits the successful completion of the course, the student will be withdrawn and reported to UKVI, with the option to defer to a later date.

If the option to defer results in a new CAS being required for the student to complete the course, the decision to issue the new CAS will be made by the NCG International Compliance Officer.

6. THRESHOLDS FOR WITHDRAWAL AND REPORTING TO UKVI

A student studying at RQF Levels 3-5 whose attendance falls below 70% for three consecutive calendar months will be withdrawn and reported to UKVI unless there are compelling, extenuating circumstances, supported by evidence and the faculty agrees that the programme of study can still be completed within the original CAS start and end date. Consultation will be made with the relevant Head of Curriculum and Curriculum Leader. A student studying at RQF Level 6 and above who fails to engage for 60 consecutive calendar days will be withdrawn and reported to UKVI unless there are compelling extenuating, circumstances, supported by evidence and the faculty agrees that the programme of study can still be completed within the original CAS start and end date. Consultation will be made with the relevant Head of Curriculum and Curriculum Leader. For example, in the case of serious illness the student may be permitted to stay on programme where the required attendance thresholds have not been met, as long as they remain engaged with the programme. The 60-day unauthorised absence threshold for RQF Levels 6 & 7 and 3 consecutive calendar months of below 70% attendance threshold for RQF Levels 3-5 are not the only triggers that will lead to withdrawal and reporting based on attendance concerns. If the personal tutor, lecturer or programme leader confirms that failure to engage is such that the student cannot progress through and/or complete the course successfully, the student will be withdrawn and reported to UKVI even if they are yet to breach the aforementioned thresholds.

If there are exceptional extenuating circumstances, the student may be supported to apply for mitigation.

7. MONITORING STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING TO UKVI

- International student attendance is monitored by the NCG International Compliance Officer fortnightly during term time and interventions are recorded in the UKVI attendance tracker by stage (see appendix A).

- The NCG International Compliance Officer will use a variety of Source reports to view and monitor attendance including the MIA report.

- Where a re-engagement meeting or risk of withdrawal meeting occurs, the NCG International Compliance Officer documents the discussion along with the relevant actions put in place for the student to re-engage in their studies.

- International student attendance is reviewed at the international committee meeting (minimum occurrence termly), where all relevant staff have a forum to raise concerns.

8. ACCOMMODATION EXPECTATIONS

NCG sets out an expectation to international students that they must live within a 50-mile radius of the college site they are studying at. This expectation is presented within this policy alongside being referenced during the compliance interview prior to receiving the CAS. Finally, this requirement is reiterated during the international induction.

9. STATEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval, this policy will be uploaded to the policy portal and communicated to staff via The Business Round-Up.
List any additional measures needed to ensure the policy is implemented and any training that may be available.

10. STATEMENT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

NCG is committed to providing equality of opportunity. Further details or our aims and objectives are outlined in our Equality Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Strategy.

This policy has been assessed to identify any potential for adverse or positive impact on specific groups of people protected by the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate either directly or indirectly. In applying this policy, we have considered eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between people from diverse groups.

11. STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

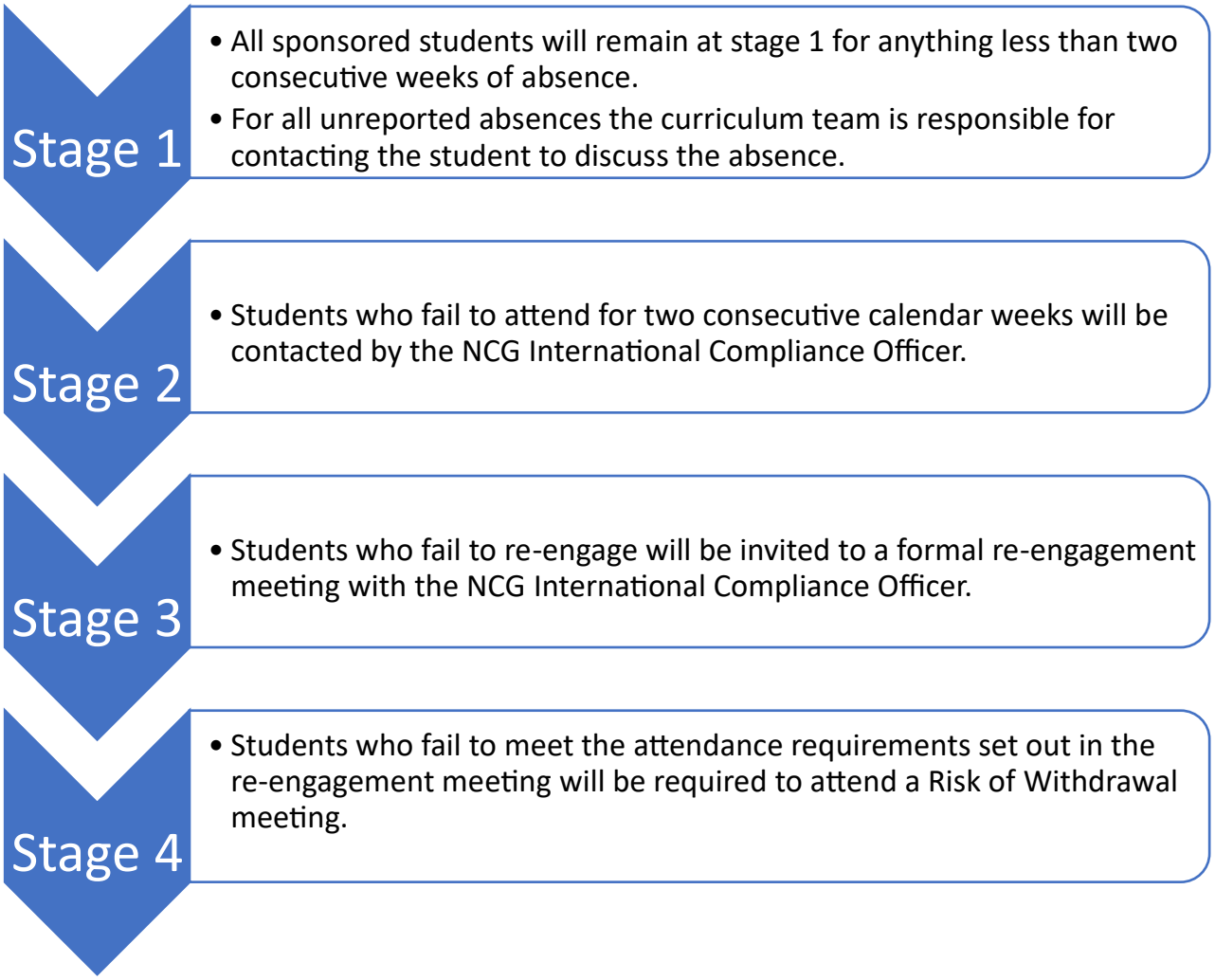
NCG is committed to upholding the principles of freedom of speech as enshrined in UK law. This policy is designed to ensure that all members of our college community, including students, staff, and visitors, can express their views and ideas freely and without fear of censorship or reprisal, provided that such expressions are within the law.

We affirm that this policy does not, in any way, diminish or undermine the rights of individuals under existing Freedom of Speech legislation.

12. STATEMENT ON CONSULTATION

This policy has been reviewed in consultation with International Office, Authorising Officer, Business faculty representative and Quality & Standards Committee.

APPENDIX A – STAGED RE-ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



VERSION CONTROL				
Version No.	**Documentation Section/Page No.**	**Description of Change and Rationale**	**Author/Reviewer**	**Date Revised**
1	New Policy	N/A	International Compliance Officer	May 2020
2	Subject to schedule review	Minor Amendments	International Compliance Officer	April 2021
3	Subject to schedule review	Minor Amendments	International Compliance Officer	April 2022
4	Subject to schedule review	Minor Amendments	International Compliance Officer	April 2023

5	Subject to full review	Changes made: Section 2: Clarify student should contact member of academic team. Section 3: Clarify student should contact member of academic team. Section 5: Addition of clause for mitigation in exceptional circumstances. Section 6: Monitoring student attendance: Change “fortnightly” attendance monitoring to “every 3 weeks in term time”. • Insert paragraph to include MIA lists.	International Compliance Officer	April 2024
6	Subject to full review	Minor Amendments Section 1: Clarity that there contact is maintained and recorded throughout termtime. Section 4: Change in how the attendance reports are obtained & tracked. Section 4&5: Detail of re-engagement activities classified into stages. Section 6: Change in monitoring from three weekly to fortnightly. Section 7: Requirement to live within a 50- mile radius. Addition of Appendix A.	International Compliance Officer	February 2025