

<b><u>Policy Title</u></b>	<b>NCG English and Maths Policy</b>	
<b><u>Policy Category</u></b>	Compliant	
<b><u>Owner</u></b>	Principal of Newcastle Sixth Form College	
<b><u>Group Executive Lead</u></b>	Principal of Newcastle Sixth Form College	
<b><u>Date Written</u></b>	February 2020	
<b><u>Considered By</u></b>	Executive and QA Leads	
<b><u>Approved By</u></b>	Executive Board	
<b><u>Date Approved</u></b>	October 2020	
<b><u>Equality Impact Assessment</u></b>	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics	
<b><u>Freedom of Information</u></b>	This document will be publically available through the Groups Publication Scheme.	
<b><u>Review Date</u></b>	September 2021	
<b><u>Policy Summary</u></b>	This policy sets out NCG's internal procedures for English and Maths across the Group.	
<b><u>Applicability of Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Undertaken</u></b>	<b><u>Applicable To</u></b>
Carlisle College	Yes	Yes
Group Services	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster College	Yes	Yes
Lewisham College	Yes	Yes
Newcastle College	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form College	Yes	Yes
Southwark College	Yes	Yes
West Lancashire College	Yes	Yes
<b><u>Changes to Earlier Versions</u></b>		
<b><u>Previous Approval Date</u></b>	<b><u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u></b>	
N/A		
<b><u>Linked Documents</u></b>		
<b><u>Document Title</u></b>	<b><u>Relevance</u></b>	
Examination Contingency Policy	Ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system affecting one or more of the colleges of NCG. Minimise the risk to examination administration and any adverse impact on learners.	
NCG Malpractice Policy	Applies to all staff that have a teaching, learning or assessment role or are involved in the associated supporting services.	

## **Introduction – Gerard Garvey, Principal of Newcastle Sixth Form College and Group strategic lead for English and maths**

Work on developing this strategy/policy started over 18 months ago, following the Ofsted inspection of NCG in May 2018, alongside published attainment that showed NCG needed to improve both GCSE high grades and DfE progress measures. Whilst there have long been pockets of excellent practice across the colleges, at NCG level, it was recognised that more could be done to bring the colleges closer together and drive up performance for the group.

A process of self-evaluation, involving extended research - made possible through a SCIF project – took place throughout the 2018/19 academic year. From this leaders, managers and teachers of English and maths were able to participate in knowledge exchange with partner colleges with a track record for securing successful outcomes. This coincided with a renewed emphasis on sharing good practice within the Group. At the same time during 2018/19 college leaders and managers continued to pursue actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning, whilst course leaders continued to work to improve attendance rates.

Publication of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and work on the NCG Strategy provided the opportunity to revisit the NCG approach to English and Maths and the impact of this. Key questions arose from this: which qualifications are most suitable for those without a 4 at GCSE? How should performance ultimately be measured – grades or distance travelled? How well are we developing the skills in English and mathematics that our learners will require when they leave us? Working across the colleges with these key questions in mind we were able to refine our new vision and associated strategic aims as a result.

The NCG approach to English and maths is entirely learner centred. Each of our colleges puts progression first and learners who do not currently hold a grade 4 or above in English and maths are enrolled onto a course which will equip them with the qualification they need to progress to the next step, be that an apprenticeship, an Extended Diploma or A Levels.

### **Curriculum Intent**

Language (speaking and listening), literacy (reading, comprehension, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar) and numeracy (use of number in simple and complex calculations) skills underpin all effective learning - if students cannot read, write, understand and/or verbally communicate properly, then this will undoubtedly hold back learning and by extension limit an ability to achieve economic prosperity. The intent of the government in the current approach to young people's education at key stage 5 was heavily influenced by a report published in 2017.

*“... Ensuring that young people and adults have good English and maths skills is the single most important thing that education can do for them. If they don't, doors everywhere shut in their faces and it is extraordinarily hard for them to come back*

*into education, do well in training programmes, start businesses, win promotions, lead successful lives, manage their affairs”*

Alison Wolf, Review of Vocational Education 14 – 19

NCGs intent toward English and maths is very simple –

**‘We aim to ensure that all learners improve their confidence and competence in English and maths skills sufficiently enough so that can thrive in their academic or vocational ambitions and in many aspects of their personal life. We will enrol learners to courses based on the following criteria hierarchy: primary consideration will naturally be their attainment at entry to ensure compliance with the DfE condition of funding; secondary to this (for learners with less than grade 3 at entry) we will build our curriculum around which stepping stone is the most appropriate to support their career aim. For some learners this may be GCSE maths and/or English, for other this may be a functional qualification, or a mix of both’.**

**The common factors underpinning high quality learner experiences and outcomes (from SCIF) and how we intend to align NCG.**

The Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF) provided an opportunity for NCG teachers and leaders to work with three high-performing colleagues with designated ‘outstanding’ provision. Additional visits were conducted to several other general further education colleges, as the Group were able to secure visits based on geographical reach.

A key workstream of the SCIF was a targeted enquiry into the factors underpinning ‘outstanding’ maths and English attainment. The research took the form of a review of policy and documentation, presentations by the managers of the partners colleges and visits to classrooms, all complemented by discussion and subsequent knowledge exchange. From this work leaders and managers at NCG were able to develop a sustainable framework and thereby secure demonstrable improvements to experiences and outcomes for our learners.

First and foremost it was clear from this work that there was no magic recipe for success in delivering these outcomes. The aspects apparently common to all colleges were: consistently high standards of delivery and associated expectations of staff and their learners; clear and well applied routines; demonstrable use of initial assessment to inform planning; rigorous assessment and questioning; clarity in the recording of learning (often using ‘traditional’ exercise books); all supported by clear, explicit instruction. Course teams and vocational/academic managers were often highly supportive of their maths and English colleagues and in some cases the teams were fully integrated. Expectations for promoting and embedding maths and English were practical and regular, and were often focused as directed by specialist maths and English staff. The product of this work could be observed in the rigour of directed questioning and in the standards of learners’ work. This may not be ground-breaking

research, but there is a clear difference between those colleges that understand this relationship and those that fully apply it.

	<p><b>Academic leadership</b> The Principal and senior team are committed to the promotion of English and maths across the college.</p> <p>Priority is given for staff who do not hold a GCSE or L2 equivalent in English and maths to achieve these.</p> <p>Leaders enable expertise to be shared across the group to raise aspirations and create a cohesive group culture</p>	<p><b>Connectivity</b> Course teams support the maths and English agenda by supporting the delivery teams and embedding literacy and numeracy in the curriculum. Opportunity/capacity provided for continual up-to-date understanding on current English and maths curriculum developments</p>	<p><b>Routines</b> Learners know what is expected of them and this requires a consistent routine.</p>
<p><b>Recording learning</b> – recording learning must be a consistent strength: use of glossaries, focused assessment plans, knowledge organisers and homework is used effectively to promote development.</p>	<p><b>Rigorous assessment</b> – Standards and grading of in-class assessment are mostly pre-defined, moderated and agreed by specialist course teams, who are familiar with national awarding standards. Assessment is based on initial assessment and/or glossaries/knowledge organisers/revision guides so that the base knowledge and skills are frequently assessed and readily understood.</p>	<p><b>Delivery:</b> Resources will be built around a consistent framework and build toward standardised assessment, but will vary to provide the teachers with the space to teach in the way they feel is most beneficial for the specific group of learners. A good routine and sharing of resources will allow teachers additional time to consider the delivery of content, in-class activity and reach questioning.</p>	<p><b>Timetabling of English and maths</b> This is prioritised in all colleges with at least 3 hours per week for GCSE and 1.5 hour per week for for functional skills.</p>



## **Your role in the delivery of maths and English**

Whilst all colleges have specialist teachers of both maths and English, it remains everyone's responsibility to ensure these skills are enhanced and promoted at regular opportunities. It is both practical to note that even the very best teachers of maths and English will only ever achieve so much in their lessons - a full course team however can make an unbelievable difference, if fully synchronised and connected.

### **College Leaders**

- Provide academic leadership by prioritising the importance of English and maths at all opportunities.
- Ensure English and Maths needs are assessed through IAG and enrolment.
- Oversee the implementation of this strategy and those related through the NCG quality framework.
- Centrally plan the E&M provision along with the principles of learner-led timetabling.
- Ensure that teachers have access to records and means to deliver initial and diagnostic assessment to enable lesson planning.
- Ensure timetabling allows all students to access their entitlement to English and maths classes for at least 3 hours per week.
- Monitor attendance and direct tutors to engage when this is not the case; support and intervene where necessary.
- Ensure that TLA standards are consistent through the NCG TLA Policy (Great Place to Teach annual cycle).
- Ensure that arrangements are made to test students in line with exam board and JCQ regulations.
- Make provision to recognise and celebrate achievement.

### **English and Maths Delivery Teams**

- Make arrangements to validate initial assessment recommendations through rigorous assessment of starting points.
- Plan and deliver high quality sessions, working to fill skills and knowledge gaps as required and evidenced by the task above.
- Provide regular, structured feedback and feedforward on the skills, knowledge and behaviours and requiring further work.
- Track and record students' progress based on rigorous assessment.
- Ensure learner commitment and progress is recognised and celebrated?
- Maintain connectivity with courses leaders and curriculum leaders to inform attendance, progress, behaviour.



### **Pastoral Support Teams**

- Ensure all learners have completed initial assessments.
- Monitor general progress against SMART targets, arrange for academic and pastoral intervention where appropriate.
- Respond to issues associated with attendance, attainment and behaviour by applying Student Agreement standards.
- Provide advocacy for the learners and understand their relative barriers; identify solutions in partnership with colleagues.
- Contact parents and employers, where necessary, manage the tutorial process for the learners in their care.

### **All Teaching Staff**

- Promote English and maths where it is naturally occurring and purposeful
- Make time for useful distractions to help embed key concepts.
- Take guidance from specialist English and maths teachers and support – to contextualise or help promote key concepts.
- Use the college guidelines for feedback on spelling, grammar and punctuation when marking assignments, assessing presentations, improving students' pronunciation.

### **Timeline**

#### **19/20**

- Standardise formal assessment for GCSE Maths across the group and align these to progress reviews through eTrackr.
- Results from formal assessment to be scrutinised at executive level.
- Introduce NCG English and Maths feedback policy to be developed to standardise the amount and quality of feedback and feed-forwards.
- Termly opportunities for sharing good practice across the group for English and Maths.

#### **20/21**

- All colleges to move to same awarding body for GCSE English.
- Standardise formal assessment for GCSE English across the group.