



## Teaching and Learning Strategy 2014

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### MISSION

Our mission is to foster a collegial environment in which learning, debate and the sharing of ideas is central, and in which all members of the College treat one another as partners in the quest for knowledge and intellectual enlargement. The students are embarked on courses of systematic study; the academic staff advise, assist and challenge; the joint venture is not a matter of *de haut en bas* but of co-operation. Encouragement of students to think across the boundaries of disciplines and to see the connection between what we study and our experience of life at large – these are some of the desiderata at the heart of our College life.

We want graduates who are high achievers, curious and have the ambition and confidence to get things done. A New College of the Humanities course of study should be the grounding that will prepare our graduates for rich and fulfilling lives. NCH students will be supported to pursue successful careers, but also to have rewarding personal relationships (as friends, partners, parents) and to be active participants in their communities.

### IMPLEMENTING THE MISSION

This strategy builds upon our mission and adds context to the second phase of the College's strategic plan, specifically, our ambition to:

- Achieve our target of 1,000+ students
- Select a long-term academic partner that is sympathetic to our mission and will help the College develop the framework of policies we need
- Consider the internationalisation of NCH and the programmes and pedagogies we need to broaden our appeal

The strategy includes the totality of the College's offering:

- undergraduate degrees encompassing both tuition for University of London International Programme degrees and designing and delivering its own programmes in collaboration with an awarding body;
- the NCH Diploma;
- the Foundation Course;
- and the future development of Masters programmes.

### STRATEGIC AIMS

Our principal aims are as follows:

1. Create a collegial environment in which intellectual endeavour flourishes.

2. Enhance teaching, learning and assessment to support an interdisciplinary approach to study.
3. Adapt the “best of the best” approach (“Oxbridge” and America’s leading East Coast Liberal Arts Colleges) to achieve high levels of student satisfaction and outstanding academic results.
4. Provide students with the capabilities that will enable them to thrive both professionally and personally after graduation.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

#### **COLLEGIAL ENVIRONMENT**

The College will:

- make explicit in literature and at induction events and ceremonies that the College is a community in which learning, debate and the sharing of ideas are central, and in which all members of the College treat one another as partners in the quest for knowledge and intellectual enlargement;
- provide all members of the College with access to a wide range of social, sports and cultural opportunities;
- support members of the College who initiate and run societies, open lectures, debates, subject outings, interdisciplinary residential reading weeks, and other extra-curricular and interdisciplinary events;
- coordinate a buddy system for students beyond their fresher year to pass tips on to new students;
- invite future alumni back for major lectures and academic events and (where relevant) to share experiences and mentor current students;
- assign personal tutors to all students, provide all staff with counselling and support training, widely publicise resources for support and advice, and take a ‘no tolerance’ attitude to prejudiced or bullying behaviour and
- make financial and other practical support available to disadvantaged students so that all may participate equally in College life.

#### **ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TO SUPPORT AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO STUDY**

Programmes offered by the College will:

- be strongly inter-disciplinary, from major-minor undergraduate degrees to (eventually) Masters degrees on topics taught collaboratively across different faculties;
- involve critical thinking, science literacy, applied ethics, and personal and professional development components, so that students ‘learn how to learn’ and are encouraged to relate their studies to real-life data and situations;
- connect clearly to relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and provide for clear progression through FHEQ Levels;

- be explicitly documented in readily available programme specifications and course descriptors;
- be developed and regularly reviewed in academic board meetings at which senior members of all faculties are present.

Learning opportunities provided by the College will:

- be underpinned by up-to-date knowledge of teaching best practice;
- be informed by relevant academic expertise and research;
- incorporate new technologies, field work, collaborative projects, interactive assignments, and student presentations;
- be substantially tailored to the needs of each individual student;
- involve clear assignment briefs and ongoing formative feedback so that students have a sense of their progress and how to improve throughout each year.

Assessment in the College will:

- provide students with diverse opportunities to demonstrate achievement of relevant learning outcomes;
- be consistently rigorous, fair, and clearly related to the explicit assessment criteria and learning opportunities provided by the College;
- foster and test acquisition of subject knowledge and understanding, academic and research skills, and transferable skills for personal development and employability as set out in subject benchmarks and College programme specifications at each level;
- evidence student achievement relative to subject benchmarks and College programme specifications.

### **STEPS TO ACHIEVE OUTSTANDING LEVELS OF SATISFACTION AND ACADEMIC OUTCOMES**

The College will:

- raise awareness about its programmes through digital and print media, school visits, open days, and individual meetings, so that applicants understand in advance what will be expected of them and what they can expect from us;
- operate a detailed and rigorous student selection process, taking references, reading personal statements and writing samples, and conducting interviews with every plausible applicant to ensure capability to flourish on our demanding academic programmes;
- operate a detailed and rigorous staff selection process, recruiting academics on the basis of proven commitment to, and enthusiasm for teaching, by recognising teaching qualifications and memberships and incorporating teaching references and presentations into the selection process; also undertaking peer review of lectures and tutorials;
- make extensive use of the individual tutorial model to adapt teaching and learning to each individual student's needs;
- hold regular faculty meetings to review students' progress and disseminate and discuss best practice in teaching, learning, and assessment;

- respond promptly and comprehensively to student course questionnaires and Student-Staff Liaison data and feedback from academic and personal tutors as well as from partners and external examiners to continually improve outcomes and satisfaction;
- undertake regular programme reviews.

### **PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH CAPABILITIES THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO THRIVE BEYOND GRADUATION**

The academic studies that form the core of students' experience foster intellectual rigour and curiosity. The Diploma, which students take alongside their degree, is designed to give students the ambition and confidence to actively participate in their communities and be valuable employees and future leaders.

This will:

- be broadly based, approaching a wide variety of issues from an ethical, scientific, and professional perspective;
- deal with global issues that face us all as human beings regardless of demographic or geographic considerations;
- be rooted in real world cases;
- give students practical experience of actually making things happen;
- provide students with opportunities to work in teams that complements their individual studies;
- offer exposure to practitioners in a wide variety of fields;
- enable students to obtain practical experience of working together in electronic context;
- allow students to explore issues interactively in a sympathetic environment where challenge and questioning is encouraged;
- facilitate career planning.

The College's programmes will be delivered in person and with a significant emphasis on feedback and interaction.

### **STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**

As set out in our Staff Training and Development documentation, the College's staff will be supported in their delivery of this Teaching and Learning Strategy by:

- tailoring of roles to areas of individual staff expertise;
- academic career progression criteria that actively support and recognise strengths and development in teaching, research, contributions to College life, and the wider dissemination of ideas;
- provision of formal and informal training (induction sessions, teaching and learning best practice sessions, and external workshops and events concerned with HE policy and practice);
- regular academic reviews, drawing on insights from peer review, student feedback, external partner institutions and examiners' reports.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

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Students will be able to benefit from a highly personalised style of learning, which will be adapted to their particular educational needs and intellectual interests. To support them the College will provide bursaries and scholarships, where appropriate, a full induction, support from trained professionals that will help them with welfare issues and the practicalities of living away from home (accommodation, for example), full personalised support around career planning, support for disabled students and counselling, a virtual learning environment, and opportunities to represent the College, and to enhance their interpersonal and social skills

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