



## NCH Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

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### OVERVIEW

The NCH Strategic Plan is designed to support the delivery of the College's Mission Statement which is approved by the Tertiary Education Services Limited (TESL) Board. <sup>1</sup>

### MISSION STATEMENT AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS

NCH's Mission Statement is to be '*A world-class university-level college in the heart of London, New College of the Humanities combines a unique liberal arts curriculum with one-on-one teaching in an international community to ensure that every student prepared to work will achieve their full potential and leave fully equipped to face the challenges of our increasingly complex world.*'

In addition to this Mission Statement, the College has certain Key Characteristics that also feed into its strategic plan:

- A for-profit business
- Based on the provision of world-class tertiary education
- Its products being in Humanities subjects
- With academic independence but within an agreed budgetary framework
- That in its approach to its teaching and management will be innovative and disruptive

The inherent reason for studying the Humanities is set out by A.C. Grayling in the Welcome to NCH message displayed in the reception at 19 Bedford Square and which is included as [Schedule 1](#).

### KEY THEMES

To deliver the Mission, there are several key themes that run through the College's strategic plan:

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning is at the root of what NCH was founded to deliver and it informs all aspects of NCH's Mission Statement and therefore this Strategic Plan.

NCH seeks to provide an education that has a unique curriculum that delivers breadth and depth within a deliberate pedagogical framework. In addition NCH maintains the highest

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<sup>1</sup> February 2019, Northeastern University (NU) became the sole owner of TESL and a new governing body was put in place and the company's name changed to NCH at Northeastern Limited.

academic standards and has a commitment to quality assurance and enhancement. The details of which are included in the [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy](#).

The current framework for undergraduate students at NCH is that the large majority study for a combined honours degree with a major and minor element, which alongside the NCH Diploma provides a breadth as well as a depth of learning. The current design of the undergraduate degrees is included as [Schedule 2](#).

This breadth and depth of learning is a key part of the Mission Statement and strategic plan for NCH and is an element that will be retained in future redesigns or changes to the main approach to the curriculum.

The postgraduate courses are currently four single subject Masters programmes but the ambition is that joint subject Masters will be launched alongside these single subject Masters currently offered.

As touched on above interdisciplinary study is built in to the curriculum where possible and more cross fertilization between courses will be developed once Taught Degree Awarding Powers are gained. This again refers to the 'breadth and depth' approach to Learning.

In terms of Teaching, the use of the one to one tutorial is a key tenet of NCH's approach to teaching and this pedagogical approach has been central to NCH since its foundation. The one to one model is one that allows the profound exchange of ideas as championed as one of the reasons to study Humanities as set out in [Schedule 1](#). The Strategic Plan sees the retention of this overall pedagogical as part of the College's approach going forward along with small class size fora.

## **RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

Allied to this approach to teaching and learning is an emphasis on research and scholarship. A key tenet of the College's Strategic Plan is to be a self-critical community of research active academics who will publish original research and contribute via conferences and other media to academic debate and discussion in their respective fields. This approach will manifest itself in the recruitment of research active members of staff, in the provision of College funds to support research activity in the form of research grants and research leave. The approach to research and scholarly activity is encapsulated in the Research and Scholarly Strategy, which demonstrates how the research and scholarship of the academics feed into the teaching and learning experience of the students.

Another part of the history of NCH and one that forms part of the Strategic Plan for NCH is that of externality; in addition to the research links that our academics foster, this has also taken the form of the 'Professoriate' or distinguished visiting professors who have taken many roles including teaching the students, mentoring the NCH academics and helping in designing the NCH validated degrees. In addition to this academic externality, the 'professional' staff which covers, admissions, marketing, finance, student and academic support and quality assurance attend relevant Higher Education events to ensure that they are building links with peers in different organisations but also that they keep up with market trends and thinking. As a College we seek to be part of relevant bodies such as 'Independent HE'. This Plan encourages this level of external engagement across the College and will seek to foster and grow this part of the College's life.

## **DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The College was founded in 2012 by A.C. Grayling to pursue the NCH Mission. Since its foundation it has followed a steady and deliberate path of development based on fulfilling that Mission Statement and these Key Themes.

As the College develops in terms of student and staff size then the Mission Statement and Key Themes will continue to be central to how that development is managed. Any development shall stay, as far as possible, true to the Mission Statement, the Key Characteristics and Key Themes.

The financial sustainability of the College is covered in the Financial Management Strategy and the environmental sustainability is covered in the Facilities Strategy.

### **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

The key assets of the College are its Students and Staff. Their welfare is a key responsibility of the College and is covered in the Staff Handbook and the Academic Handbook which include Policies and Procedures covering the both the College's legal requirements and its voluntary standards.

### **KEY ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Mission Statement is manifested in a number of key strategic choices that are apparent in this plan:

- London – As a world leading city and as a world class centre of higher education London is where NCH will be based. The current location is in Bloomsbury which is the heart of educational London and it is intended that the College will always remain in this area.
  - This ambition to remain in Bloomsbury, with its high concentration of other institutes of Higher Education and all the facilities that provides for students and staff will be balanced against the imperatives laid out in the Financial Management Strategy.
- A broad academic content for students – the 'T' shaped model that marries the major and minor degree structure and the diploma is the one that the College follows.
  - The provision of a broad but also deep education is the defining characteristic which will be front of mind for the Academic Board when reviewing curriculum changes, programme development and for the governing body when allocating budgets.
- Its pedagogical approach - the marrying of the Oxbridge one-to-one tutorial tradition alongside the American 'liberal arts' tradition is still the basis for teaching where a high level of personal contact between academic and student is fundamental.
- Collegial – Maintaining the environment where students can 'thrive', with a strong emphasis on pastoral care for students who are treated as 'names not numbers'
  - In addition to students wellbeing, the College will seek treat its employees with respect and will follow the principles laid out in its HR Strategy.
- Life after College – ensuring that students get fulfilling jobs/opportunities after their NCH education, supported by a careers' mentoring and developing service that from day one is focused on achieving the right outcome for an individual.
  - Additionally the College will seek to foster ongoing engagement with its alumni community through its Alumni Committee

## REVISION AND APPROVAL OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- The Strategic Plan for the College, and the Mission Statement, Key Characteristics and Key Themes is owned by the governing body.
- The plan is reviewed on a five yearly cycle and the input of the key constituents parts of the College; its students (both current and alumni) and staff (both academic and professional), is taken through a process of consultation.
- Once a new Strategic Plan, Mission Statement, Key Characteristics and Key Themes are adopted by the Board then these are then communicated to all the key constituent parts of the College through the Governance Structure and other informal channels as relevant and helpful.
- These defining documents for the College are available for review by all members of College and prospective students at any time.

## SCHEDULES

### SCHEDULE 1 'WELCOME TO NCH' TEXT

#### **Professor A.C. Grayling's 'Welcome to NCH' displayed in the Hallway at 19 Bedford Square:**

*'New College of the Humanities is a place of learning, discussion, enquiry and discovery. As the word 'college' implies, we are a community of colleagues, staff and students alike, together engaged in the adventure of ideas. We are the only higher education institution in the United Kingdom exclusively dedicated to the study of the humanities, which we think of as constituting the great conversation that humankind has with itself about values and aspirations, both personal and collective, and the advancement of understanding.*

*There are three great benefits in studying the humanities.*

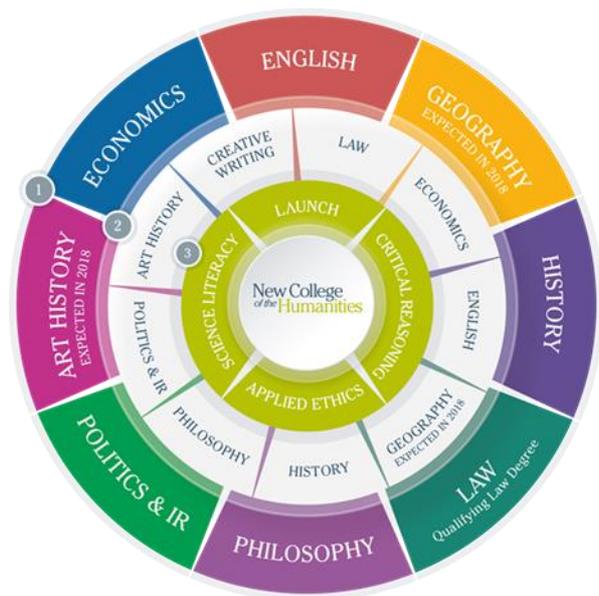
**The first** is the intrinsic fascination of what the humanities teaches us about the world, about ourselves and about society. Understanding the hopes and endeavours of our forebears illuminates our present: that is the gift of history. Learning from the stories we tell one another about love and grief, aspiration, the experience and passion of others, life's complexities and promises: that is the gift of literature. Exploring, clarifying and evaluating our assumptions and beliefs, the ideas that shape our view of the world, and the systems of thought by which we live: that is the gift of philosophy. These and the other studies grouped under the label 'Humanities' throw light on our world, giving us both a wide horizon of view and a deeper and richer grasp of what matters in it.

**The second** is that these studies constitute an unparalleled training of the mind, which happens almost effortlessly as one goes through the intellectual adventure itself. To think with clarity, acuity and versatility, to acquire understanding with wide scope, to combine a breadth of knowledge with an ability to be precise and penetrating – these are the outcomes of an advanced education in the humanities, especially in the way that students and faculty here at NCH study them together, as colleagues in the enterprise, with the one-to-one essay-based tutorial as the gold standard for honing and deepening the powers of intellect.

**The third** is the platform that the humanities gives us for life. A good degree in the humanities is a platform for setting out on successful careers in a wide range of fields, where the humanities-fostered qualities of mind are in high demand. But we are not just our careers: we are also friends

*and parents, lovers and travellers, voters, socialisers, holidaymakers, participants and contributors to much besides; and above all we are lifelong learners facing constantly changing challengers – and opportunities – in a constantly changing world. Studying the humanities is a platform to be good at all these things in all these ways and thereby to be a true citizen of the world and its future.'*

**SCHEDULE 2: CURRENT CURRICULUM STRUCTURE**



**An innovative and unique programme**

- 1 Choose your major subject, or study the single honours Law LLB.
- 2 Choose your minor subject. For PPE and PPH, you choose two minors. For the single honours Law LLB, you do not choose a minor.
- 3 Study the unique NCH Diploma.

<b>Title: NCH Strategic Plan</b>					
<b>Approved by: TESL Board</b>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Author	Location	Proposed next review date
1.1	July 2019	July 2019	COO	NCH Academic Handbook/strategies	September 2020
1.0	April 2017	April 2017	COO	NCH Academic Handbook/strategies	September 2020
Referenced documents	Financial Management Strategy; HR Strategy; Facilities Strategy; Research and Scholarly Strategy; Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy				
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code Theme: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access; Assessment; Concerns, Complaints and Appeals; Course Design and Development; Enabling Student Achievement; External Expertise; Learning and Teaching; Research Degrees; Monitoring and Evaluation; Partnerships; Student Engagement				