



Teaching and Learning Strategy 2019 - 2024

MISSION

1. The College's mission is to provide an outstanding personalised higher education experience to its students, thereby equipping them intellectually and personally to be successful in whatever fields of endeavour their ambitions take them into, and to add to depth of knowledge a broad and educated understanding of how that knowledge makes a difference to life and the world.
2. This is to be achieved by providing a world-class education in the Humanities and related disciplines at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, promoting deep and insightful engagement with ideas and fields of scholarship, thereby developing students' acuity of thought, reasoning power, knowledge of methods and sources, and learning, writing and discursive skills. These acquirements are all exportable into lifelong learning and applicable to the demands of life, work and/or further study.
3. The mission's aim is to place academic study into a framework of additional skills that forge outward-looking connections from students' specialist knowledge to the wider world. This is achieved by the NCH Diploma programme, a non-degree, non-credit bearing programme which is compulsory for all undergraduate students, who are awarded the College's own Diploma to mark the richer content of their course of study. The Diploma consists of the *Core Curriculum* and *LAUNCH*, as follows:
 - 3.1. In the *Core Curriculum* students study (a) Critical Reasoning, which focuses the students' attention on first-order logic, ways of thinking and arguing, methods of enquiry, reason and right reasoning, rhetoric, and the fallacies of both formal and informal logic; (b) Science Literacy, an overview for non-scientists of major areas of contemporary science. This course is enhanced by the lectures of distinguished Visiting Professors in these fields; and (c) Applied Ethics, raising and discussing the ethical dilemmas that face us as individuals and as a society in business, the environment, politics, conflict, and medicine.
 - 3.2. The *LAUNCH* programme prepares students for the world of work after graduation, focusing on practical skills including financial literacy, entrepreneurship, team work, practical projects, and career advice. It is designed to provide the skills and aptitudes required in the employment market in the coming years.

IMPLEMENTING THE MISSION

4. The key element of the NCH pedagogical model is the regular one-to-one essay-based tutorial, centrally placed among 'small group' sessions, seminars and lectures to ensure a high level of rich and genuine contact with teaching staff (faculty) to support a personalised approach to the diverse needs, learning style and interests of each individual student.
5. Support and guidance in study methods, research, writing and presentation skills, together with support for student well-being and welfare, underpin the pedagogical approach, to ensure that every student benefits from the College's approach to teaching and learning.
6. The importance to students of accessibility of staff and educationally-fulfilling contact time with them, and of prompt and full feedback on their work, is recognised and made central to establishing the excellence of both key factors: student experience, and student outcomes.
7. Selection and training of academic and professional staff is tailored to the achievement of the pedagogical aims. Faculty who are both research-active and dedicated to teaching, thus bringing enthusiasm for their subject areas to the tutorial encounter and the lecture hall, are the principal targets of recruitment, and both on and after appointment are given ongoing training and support to foster best practice in teaching and student engagement. Support and encouragement is given for research activities, and professional staff are likewise given training and support for their various roles in supporting students and faculty and in managing the College.
8. Clarity on expectations and performance by all staff, faculty and professional, and support in meeting those expectations, is key to ensuring that the overriding interests of high quality inclusive student experience and outcomes is maintained as the central focus of the College's endeavours.

STRATEGIC AIMS

9. Our principal aims are to:
 - 9.1. Create a safe, diverse and inclusive collegial environment in which intellectual endeavour flourishes.
 - 9.2. Enhance teaching, learning and assessment to support the College's key pedagogical aims.
 - 9.3. Adapt the "best of the best" approach to achieve high levels of student satisfaction and outstanding academic results.
 - 9.4. Provide students, whatever their starting point, with the capabilities that will enable them to thrive both professionally and personally after graduation.
 - 9.5. Ensure that pastoral and learning support is of the highest quality.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

COLLEGIAL ENVIRONMENT

10. The College will:
 - 10.1. Make explicit in its literature and at induction events and ceremonies that the College is a diverse and inclusive 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.
 - 10.2. 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.
 - 10.3. Encourage and support the NCH Students' Union in fostering a collegial and co-operative atmosphere of mutual respect, inclusiveness, engagement and collaborative endeavour in the student body.
 - 10.4. Invite alumni to major lectures and academic events and (where relevant) to share experiences and mentor current students, and generally encourage them to continue to feel a full part of the life and mission of the College.
 - 10.5. 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.
 - 10.6. Make financial and other practical support available to disadvantaged students so that all may participate as fully as possible in College life.

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

11. Programmes offered by the College will:
 - 11.1. Be interdisciplinary, from major-minor undergraduate degrees to Masters degrees including subject programmes taught collaboratively across different faculties.
 - 11.2. Involve critical thinking 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.
 - 11.3. Connect clearly to relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and provide for clear progression through FHEQ Levels.
 - 11.4. Be explicitly documented in readily available programme specifications and course descriptors.
 - 11.5. Be developed and regularly reviewed in Academic Board meetings at which senior members of all faculties are present.
 - 11.6. Take account of diverse backgrounds and experiences of students to meet their educational needs.
12. Learning opportunities provided by the College will:
 - 12.1. Be underpinned by up-to-date knowledge of teaching best practice.
 - 12.2. Be informed by relevant academic expertise and research.

- 12.3. Incorporate new technologies and digital resources, field work, collaborative projects, interactive assignments, and student presentations.
 - 12.4. Be substantially tailored to the needs of each individual student.
 - 12.5. Involve clear assignment briefs and continuing and prompt formative feedback so that students have a sense of their progress and how to improve throughout each year.
13. Assessment in the College will:
- 13.1. Provide all students with diverse opportunities to demonstrate achievement of relevant learning outcomes.
 - 13.2. Be consistently rigorous, fair, and clearly related to the explicit assessment criteria and learning opportunities provided by the College.
 - 13.3. 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.
 - 13.4. Evidence student achievement relative to subject benchmarks and College programme specifications.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE OUTSTANDING LEVELS OF SATISFACTION AND ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

14. The College will:
- 14.1. Ensure that applicants to the College will understand in advance what will be expected of them and what they can expect from the College, through full awareness of the College's programmes via digital and print media, school visits, open days, and individual meetings.
 - 14.2. Operate an open and transparent selection process, based on references, personal statements, and interviews, to ensure that each student offered a place has the capability to flourish on our academic programmes, for which students of all backgrounds and characteristics are encouraged to feel able to apply.
 - 14.3. 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.
 - 14.4. Undertake peer review of lectures and tutorials and promote both best practice in established teaching methods and innovative and creative approaches to the College's individualised pedagogical model.
 - 14.5. Make extensive use of the individual tutorial model to adapt teaching and learning to each individual student's needs.
 - 14.6. Ensure prompt, full, thoughtful feedback to students' essays and examinations, recognising that feedback is key to a student's educational progress.
 - 14.7. Hold regular faculty meetings to review students' progress and disseminate and discuss best practice in teaching, learning, and assessment.

- 14.8. Respond promptly and comprehensively to student course questionnaires and student-staff liaison data and feedback from faculty as well as from partners and external examiners to continually improve outcomes and satisfaction.
- 14.9. Undertake regular programme reviews.
- 14.10. Encourage faculty to engage in research in their fields, and give them time and support for this purpose, both to enhance their teaching by being up to date in their fields, and to support them in their own scholarly interests and career development.
15. The student will be able to benefit from:
 - 15.1. A highly personalised style of learning, which will be adapted to their particular educational needs and intellectual interests.
 - 15.2. A full induction.
 - 15.3. Support from trained professionals that will help them with welfare issues and the practicalities of living away from home (e.g. accommodation, managing finances).
 - 15.4. Personalised support for career planning.
 - 15.5. Support for disabled students and counselling.
 - 15.6. A virtual learning environment.
 - 15.7. Opportunities to represent the College and enhance their interpersonal and social skills.
 - 15.8. Where appropriate, bursaries and scholarships provided by the College.

PROVIDE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH CAPABILITIES, THROUGH THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME, THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO THRIVE BEYOND GRADUATION

16. The undergraduate students' *academic* studies form the core of their NCH experience, fostering intellectual rigour and curiosity. The *Diploma*, which undergraduate students take alongside their degree, is designed to give students the ambition and confidence to participate actively in their communities and be valuable as employees, scholars, future leaders, or wherever their ambitions may take them.
17. This will:
 - 17.1. Be broadly based, approaching a wide variety of issues from an ethical, scientific, and professional perspective.
 - 17.2. Deal with global issues that face us all as human beings regardless of demographic or geographic considerations.
 - 17.3. Be rooted in real world cases.
 - 17.4. Give students practical experience of actually making things happen.
 - 17.5. Provide students with opportunities to work in teams that complements their individual studies.
 - 17.6. Offer exposure to practitioners in a wide variety of fields.
 - 17.7. Enable students to obtain practical experience of working together in

electronic context.

17.8. Allow students to explore issues interactively in a sympathetic and inclusive environment where challenge and questioning is encouraged.

17.9. Facilitate career planning.

18. The majority of 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

19. The College's staff will be supported in their delivery of this Teaching and Learning Strategy by:

19.1. Tailoring of roles to areas of individual staff expertise.

19.2. 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.

19.3. Provision of formal and informal training (induction sessions, teaching and learning best practice sessions, diversity and inclusiveness awareness, and external workshops and events concerned with HE policy and practice).

19.4. Regular academic reviews, drawing on insights from peer review, student feedback, external partner institutions and examiners' reports.

20. For faculty and professional staff alike – these latter providing vital support for the teaching and learning aims and processes of the College – the College aims to be an inclusive, fair and supportive workplace that fosters talent and helps all staff to achieve their best potential.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

21. The overall implementation of the Teaching and Learning Strategy is the responsibility of Academic Board.

22. Each Faculty will undertake course and programme level monitoring regularly, identifying actions needed to support the enhancement of its provision, referring directly to the relevant objectives of this strategy.

23. Each professional team will review and enhance their activities regularly and identifying actions taken, where relevant, that supports this strategy.

Title: Teaching and Learning Strategy					
Approved by: Academic Board					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Author	Location	Proposed next review date
2.0	June 2019	October 2019	Master	NCH Academic Handbook/strategies	January 2024
1.0	September 2014	September 2014	Validation Team	NCH Academic Handbook/strategies	September 2016
Referenced documents					
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code Theme: Course Design and Development; Learning and Teaching; Assessment; Enabling Student Achievement; Student Engagement; Monitoring and Evaluation				