Teaching & Learning Policy

Mission Statement

“We provide the finest education by inspiring our students to achieve their goals through academic excellence.”
Introduction

The aim of the Teaching & Learning Policy is to ensure that the Mission Statement, “We provide the finest education by inspiring our students to achieve their goals through academic excellence.” is understood, and applied, by every member of the Academic Team so that all students can achieve their full potential. In order to achieve this, we have identified the following aims and objectives in three key areas; curriculum, teaching and learning.

Aims

Curriculum: To provide a range of engaging, challenging and individualised programmes of learning which meet international standards.

Teaching: To achieve excellence in teaching regardless of a teacher’s experience or expertise.

Learning: To support all students in reaching their goals inside and outside of the classroom.

Objectives

Curriculum

At New College Group we provide a range of courses to meet the needs of our clients: from General English Courses to Bespoke Professional Courses. In this context, we understand curriculum to mean any educational content to be followed during a student’s time with us; this can be in the form of a course book, a planned extra curricula or social activity, or a specialised programme created by one of our academic team. To ensure quality is maintained in all our curricula we implement the following across all our courses:

- Use of supplementary materials, which complement the curriculum, provide additional learning opportunities, and allow it to be adapted to meet the needs of individual students.
- Regular review, by teachers and students, of text books, bespoke course content and supplementary materials.
- Use of CEFR Levels and Can Do Statements, to provide an internationally recognised benchmark for the aims and objectives of each curriculum; to enable students and teachers to assess progress and achievement in learning.
- Embedding self-study activities into all curricula to develop independent learning skills.
• The embedding of British Cultural Values, Health & Safety, Welfare and Safeguarding within curricula.

Teaching
We have an excellent academic team, who have a broad range of qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience. We believe that employing highly experienced and newly qualified teachers creates a team which is knowledgeable, supportive and creative. Our teachers have high expectations of themselves, each other and their students; and they employ a variety of theoretical approaches and teaching methods to deliver high quality lessons and learning experiences. We feel the following practices help us to ensure the teaching at NCG is of the best quality:

• Having clearly identified Teacher Standards which all academic staff must adhere to. (Please See Appendix 1)
• Undertaking formal observations to monitor the quality of teaching and inform teacher development.
• Supporting the Continual Professional Development of all teaching staff through:
  o Weekly CPD sessions on developing skills in Ed-Tech, delivered by our specialist tutor.
  o 1 & ½ hours set aside in the monthly Teachers’ Meeting for CPD, feeding back from external training/conferences, sharing good practice, and developing practice within the department.
  o Peer observation programme for all teaching staff.
  o Providing funding for teachers to attend conferences, workshops and training days, and longer courses.
• Promoting a culture of sharing skills, ideas and resources on a daily basis.
• Delivering well planned lessons that have clear objectives that are shared with students and use a variety of teaching methods, a selection of differentiated activities and supplementary resources, in order to meet the needs and learning preferences of the group and individual students.
• Using formal and informal assessments to inform the ongoing planning and delivery of lessons.
• Developing a good rapport with a group to assist with open communication.
• Involving students in the selection of course books and in planning adaptations to the set curriculum through regular dialogue.
• Supporting teaching staff when students have identified learning needs.
Weekly **Learning Walks** to give the Senior Academic team and teachers the opportunity to monitor teaching standards and observe examples of good practice.

**Learning**

We endeavour to personalise student’s learning as much as possible, and work in collaboration with students to help them achieve their goals, and become independent learners, in a supportive and safe environment. To make the learning experience meaningful and successful for students we have identified the following as being essential to effective learning:

- Providing a safe environment for students. (See Appendix 2)
- Where possible, identifying any specific learning needs prior to enrolment so an individualised action plan can be put into place as soon as a student starts. If this is not possible, a meeting with the SEN Specialist will be arranged as soon as possible so an action plan and support can be put in place. (See Appendix 2)
- Using a comprehensive placement test & student profile, which provides a detailed initial assessment of all the skills and grammatical knowledge, so students are placed in the correct class and areas of strength and weakness are identified.
- Completing a learner profile: which includes information from the placement test, students’ reasons for studying, their short-term and long term goals and any information that will impact on their learning. This also forms the basis for their first tutorial.
- The provision of a leaflet explaining the CEFR levels with clear examples of the grammar, vocabulary, receptive and productive skills required to progress to the next level.
- Ongoing formal, and informal, assessments and tutorials throughout a student’s study; to allow individual targets to be set and progress to be reviewed.
- Setting and marking homework regularly. With writing, using a marking code to encourage students to develop self-correction skills and become more independent.
- Use of electronic ILPs and e-learning platform to allow learners to be involved in managing and monitoring their learning and progress whilst at the college and for 3 months after they leave.
- Provision of extra curricula activities and workshops to give students the opportunity to practice areas they feel are important to their development.
- A collaborative approach in the classroom so students can be involved in the planning of their lessons.
- Sharing the objectives for lessons and the purpose of the teaching activities.
• An open communication policy with the Senior Academic Team which allows students to discuss their studies and other issues with a Senior Teacher, The ADoS or the DoS.

• The use of several feedback forms, and a student council, give students an opportunity to formally note their opinions on their learning, and experience in the college as a whole.

Ensuring High Standards Are Maintained

To ensure we maintain high standards in the areas of curriculum, teaching and learning, we employ the following monitoring and quality assurance practices:

• A formal observation programme, of 2 observations per year is implemented. The results are entered onto a feedback monitoring sheet; which contains grades, areas of strength and development points. This and a random sample of completed observation documents are checked against set QA criteria monthly by the DoS/Principal. Any common development points across the department are fed into the CPD programme. Teachers who demonstrate exceptional skills in an area of teaching are encouraged to deliver a CPD session to their peers to further share good practice. Any concerns about a teacher will be raised with them during the feedback, support or training will be given and a follow-up observation arranged. If improvement has not been made, procedures outlined in the Capability Policy will be actioned.

• During the Learning Walks staff complete a feedback form, the results of which are collated on a monitoring sheet. The results of which also feed into the CPD and Appraisal programmes. The forms used are quality assured by the DoS/Principal on a monthly basis.

• Once a month the Class Files and their contents are checked against the criteria laid out in the quality assurance document. Any concerns about the quality of the documentation will be raised with the teacher in question and they will be given an opportunity to improve their practice. If improvement has not been made, procedures outlined in the Capability Policy will be actioned.

• Curricula, teaching practice, learning and relevant documents are reviewed bi-annually, or when suggestions are made, by the whole academic team; with improvements being made as necessary. The implications of these improvements are raised in the subsequent review.

• Student progress is monitored and analysed by one of the Senior Teachers to look at trends in where progress is being made and where it is not. The information is then used to inform curriculum planning, teacher CPD and provision of support to students; the impact of which is quality assured on a bi-annual basis.
• All student feedback is recorded and analysed by the college staff; anything pertaining to the academic provision is shared with teachers and appropriate actions implemented.
• Students and teachers are listened to and any suggestions for improvement are considered and actioned where possible.
Appendices

Appendix 1:  
Teacher Standards

Appendix 2:  
Safeguarding & Specific Educational Needs

Appendix 3:  
Observation Process
Appendix 1: Teacher Standards

NCG Teachers’ Standards

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their students their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with other stakeholders in the best interests of their students.

Part One: Teaching

A teacher must:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students
   - establish a safe and stimulating environment for students, rooted in mutual respect
   - set goals that stretch and challenge students of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
   - demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of students.

2. Promote good progress and outcomes by students
   - be responsible for students’ attainment, progress and outcomes
   - be aware of students’ capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
   - guide students to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
   - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how students learn and how this impacts on teaching
   - encourage students to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
   - have a secure knowledge of English grammar
   - demonstrate the ability to employ a range of teaching strategies including the use of Information Technology
   - keep themselves informed of developments in English Language teaching
   - have a thorough understanding of the CEFR level descriptors
4. **Plan and teach well-structured lessons**
   - produce a detailed and referenced weekly plan for all classes: that states the aims for each
     lesson, contains a variety of teaching and learning methods, includes supplementary materials,
     highlights any SEN considerations and makes reference to homework set
   - impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time: taking into
     consideration timings, methodologies, student learning needs & preferences, adapting the
     lesson plan in response to student progress
   - promote a love of learning: through developing a rapport with students, understanding their
     interests and goals, and involving them in the planning process; so that learning can be
     personalised and meaningful
   - set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge
     and understanding students have acquired; ensure feedback is timely and thorough
   - reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching by keeping
     accurate records of work and annotating weekly plans, ensuring records of student progress are
     up-to-date and carrying out tutorials; using these and personal observations to inform the
     planning of future lessons
   - contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum by sharing ideas, resources
     and good practice with colleagues, making suggestions for improvements to the management
     and listening to students’ opinions

5. **Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all students**
   - know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable students to
     be taught effectively
   - have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit students’ ability to learn, and
     how best to overcome these
   - have a clear understanding of the needs of all students, including those with special
     educational needs and those of high ability, and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching
     approaches to engage and support them.

6. **Make accurate and productive use of assessment**
   - know and understand how to assess the relevant curriculum areas
   - make use of formative and summative assessment to secure students’ progress
   - use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
   - give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage
     students to respond to the feedback.
7. **Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school’s behaviour and attendance policies
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to students’ needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with students, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

8. **Fulfil wider professional responsibilities**

- complete all required administrative duties on time
- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher’s career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard students’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students’ vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
Appendix 2: Safeguarding & SEN

Working with children and young people under the age of 18, vulnerable adults, and students with special educational needs and disabilities.

All employed personnel are required to follow and adopt New College Group procedures and policies relating to children and young people under the age of 18, vulnerable adults and students with special educational needs and disabilities.

At all times, employees should reflect care and concern, and ensure that children and young people under the age of 18, vulnerable adults and students with special educational needs and disabilities are fully supported and responded to in a positive supportive manner.

All employees must demonstrate positive attitudes and commitment towards ensuring appropriate support structures, resources, facilities, or individualised learning or special educational plans are in place and fully implemented.

All employees must undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are fully versed with all relevant safeguarding procedures and policies and must demonstrate appropriate understanding of how these policies relate to their own individual work programmes, or areas of responsibility.

All employees will be required to undertake, as deemed appropriate from time to time, mandatory training with regards to safeguarding and general health and safety, and welfare of students, children and young people under the age of 18, vulnerable adults and individuals with special educational needs and disabilities.