

Policy Title	International Admissions Policy
Policy Category	Local
Owner	Head of International
Group Executive Lead	N/A
Date Written	June 2025
Considered By	Policy Review Group
Approved By	Principalship
Date Approved	June 2028
Equality Impact Assessment	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics
Freedom of Information	This document is publicly available through the Group's Publication Scheme.
Review Date	June 2028
Policy Summary	This policy covers the application and admission of international applicants to FE and HE courses delivered by Newcastle College.

Applicability of Policy	Consultation Undertaken	Applicable To
Newcastle	Yes / No	Yes / No
Newcastle Sixth Form	Yes / No	Yes / No
Carlisle	Yes / No	Yes / No
Kidderminster	Yes / No	Yes / No
Lewisham	Yes / No	Yes / No
Southwark	Yes / No	Yes / No
West Lancashire	Yes / No	Yes / No
Professional Services	Yes / No	Yes / No

Changes to Earlier Versions	
Previous Approval Date	Summarise Changes Made Here
February 2021	Changed references from UK NARIC to UK ENIC.
June 2025	Removal of references to English as a Foreign Language course
June 2025	Section 10.2 added regarding assessment of gap in study.

Linked Documents	
Document Title	Relevance
<u>NCG UKVI Compliance Policy.</u>	Outlines NCG’s approach to UKVI Compliance for International Admissions.
<u>Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy.</u>	Outlines Newcastle College’s approach to the accreditation of prior learning for Further Education applicants.
<u>Higher Education Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.</u>	Outlines NCG’s approach to the accreditation of prior learning for Higher Education applicants.
<u>NCG English Language Policy.</u>	Details the acceptable methods of demonstrating English Language required for sponsorship by NCG on a Student visa.

International Admissions Policy

Date approved: June 2025

Approved by: Policy Review Group

Review date: June 2028

Responsible Manager: Head of International

Accessible to Clients/Students: Yes/No

1. Consultation

Consultation undertaken with Newcastle College

2. Applicability of Policy to Organisation

This policy applies to Newcastle College

3. Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy covers the application and admission of international applicants to FE and HE courses delivered by Newcastle College.

Its purpose is to ensure that admission to these courses follows a fair and efficient process that is compliant with the Immigration Rules and with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) policy. Any applicant who will require a Student visa to study should read this policy in conjunction with the NCG UKVI Compliance Policy.

4. Policy Statement

This policy describes how the International Office will make decisions relating to international applications for admission to Further and Higher Education courses.

5. Linked Policies

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Higher Education Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy
- Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy 2021-23
- Complaints and Compliments Policy
- Information Policy
- NCG UKVI Compliance Policy
- NCG English Language Policy (UKVI Student Sponsorship)
- International Fees and Refunds Policy
- Higher Education Admissions Policy
- Further Education & Apprenticeship Admissions Policy

6. Linked Procedures

- NCG Standard Operating Policy - Enrolments
- NCG HE Academic Regulations

7. Responsibilities

7.1. Governance

Any changes to this policy will be approved by Newcastle College's Policy Review Group.

7.2. Management

The Head of International is responsible for the management of this policy but may delegate implementation to others.

7.3. Administration

The administration of this policy is the responsibility of the following:

- International Office
- All Curriculum Areas
- International Compliance Officer

8. Definition of an international applicant

For the purposes of this policy an international applicant is an individual who does not qualify as a 'home' student for funding purposes. I.e. is not eligible for educational funding through either:

- The ESFA for FE courses, or,
- The Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 for HE courses.

Applicants who do not qualify as 'home' students for funding purposes will be defined as 'overseas' fee payers and must be referred to the International Office for admission and enrolment.

9. Recruitment process

9.1. Applicants who are outside of the UK

Enquiries can be made by contacting the International Office via [email](#), telephone 0191 226 6323 or through our [online form](#).

Applications from outside the UK can be submitted to the International Office by email to international@ncl-coll.ac.uk or in person at the International Office and will be processed and assessed by the international admissions team.

9.2. Applicants who are already in the UK

International applicants who are already in the UK who visit the Student Services team or other departments across campus should be referred to the International

Office for advice, guidance, immigration checks and funding assessments where applicable.

9.3. UCAS applicants

All applications from International applicants through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) system will be referred to the International Office to be processed and assessed. Any UCAS applications received from applicants who are identified as 'overseas' fee payers (including EU/EEA/Swiss nationals) will be referred to the International Office for admission.

9.4. Online applications and enquiries

Any applications submitted through the website or online portal by international applicants, or email enquiries sent to the central enquiries inbox, will be referred to the International Office international@ncl-coll.ac.uk for processing.

9.5. Use of an Educational Agency/Agent

If an applicant chooses to use an Educational Agency to assist them with their application, the Agency must be vetted and approved by the Head of International, and in most cases the International Compliance Officer, before an Unconditional Offer can be issued.

We recognise that in some circumstances an applicant may wish to change their Educational Agency. Newcastle College will consider requests from applicants to change Agent mid-application providing that they have not made a deposit payment and/or have not been issued a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) or an Unconditional Offer. Requests will not be considered where the applicant has been referred to the College initially via an existing partnership with an overseas University or College.

Applicants who wish to change Educational Agency should follow the process listed in Appendix A of this policy.

10. Selection / Assessment

10.1. Selection framework

International applications will be assessed by the International Office in line with the course entry requirements published on our website. Overseas qualifications will be assessed and equated to a UK equivalent using UK ENIC, which is the UK National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills (formerly UK NARIC). The College will use UK ENIC to establish the equivalent RQF level of an overseas qualification to determine if an applicant meets the entry requirements of their chosen programme.

Where an applicant meets the entry criteria for their chosen course, the International Office will issue a Conditional Offer and assist the applicant in meeting any additional conditions before progressing to the Unconditional Offer or CAS stage. Additional conditions will be listed to support applicants to meet the requirements for the Student visa application e.g. maintenance checks,

immigration history checks and relevant supporting documentation which meets UKVI requirements.

Where it is not clear if an applicant is suitable for their chosen course the International Office will liaise with relevant academic staff to assess whether an offer for study can be made. Suitable alternatives will be offered where appropriate.

10.2. Gap in Study

Where an applicant's last qualification was awarded five or more years before the course start date, the International Compliance Officer will assess the rationale for returning to study after the long gap. This is due to gaps in study being perceived as a risk by UKVI.

For applicants in the above circumstances, the following will be requested:

- A CV detailing work experience and job responsibilities since completion of the previous qualification
- Employer references to cover the full period of the gap in study
- A statement of purpose detailing why the applicant wishes to return to study.

The above documents will then be assessed by the International Compliance Officer who will confirm if the application can progress. In the absence of the International Compliance Officer, the International Admissions Manager can assess the documentation and decide whether the applicant can proceed. The gap in study will also be explored at the pre-CAS interview.

10.3. Referral to Curriculum teams

If there is any doubt about a particular applicant's suitability for a course, the International Office will refer the application to the relevant Lecturer or Curriculum Leader. Within two working days a decision will be made by the Lecturer or Curriculum Leader and referred to the International Office so the application assessment can continue.

10.4. Interviews and auditions

The International Office will liaise with relevant members of staff in specific curriculum areas to organise interviews and/or auditions where they are listed as entry requirements for a programme.

In addition, interviews to establish academic progression or previous work experience may be organised with the relevant Lecturer or Curriculum Leader and if applicants require a Student visa they will also be required to undertake a pre-CAS interview with the International Compliance Officer. See [NCG UKVI Compliance Policy](#).

10.5. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The College recognises that knowledge and skills can be acquired from a whole range of learning experiences - both formal and informal. We therefore encourage credit transfer and RPL as a means of entry to, or credit within, all our programmes.

For Further Education please refer to the [Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy](#).

For Higher Education all applications for RPL must be submitted online via the 'Recognise Me' website which is available at <https://recogniseme.ncgrp.co.uk/> . Please refer to the [Higher Education Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

NCG has processes to enable the gaining of credit towards courses for prior qualifications and/or learning through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which are guided by the RPL Policy and subject to NCG's regulations. Applicants who wish to apply to RPL should do so through the [Recognition Service](#).

10.6. English Language Proficiency

Applicants whose first language is not English must have an appropriate level of English to enable them to study the course. This is a mandatory requirement of both the Student visa route and the entry requirements of Newcastle College. The minimum level required will be set at programme level in line with the Immigration Rules. For courses at Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Level 3 applicants must have a minimum of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) Level B1 in each of the four language learning components (reading, writing, speaking, listening). For courses at RQF Level 4-7 applicants must have a minimum of CEFR Level B2 in each of the four language learning components (reading, writing, speaking, listening).

The International Office will assess and verify that an applicant meets the English Language requirement for both the programme of study and the relevant Immigration route in line with the NCG English Language Policy.

English language ability is commonly assessed through a minimum IELTS score but may be assessed through means other than IELTS and this is detailed in the [NCG English Language Policy](#).

10.7. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

For programmes that require an applicant to complete a DBS check, admission for overseas applicants will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants may be asked for an overseas criminal record check and will have to bear the cost of this in line with [UK Government guidance](#). This may prevent access to certain courses where a DBS check is a mandatory admission requirement.

11. Information and Feedback

11.1. Information to applicants and potential applicants

Newcastle College will ensure that information supplied to applicants and potential applicants is clear, accurate, reliable, valid and relevant. This will apply to the following:

- Prospectus
- Website
- Social Media
- UCAS publications

11.2. Communication of changes

Changes to any courses involving significant restructuring or discontinuation will be communicated to applicants affected and/or their educational representative by such changes at the earliest possible opportunity.

11.3. Explanations of decisions

Applicants who are not made an offer will receive clear feedback on the decision. Where applicable we will suggest an alternative course for the applicant. The International Office will communicate decisions relating to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) guidance or the Immigration Rules. Any educational representative involved in the application process of a particular applicant will also be notified of these decisions.

11.4. Issuance of Unconditional Offer Letters or Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

It is the responsibility of the International Admissions Manager and the International Compliance Officer to ensure that eligible applicants receive accurate Unconditional Offers and/or CAS in accordance with UK Visas and Immigration guidance.

12. Complaints and appeals

Any complaints or appeals will be in accordance with NCG's Complaints and Compliments Policy.

The NCG UKVI Compliance Policy sets out the non-exhaustive grounds under which NCG will not assign a CAS. NCG is under no legal obligation to assign a CAS and exercises caution so as not to risk its status as a Student sponsor. NCG will only assign a CAS where it is believed that the visa application will be successful and reserves the right to refuse to assign a CAS if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting otherwise.

13. Data Protection

Admissions will be conducted in accordance with the NCG Learner Privacy Notice available at www.ncgrp.co.uk/learnerprivacynotice.

14. Staff Training & Development

All International Office staff will receive appropriate and on-going training and development to enable them to perform their duties in a professional, accurate and effective manner.

15. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review of this policy will take place through Newcastle College Policies and Procedures Board.

16. Equal Opportunities Statement

In accordance with College procedures and Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this policy.

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics

This document is available in the following alternative formats;

- Large print
- Coloured paper
- Braille and Tactile diagrams
- Audio
- Subtitling
- Simplified document content

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact CSS@ncl-coll.ac.uk

17. Location and Access to the Policy

This policy is located as follows:

- Newcastle College SharePoint: College Information: Policies and Strategies.

18. Person Responsible for the Policy

Head of International.

19. Variations to the Policy

There are no variations to this policy.

Appendix A

Procedure for requesting to change Educational Agency

Newcastle College is prepared to consider requests from applicants to change Educational Agency mid-application providing that they have not made a deposit payment and/or have not been issued a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) or an Unconditional Offer. Requests will not be considered where the applicant has been referred to the College initially via an existing partnership with an overseas University or College.

The procedure to change agents below must be followed:

- 1) All requests to change Educational Agency must be submitted by the applicant and not by the Agency. The request should explain the reasons for the change and provide evidence (if applicable) using the form below. Requests of this nature made via the Educational Agency will not be considered and the Agency will be informed that the request must come directly from the applicant.
- 2) If the applicant has already paid a deposit and/or received a CAS or Unconditional Offer, the applicant will be informed in writing that a change in Agency is not permitted as the applicant is already at an advanced stage in the process.
- 3) Where the above procedure has been correctly followed the Head of International will consider each request on a case-by-case basis and will respond to requests to change Educational Agency within three working days. The initial response will either; confirm whether or not the change has been approved or request additional information from the applicant.
- 4) If the change is approved by the Head of International the applicant will be advised to submit a new application including details of the new Agency and the original application will be withdrawn immediately.
- 5) If the change is not approved the original application will proceed under the supervision of the original Agent or as a direct application.
- 6) The decision of the Head of International is final.

Request to change Educational Agency

Name of applicant: _____

Date of birth: _____

Course applied for: _____

Course start DD/MM/YY: _____

Name of original Agency: _____

I no longer wish to have my application overseen by the above agent and would like to take the following action (please delete as appropriate):

a) Submit a new application as a direct applicant with no Agency working on my behalf

OR

b) Submit a new application overseen by the below Agency:

Agency name: _____

Reason for change (please give as much detail as possible and attach evidence where appropriate):

Applicant signature: _____

Date: _____

I understand that by signing this form I am giving my consent for Newcastle College to contact the new agent listed above regarding my application and that the new agent will be copied into all correspondence relating to my application.