

English and Maths Strategy (incorporating initial and diagnostic assessment)

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1. Scope and Purpose

North Kent College “The College” refers to all campuses which includes, Gravesend, Dartford, Tonbridge, Hadlow and Greenwich campuses.

The purpose of this document is to pull together all aspects of English and maths covered by the Study Programmes.

The primary aim of this Strategy is to contribute to national and local priorities identified by the Government and to meet the College’s Quality Improvement Plan and priorities.

2. Introduction

The strategy covers all aspects of the way in which the College (this includes, Dartford, Gravesend, Tonbridge and Hadlow campuses) intends to identify, plan and execute its delivery in a whole College approach to English and maths and, as a consequence, review and update its strategy for delivering initial and diagnostic assessment, now included within this document.

The College is fully committed to ensuring all 16-19 aged students, following a Study Programme, are equipped with the relevant English and maths qualification under the Education & Skills Funding Agency (“ESFA”) requirements for young people.

Since 2015, all students starting a new study programme of 150 hours or more, aged 16 to 18, or aged 19 to 25, if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (“EH&CP”) who do not hold a GCSE 9 to 4 (old grade A* to C), or equivalent qualification in maths and/or in English, are required to be studying these subjects as part of their study programme in each academic year. The condition of funding will be met if students are enrolled to take either:

2.1. a GCSE; or

2.2. Entry Level, Level one or Level two Functional Skills (Apprentices only) or alternative approved stepping-stone qualification.

Functional Skills qualifications are seen as interim or stepping-stone qualifications on the journey towards achievement of a GCSE.

Some students with SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) will be excluded from this requirement where appropriate, within the 5% exemption limit permitted. Students with SEND who are capable of taking and achieving these qualifications, although they may be stretching, should always do so.

In addition, the College has taken into consideration the recommendations from the Wolf Report, relating to English and maths and the focus given to Teaching, Learning and Assessment under the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

A systematic review of the College’s current strategy for offering diagnostic assessment is also ongoing, to ensure it collects robust data in determining any additional support needs for individual students.

The key approaches will be:

- 2.3. ensure all 16-19 learners complete an initial assessment and diagnostic test in English and maths;
- 2.4. raising the profile of the value of English and maths with students through Personal Tutors and the student e-tutorial process;
- 2.5. ensuring all 16-18 students are enrolled on either GCSE re-sits or functional skills according to their GCSE grades upon entry;
- 2.6. learners who have achieved a grade 4 will be exempt but are expected to continue to improve their literacy/numeracy through application in their vocational studies;
- 2.7. prioritise timetabling of maths and English on the annual timetabled blueprints to increase the profile of English and maths and illustrates the importance placed upon these subjects being taught at the right time of the day/week for specific groups of learners;
- 2.8. ensuring entitlement offer and the delivery of English and maths respond to the national agenda; and
- 2.9. commitment to further develop the literacy and numeracy skills of learners who are exempt from dedicated English and maths lessons.

3. Background

3.1. Wolf Report

Professor Wolf's recommendations relating to the development of English and maths states that "all young people should achieve a Level 2 in English and maths by age 19 to ensure effective progression to further education or employment"

Wolf's recommendations state that:

5.1.1 Recommendation 7:

Programmes for the lowest attaining students – including many with SEND, as well as those highly disaffected with formal education, should concentrate on core academic skills of English and maths and on work experience.

5.1.2 Recommendation 9:

Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE 4 in English and/or maths should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications or which provide significant progress towards future GCSE entry and success.

The latter should be based around other English and maths qualifications which have demonstrated substantial content and coverage and key skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context.

3.2. Ofsted Education Inspection framework

The revised Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (“EIF”) 2022 review provision for learners aged 14 to 16 enrolled full time at a college and provision for learners on traineeships aged 16 to 19 as part of this judgement.

3.2.1. Inspectors will consider how leaders and teachers develop or take on a purposeful curriculum that provides progression and stretch, as well as mathematics and English for all learners, including those without GCSE grades 9 to 4, and, where relevant, work experience or industry placements and non-qualification activities.

3.3. Study Programmes for young people

The DFE funding reform for 2013/14 changed the way post-16 funding is allocated to support implementation of the 16-19 Study Programmes.

From the academic year 2013/14, funding for young people aged 16-19 and up to 24 for students with an EH&CP, has been calculated based on one basic rate per student, regardless of which type of institution they attend or what they study.

Success rates is no longer used in the calculation for funding and a retention factor was introduced, which has impacted on the amount paid, should they leave early.

Study programmes are funded for 600 guided learning hours and delivered at a minimum of 540 guided learning hours, plus 60 hours from September 2022 for 16-18 learners.

The principles of the Study Programme stem from the Wolf report which states that they must offer ‘breadth, depth and progression into higher education, further study or skilled employment without unduly limiting options.’

- 3.3.1. they must not be wholly occupational;
- 3.3.2. they must include at least one qualification of substantial size which offers progression into education or employment;
- 3.3.3. they can include high quality work experience or internships (where appropriate) and non-qualification activity, for example, tutorial time, study skills and other enrichment activities; and
- 3.3.4. they must include GCSE 4 in English and/or maths or qualifications that lead towards this level, for students who have not already achieved them and they must include employability skills.

4. Full-time Learning Strategic Aims

- 4.1. Develop a whole College ethos to English and maths and to gain all staff commitment to the Skills Agenda by continuing to reinforce English and maths in vocational programmes within the college, community and workplace;

- 4.2. Work collaboratively with other partners including the Local Authority, schools and employers to raise participation and engagement of 14–19-year-olds in education;
- 4.3. Raise achievements in English and maths and increase learners' potential to achieve high grade qualifications and improve distance travelled;
- 4.4. Have a responsive, flexible and professional workforce to deliver English and maths in a vocational context;
- 4.5. Use best practice to inform and drive curriculum change;
- 4.6. Increase and improve use of interactive and on-line teaching, learning and assessment resources;
- 4.7. Keep staff informed of national curriculum developments in respect of English and maths by accessing external training as appropriate;
- 4.8. Encourage staff to continue their development in relation to their own English and maths qualifications and skills to raise the quality of teaching, learning, training and assessment;
- 4.9. Keep staff informed of national developments in respect of functional skills and GCSE by accessing external training as appropriate to fully implement any new curriculum changes;
- 4.10. Where possible, ensure that functional skills and GCSE specialists are available to support the delivery in a related vocational context;
- 4.11. All teaching and Additional Learning Support ("ALS") staff to be encouraged to develop their skills in supporting English and maths; and
- 4.12. Equip vocational staff to be able to reinforce the value of functional skills by explaining how they relate to vocational activities within the vocational qualification.

5. Work Based Learning Strategic Aims

- 5.1. Ensure that the English and maths delivery is flexible in terms of location, time, method of delivery and vocational context to meet the needs of learners as much as possible;
- 5.2. Ensure that our employer-facing staff promote the benefits and develop employer understanding of English and maths within the learners' programme and the workplace;
- 5.3. Develop the skills and knowledge of employer-facing staff so that they are able to have a critical role and be responsible for encouraging workplace supervisors to take responsibility for English and maths development relevant to the vocational area in which the learner is working;
- 5.4. Train and develop all staff involved in the recruitment and guidance to promote the benefits of English and maths to learners, employers and other stakeholders; and

- 5.5. Ensure that English and maths delivery for apprentices is flexible in terms of location, time and method of delivery, to meet the learners' needs as much as possible.

6. The College Offer

6.1. Qualifications Criteria

College delivery will be specifically focused on offering all Education and Skills Funding Agency ("ESFA") qualifying Study Programme students the following options:

- 6.1.1. Re-sit GCSE maths and/or English for all students entering with a GCSE Grade 3 in maths and/or English.
- 6.1.2. Functional Skills maths or English for all students who achieve GCSE Grade 2 or below; and
- 6.1.3. Study programmes do not cover Apprentices who will have the opportunity to take Functional Skills as part of an approved Apprenticeship Framework.

The criteria which will be used to place students in the correct level of additional English and maths study will be based upon their previous attained GCSE levels, using the table below:

GCSE or FS grade upon entry to NKC	Suggested GCSE/FS Level of entry (22/23) ****
Grade 4 in English or Level 2 FS*	Exempt
Grade 4 in maths or Level 2 FS**	Exempt
Grade 3	English GCSE Maths GCSE
Functional Skills Level 1 ***	English GCSE Maths GCSE
Grade 2 or Entry Level E3	L1
Grade 1 or Entry Level E2 and below	E3 Based on initial assessment and tutor feedback some learners may be entered for E2

* Students who have achieved at least a Grade 4 in any one of the following qualifications will be exempt:

GCSE English;
GCSE English Language;
GCSE English Language and Literature; or
GCSE English Literature.

** Statistics does not count as maths

*** There will be no entries on Level 2 FS for main programme learners

**** It may be offered as part of the WBL/Apprenticeship offer and some High Needs Students (HNS) who do not necessarily fall into this grid. Each learner will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Learners who have achieved a Grade 4 in English Literature but not language can request to re-take English Language and will be considered on an individual basis. If a learner is approved to take the GCSE on this basis, the learner will be asked to fund the examination entrance fee.

6.2. Delivery model

In order to effectively optimise a student's time following a Study Programme, the College will implement a maths and English grid consisting of GCSE and/or Functional Skills, on which a substantive vocational qualification can be overlaid and subsequently tutorials, employability, work experience, supported internships, volunteering opportunities and other activities can be planned to ensure each 16-18 year old student is attending a programme with a minimum of 600hours.

GCSE maths and GCSE English re-sit

Students will follow the awarding body syllabus for two-hours per week, per re-sit, for 30 weeks minimum. 18 or above on 31.08.2022:

1. on a Level 3 programme and are in Year 2; or
2. on a course where there is no higher FT programme e.g. Plumbing Level 2.

All learners will have an initial attempt at GCSE at the end of year one.

Some learners will have the opportunity of taking the November re-sit, but this will be determined by the English and maths teams on an individual basis, dependent upon how close the learner is to achieving the Grade 4 and the level of commitment they are showing both in lessons and whilst at home.

Functional Skills

For timetabling purposes, all Functional Skills ("FS") lessons are identified on a learner's timetable as English and/or maths and this will be delivered by dedicated FS staff. The College aims for the significant majority of lessons to be taught by specialist English and maths staff. Both models of delivery should include vocational context for each subject to ensure learners see the relevance of continuing with these subjects, where possible.

7. Initial and Diagnostic Assessment

7.1. Assessment of Literacy and Numeracy Skills

At enrolment, all young people applying for a Study Programme will be streamed against their "actual*" GCSE grades and placed in either GCSE re-sit maths and/or English group or a Functional Skills level group, as outlined in this document under **6.1 Qualification Criteria** (refer to the Table)

- * Those students with actual grades but who have been submitted for re-marks at their previous educational institution, once verified, will be moved accordingly.

All enrolled learners (exempt and non-exempt) will undertake an initial assessment and diagnostic for English and maths. This will take place during the first six weeks of the year within curriculum areas as part of the tutorial process. This is currently being reviewed to ensure value for money by encouraging vocational areas to use it for tutorials. A “Distanced Travelled” assessment had been trialled in 2021/22 for rollout for the end of 2022/23 to monitor progress, in particular of exempt learners. All non-exempt learners also complete a written initial and diagnostic assessment in the first lesson and this will be used to track progress through the year by the English/maths teams.

7.2. Students with SEND

Students aged 19 to 25 who have an Education Health and Care Plan are covered by the condition of funding and are treated as a 16 to 18 year old.

7.3. Assessment of Additional Support Needs

All young people following Study Programmes will be given the opportunity to disclose any disability or learning difficulty at any time at College but more specifically through:

7.3.1. the application form;

7.3.2. 1:1 discussion at College interview;

7.3.3. 1:1 discussion with Information, Advice and Guidance staff in Student Services;

7.3.4. a confidential discussion with their personal or course tutor or any of the Additional Learning Support (“ALS”) staff at any point in their study programme;

7.3.5. at enrolment; and

7.3.6. in lessons.

Any disclosure of disability or learning difficulty and evidenced in the production of an EH&CP, will be used to help the College to ensure that it makes reasonable adaptations to support the students on Study Programmes and this will not be discussed with any person or agency outside of the College without their permission.

Early assessment of individual needs is an integral part of the College process to support young people prior to College. The College will work closely with schools, careers advisors and Local Authorities and other agencies to support transition to the College.

8. Tracking students and course assessments

English and maths Tutors will be responsible for tracking progress against the English and maths targets for each of their students, working in conjunction with the relevant vocational staff, which will be monitored by their Head of Curriculum and quality assured by their Assistant or Vice Principal. They will use a progress monitoring spreadsheet on a secure TEAMS page to monitor their learners.

The MIS Manager is responsible for ensuring all 16-18 year old students are following English and maths and are entered for the relevant qualification and at the right level at enrolment. After enrolment, the Assistant Principal for English and maths, the Heads of Maths and the Heads of English must also ensure learners have regular attendance at these sessions to ensure the College is meeting the condition of funding rules.

Assistant Principal English and Maths is responsible for ensuring consistently high standards of teaching and learning, including the actual delivery of English and maths, whether in an integrated or embedded form and that learners are covering all the topics needed for each level, so that success rates improve year on year.

The Assistant Principal English and Maths is responsible for updating the Deputy Executive Principal Teaching, Learning and Improvement and the Chief Executive and Executive Principal through their Curriculum Planning Meetings, giving regular reports on the progress of students in terms of their English and maths.

9. Strategic Responsibilities

9.1. Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team meeting, chaired by the Chief Executive and Executive Principal, will form the strategic group with responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the English and maths strategy.

9.2. The Curriculum Forum

The Forum, chaired by the Deputy Executive Principal Teaching Learning and Improvement will ensure that the delivery of GCSE and functional skills is progressing and that any administrative issues across the College are addressed at Assistant Principal level. Functional Skills and GCSE will be a standing item on each agenda and this platform will discuss strategies to improve outcomes for learners in English and maths.

9.3. Assistant Principals (Curriculum) Responsibilities

A central timetable for GCSE and Functional Skills will be formed in consultation with all Assistant Principals, so that study programme content can be fitted around the English and maths slots allocated for each area.

Each Assistant Principal (Curriculum) will work closely with their Heads of Curriculum to timetable within the agreed delivery model and ensure the effective delivery and initial assessment processes are in place.

Each Assistant Principal (Curriculum) will ensure learners are fully aware that poor attendance at lessons and exams may impact on remaining on programme in the current year or on their future progression.

Each Assistant Principal (Curriculum) will be responsible for reporting to the Vice Principals and Deputy Executive Principals on the progress of all their study programme students in relation to any being 'off track' in terms of this strategy; this will include attendance.

The Learner Entitlement to Maths and English at North Kent College

North Kent College is fully committed to ensuring that all learners are equipped with the relevant English and maths and to provide the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life, improving their employability and creating opportunities to progress in further or higher education.

All learners on any programme of study are entitled to develop their skills at an appropriate level on their main course of study.

STUDY PROGRAMMES		
GCSE		
Grade 9-4 or Level 2 FS	Grade 3 or FS or 1	Grades 2 - 1
They will not have discrete English or maths lessons, but there will be integrated functional skill work as part of the core course.	Re-sit for maths and/or English for those students entering with a GCSE Grade 3 in maths or English or Level 1 FS.	Functional Skills maths and/or English (Entry Level 2 or 3 or Level 1) for all students entering with maths or English at these grades
All learners to undertake Skills Forward initial assessment and diagnostic for English and maths as part of induction process within curriculum areas. All English and maths learners will undertake an assessment in their first English and/or maths lesson.		
*Those students with re-marked grades, once verified will be moved accordingly.		
	Two hours weekly per GCSE re-sit for at least 30 weeks.	Two hours weekly per functional skill for at least 30 weeks.