

## Distance and Blended Learning Policy

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please contact Head of Student Services.
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this policy.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person
Executive Group	1	February 2024	February 2027	Head of Curriculum and Performance Preparation for Life and Services Industries

## **1. Policy Statement**

Tyne Coast College is committed to providing high-quality distance and blended learning programs that meet the needs of our students.

To achieve this goal, we will ensure that all distance and blended learning programs:

- Have learning material which is accessible, inclusive, relevant and current and also supports different approaches to learning.
- Are designed to meet the same academic standards as our traditional programs.
- Provide students with access to the same resources and support services as our traditional programs.
- Use appropriate technologies and instructional methods to facilitate student learning.
- Are regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure that they meet the needs of our students and maintain high academic standards.
- Are a safe online learning environment where expectations are set for both face to face and online delivery, safeguarding both staff and students at all times.
- Subject to standardisation, internal and external verification, which will take place to ensure awarding body standards are met. This can take place remotely or via digital means if face-to-face is not possible ensuring deadlines are met.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the delivery and support of online, distance, and blended learning programs at our college.

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all students and staff enrolled on distance and blended learning programmes across Tyne Coast College. The policy will inform

prospective students, current students, parent/carers or employers of expectations for all relevant parties when studying either online, blended or distance learning courses.

#### **4. Definitions**

- Distance Learning: A mode of study where students are not required to attend classes or events at particular times and locations. Students can complete the distance learning model at their convenience. They will have access to a distance learning platform 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, which can be accessed remotely from anywhere in the world via internet access. Students will not be required to meet tutors or other students during their studies. Students will be allocated a personal tutor for online support as required.
- Blended Learning: A mode of study that combines online learning with traditional classroom methods. Support is provided through attendance in college. A mode of study where students attend college for face-to-face engagement and, in addition, access course materials and interact with instructors and peers through web-based platforms.

#### **5. Responsibilities**

- The Distance Learning team are responsible for the planning and development of the distance learning offer at Tyne Coast College. This is subject to current labour market information and local need.
- Students are responsible for participating in distance and blended learning programs and adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in this policy. Students are also responsible for the timely completion and submission of evidence to successfully achieve their qualification.
- Students must be aware that there will be an administration charge in the event of withdrawal due to non-start or non-completion of the course. Students may also be charged for elements of the course which have been delivered.

- The Exams team are responsible for processing the registrations and certification claims in a timely manner.
- The Distance Learning team will provide training and support to staff members who are developing and delivering distance and blended learning courses.
- All students will be allocated an identified tutor to oversee their studies and welfare. The tutor will check on their learning and progress at regular intervals and signpost for support where needed.
- Failure to behave in an appropriate way during online sessions or using a college device will be dealt with through our student disciplinary policy.
- As with face-to-face delivery the college take digital harassment, abuse, racism and discrimination seriously. This will be dealt with in line with the student disciplinary policy. Include key timeframes:
- Student enrolments will be processed within 5 working days from completion of the online application form to accessing the platform. An English and maths initial assessment will need to be completed as part of the online application.
- There is an identified time frame for each qualification. At level 2, there will be an expectation to complete the qualification within 12 weeks. All deadlines, as advised by your personal tutor, must be met.
- Assessment will take place in a timely manner. Feedback on submissions of work will be provided within 10 working days.
- Access to additional support is available if this is needed. The personal tutor will arrange for referrals for additional support to be made.
- Access to additional courses and careers guidance can also be arranged to support progression. Links to employment opportunities and expected salary information will also be available.

## **6. Quality Assurance**

- Our college will conduct regular evaluations of distance and blended learning programs to ensure that they meet the needs of our students and maintain high academic standards.
- The distance learning team will be required to participate in professional development activities related to distance and blended learning.
- Standardisation, internal and external verification will take place to ensure awarding body standards are met. Quality processes follow the Tyne Coast College assessment policies and procedures.
- Students will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on distance and blended learning programs through surveys and other feedback mechanisms.

This policy is subject to review and revision as necessary to ensure that it remains current and effective.