Vulnerable Student and At Risk Policy

Review

Formal Review Cycle	3 years		
Latest Formal Review (date)	October 2020	Next Formal Review Due (date)	February 2024
Policy Owner	Director of Student Services		
Policy Author	Director of Student Services		

Approvals

Board of Corp Y/N	N	Committee		Date Board approved	
SLT Y/N	Y	SLT date approved	01/02/2021	Additional committee	

Publication

Website Y/N	Y	Intranet Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Other	

Change History

Version	Date Reviewed/ Revised	Description of Change	Reviewed by	Approved by

1. **Policy Statement**

   1.1. This policy is a policy of the City of Sunderland College, trading as Education Partnership North East (which includes Sunderland College, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and Northumberland College). These colleges will be referred to as "the College" throughout this document.
   1.2. This Policy sets the principles and process for managing at risk students. The College is committed to identifying individuals who are at risk of not achieving and to supporting all students to overcome barriers to retention, achievement and progression.
   1.3. One to one support is integral to all learning, the focus is on progress and achievement and the holistic support of students. 1:1 reviews support the early identification of individual needs and ensure that each student is working to an agreed and clearly understood action plan.
   1.4. The College is committed to supporting all students to achieve their full potential and succeed on their course; supporting their personal development and welfare, reducing the impact of internal and external barriers to learning, developing employability skills and to support progression onto further study and employment.
   1.5. The policy, and accompanying procedure, provides a structure that underpins an effective allocation of support based upon a Blue, Green, Amber and Red risk rating system, identifies the roles and responsibilities of key staff and details the mechanisms in place to monitor, record and report on the impact of support measures on student outcomes.
   1.6. The College defines risk for the purpose of this policy as 'at risk of underachievement or of disengagement'. It is recognised that the indicators of risks in section 2 are neither inherently vulnerable characteristics nor do they present a risk in themselves. However, the additional barriers experienced by those defined in section 2 means that they are more likely to under-achieve. The College therefore will ensure that all of its policies, procedures and practices are assessed against equality impact measures and they minimise the risk of underachievement or disengagement to any individual student. The College will also ensure that appropriate support is provided to remove barriers to achievement.

2. **Scope**

   2.1. This Policy applies to all curriculum, student support staff, subcontractors and students/apprentices at the College.
   2.2. The policy outlines the guidelines for supporting, monitoring and tracking of all students using college reporting systems using information from enrolment as well as in-year progress and support.

3. **Aims of the Policy/Underpinning Principles**

The aims of the policy are to support students in achieving their full potential by:
   3.1. Outlining the steps the College will take to identify vulnerable students and the measures that will then be implemented to maximise the success of these students over and above those that apply to all students.

3.2. Providing a clear framework for managing support of vulnerable and at risk students.

3.3. Providing clear guidance about how to support students who give cause for concern, without instigating undue sanctions.

3.4. Recognising the difference between the need for support and the need for sanctions (please refer to Positive Behaviour (Student Discipline) Policy.

3.5. Promoting an environment where students feel safe, supported and able to raise concerns.

4. Responsibilities

4.1: **Leadership**. It is the responsibility of all members of the leadership team to:

• promote policies, procedures and practices that minimise underachievement or disengagement to any individual student.

• ensure that all staff know and follow the policy.

• ensure that regular checks are undertaken to ensure compliance with the Policy.

4.2 **Director of Student Services**. It is the responsibility of Director of Student Services to:

• promote the policy to all staff

• review and apply the requirements of this Policy.

• monitor and assess the impact of the policy.

• provide advice and support to other staff on aspects of the policy.

promote positive processes with Student Services and wider college teams in relation to vulnerable students/at risk students.

4.3 **Director of Inclusive Learning**. It is the responsibility of Director of Inclusive Learning to:

• oversee the support for those students with an identified learning difficulty or disability, including transition.

• promote positive processes with Inclusive Learning and wider college teams in relation to students with identified learning support needs.

• provide advice and support to other staff on aspects of the policy in relation to SEND.

4.4 **Head of Student Services**. It is the responsibility of Head of Student Services to:

• oversee the support for those students identified as vulnerable, having a learning difficulty or disability, including transition.

• liaise with partners to ensure timely transfer of information in early identification of vulnerable students

• provide advice and support to other staff on aspects of the policy in relation to vulnerable students.

4.5 **Faculty Directors**. It is the responsibility of Faculty Directors to:

• Ensure managers are overseeing monitoring of at risk students within their faculty/area, including ProMonitor recording by curriculum teams.

• Ensure at risk monitoring and progress review processes are in place and reviewed.

• Ensure curriculum teams follow policy and related procedures including the College's Retention Approach, ProMonitor Expectations and process for latecomers.

4.6 **Personal Development and Wellbeing Managers**. It is the responsibility of Personal Development and Wellbeing Managers to:

• oversee monitoring of at risk students/vulnerable students with their tutor teams, including monitoring and ProMonitor recording.

• monitor and review parent/carer communication and activity for at risk/vulnerable students.

• act as point of contact with wider college teams in terms of specific support in place for at risk/vulnerable students.

4.7 **Student Progress and Development Tutors/Tutorial Mentors** It is the responsibility of Student Progress and Development Tutors/Tutorial Mentors to:

• support all vulnerable and at risk students in their case load.

• liaise with curriculum, support and parent/carer regarding progress, attendance and wellbeing.

• monitor progress of at risk/vulnerable students and interventions in place, updating overall risk status.

4.8: **Curriculum Teams.** It is the responsibility of all curriculum staff, including managers to:

• be familiar with and follow the policy and associated processes.

• know who their vulnerable/at risk students are and have clear interventions in place, logged on ProMonitor.

• monitor progress of at risk/vulnerable students and interventions in place, updating course risk indicators and actions taken and liaising with support teams and tutor.

4.9: **Parents/Carers.** It is the responsibility of parents/carers to:

• encourage their child to fully attend and engage in learning.

• keep appropriate members of staff informed of any factors which may impact upon their child's progress or wellbeing.

• attend college events.

4.10: **Students.** It is the responsibility of students to:

• fully attend and engage in learning.

• keep appropriate members of staff informed of any factors which may impact upon their progress or wellbeing, including their ability to reside in Halls of Residence if a residential student.

• attend any additional support or intervention sessions.

• follow support plans in place and complete any actions required.

5. Implementation

5.1 Risk Indicators

The College has identified that students from certain groups tend to perform less well on average than other groups. However, there are many ways a student might be identified as vulnerable and / or at risk of underachievement or disengagement. The College will define vulnerability for the purposes of this policy, recognising the criteria used may not include all vulnerable students or all of the ways in which they might be considered vulnerable. Furthermore, whether a student is considered vulnerable may depend on the level and type of course or study programme.

For College, students will be considered to be vulnerable and / or at risk of underachievement or disengagement if they:
- have an identified disability or learning difficulty without the correct level of support;
- have an EHCP
- are from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) defined eligible groups – students who are in care or a care leaver; receiving income support, employment support allowance, disability living allowance or personal independence payments;
- those in the College's defined vulnerable categories, i.e. young parent, unaccompanied asylum seeker, young carer, youth offender or those whose family income is low;
- have an unspent criminal conviction or a record of re-offending;
- have an ongoing safeguarding issue;
- have English as a second or other language;
- have been previously identified as being vulnerable or at risk by their school or local authority, including those with multi-agency support, poor attendance, special educational needs (SEN) support or recipients of free school meals;
- have been previously identified as vulnerable or at risk by the College, including those withdrawn from programme;
- have an initial assessment profile at entry 2 or below;
- have not met the course entry requirements and a waiver has been applied;
- are late starters/transfers to their programme

5.2 How risk will be determined

Initial risk will be determined at the start of the student journey. The College will work in partnership with the Local Authority, schools and other agencies to ensure the early identification of vulnerability. Confidentiality is paramount and care will be taken to ensure information is only shared where it can be shown it is for the purpose of providing appropriate support to minimise the barriers faced by those defined in Section 2 as vulnerable and / or at risk of underachievement or disengagement.
The risk status of a student is likely to change as the student progresses through their programme. Students not previously at risk may become so, either because they develop one of the characteristics in Section 2, or due to engagement issues such as poor attendance, punctuality, behaviour or incomplete work. The risk status of those who have been identified as having an initial risk indicator (Section 2) will be determined in the same way as those without an initial indicator, i.e. by engagement and progress on their programme. A grid of how risk / vulnerability is determined and how it is communicated to staff is contained in Appendix 1. Risk categories (high, medium, low etc.) are described in Appendix 2.

5.3 How information about vulnerable students will be communicated and monitored

Information about a student's support needs and vulnerability are confidential and may be of a sensitive nature. Care will be taken to keep all information secure and confidential. Information is recorded on ProMonitor and badges and risk indicators identified. Confidential and safeguarding information is held on MyConcern.

Information can be safely stored on Pro Monitor, and this is the preferred location for recording information identified in Section 2 (and any other relevant information that may help students succeed). Information will be added to Pro Monitor throughout the student journey.
If any member of staff has a safeguarding concern with a student, they log this on MyConcern which will be actioned by the Safeguarding team in the first instance.

All students defined as at risk will be monitored closely and the College will ensure interventions are timely and effective. In summary, the Student Progress and Development Tutors/Tutorial Mentors/Assessors are responsible for monitoring attendance and performance of their tutees/apprentices; course leads and tutors will monitor the performance on the course. For 16-18 students, Personal Development are responsible for ensuring interventions are effective and parents/carers are involved, where appropriate. QTLA Managers will work with CMs to ensure effective teaching and learning strategies are in place and the curriculum addresses issues that may increase students' vulnerability.

5.4 Monitoring progress

As part of the ongoing monitoring of students' progress, tutors will be asked throughout the year (fortnightly for A meetings and for each progress review) to rate the learners current performance based on a number of key factors including, timely completion of work, target grade achievement and progress. This information will be entered by the curriculum staff to give an indication of the student's current performance and will be monitored on a regular basis.

This process is to identify students that are below target so action and interventions can be put into place. This tool will also be used to raise student's aspirations and recognise achievement. Via Pro-Monitor, the tutor will be able to access reports which will indicate the whole status of a group or course to aid planning.

The following will be used to categorise student progress:
- Blue – exceeding target grade with outstanding achievement.
- Green – on target grade
- Amber – below target grade (one grade)
- Red – significantly below target grade and risk of not achieving

6. Associated Documents

6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Positive Behaviour (Student Discipline) Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Fitness to Reside Policy
- Parent/Carer Engagement Policy
- ProMonitor Expectations and at risk categories
- College Retention Approach
- Student Support Plan

7. Policy Monitoring and Review

7.1 Process for Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness of Policy

Monthly: Reviews at Student Development Meetings. Report on vulnerable groups attendance, progress and retention and risk status report.

Termly: Report to SLT

Annually: Full review of policy and procedure

8. Equality Impact Assessment
(Consider whether the policy or procedures may disproportionately impact any group.)

Have you sought consultation on this policy? Details:		Director of Student Services Director of Inclusive Learning Head of Student Services Intensive Support Manager Personal Development and Wellbeing Managers Student President and student focus group		
Could a particular group be affected (negatively or positively)?	Impact Y/N	Description of Impact	Evidence	Mitigation/ Justification
Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010				
Age	N			

Disability	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
Gender Reassignment	N			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N			
Pregnancy and maternity	N			
Race	N			
Religion or belief	N			
Sex	N			
Sexual Orientation	N			
Additional characteristics to consider				
Young Persons in Care & Care Leavers	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
Young Carers & Care Givers	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
Young Parents	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
Youth Offenders	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
Those Receiving Free School Meals	Y	Designated staff members in place	Structure charts, job descriptions and appendices	Positive impact
If there is no impact, please explain:				

Appendix 1: At Risk Identification at Each Stage of the Learner Journey

Stages in the 'Learner Journey'	How / when is risk identified	By whom	How risk is communicated	
Admissions and Pre Entry	By application e.g. a student may declare a support need on the application form.	Applicant / Learner Recruitment Team	▪ ProSolution logs all SEN needs and medical conditions declared on application. Referral made to Learning Support Team team for further assessment. ▪ Criminal Conviction indicator is logged and referred to Intensive Support for further assessment. ▪ Report on ProSolution identifies all students with a declared need so that the Learning Support Team can be alerted and follow up as appropriate (e.g. with SEND team or health and safety risk assessment for those with medical needs). ▪ Self-declaration as a young carer or LAC is shared with Intensive Support. ▪ Information re risk on Prosolution is transferred to Pro Monitor as Initial Risk ready for students start date.	
	Through Special Needs Assessment – Educational Health Care (EHCP)	▪ Information is used in interview (if it has been sent at this stage) and by Learning Support team to inform the support plan. ▪ Once enrolled Learning Support check course and campus.	Through Special Needs Assessment – Educational Health Care (EHCP)	

		▪ At enrolment the existence of the EHCP is logged.		
	At interview	Interviewer/LS staff		▪ Need is recorded on Admissions Interview Record and then logged as above.
	At information event	Curriculum staff/Student Services		Any need risk indicator not previously recorded is logged and transferred as above.
	At transition event	Curriculum staff/Intensive Support/Learning Support to pick up on specific issues.		Any need risk indicator not previously recorded is logged and transferred as above.
	Local Authority / Schools	LA /Intensive Supoort & Learning Support		▪ LA transfer information about vulnerability in August for new starters in Sept. School transfer records in Sept once enrolments confirmed.
	At any stage of the admissions and recruitment process Student Services and Inclusive Learning could be alerted to a potential risk indicator	External agencies including virtual schools, Children's Services, Carer Centres.		Any need risk indicator not previously recorded is logged and transferred as above.
	Via exchange of safeguarding information between school and the College	Safeguarding Officers		▪ Safeguarding Team log on MyConcern. ▪ Alert and badge on Pro Monitor

Enrolment and Induction	Waivers given to qualifications on entry.	CMs		▪ All waivers approved during the recruitment process are recorded. ▪ Further waivers could be granted by the curriculum area at enrolment. ▪ Personal Development change risk indicator if not already at risk.
	At enrolment all students are checked at Support Desk	Intensive Support Learning Support		▪ Any emerging risk indicator checked against existing information and logged if not already recorded. ▪ ISM to check against Pro Monitor record during week following registration.
	During Induction risk indicators may emerge e.g. attendance issues, vulnerable indicators not picked up through admissions, etc.	Any staff in contact with student		▪ Any indication of risk will be sent as a learner comment to the TM/ SPDT /Tutor who will adjust the risk category accordingly and note the reason why they are at risk (status reason field). ▪ Student Services will also log interventions or information held. ▪ Safeguarding Team will update MyConcern as appropriate. ▪ Learning Support staff upload all support plans to Pro Monitor.
Late starters	Students enrolled after the start date of the course	Student Development Manager, SPDT/TM, CM		▪ College retention approach is followed with evidence of a robust induction

				process and clear support plan in place. • Curriculum and Personal Development Team monitors learners' progress, attendance and achievements, adjusting risk factor accordingly. Student should be flagged as high risk if starting more than 4 weeks after the start of their programme.
On programme	Emerging vulnerability either because one of vulnerable characteristics is identified or because attendance or engagement is poor .	Any staff in contact with student		• Any indication of risk will be sent as a learner comment to the TM/ SPDT who will adjust the risk category and status accordingly. These should be reviewed in A/At risk meetings.

Appendix 2: Procedure for Managing Latecomers

This procedure for managing latecomers is designed to ensure students who start late on a course are properly supported. There are many reasons why students start their course late or enrol late. Whatever the reason, students are immediately considered 'at risk' because of their late start and will therefore need more support.

The following must be adhered to for any latecomer:

- Ensure that the latecomer receives a full and comprehensive Induction process.

- Latecomers have the same entitlement to a full and comprehensive Induction process as a student who started the course at the beginning of the term.

- If your area has numerous latecomers in a week, it should be worth considering group sessions to cover Induction, which will make the students feel welcome and benefit from a shared experience.

This should include:

- A full and up to date timetable for the whole course and one for their own specific sessions

- Full tour of facilities and introduction to staff and students, including Student Services

- A one to one with each subject teacher to include subject and work missed to date.

- An outline of the student journey and assessment schedule

- Introduction to Pro Monitor and VLE, explain at risk factors

- An introduction to tutorials and the Personal Development plan

- A meeting with relevant support teams (Learning Support, Intensive Support) where appropriate or request made.

- A Right Course Review, one to one meeting with SPDT/TM to complete profile

Further Guidance

Ensure that the student is correctly enrolled: Late students need to be formally enrolled as soon as possible.

Allow for extra time outside of formal lessons for the latecomer to access facilities, computers etc - Latecomers will need time scheduled outside their course timetable, giving them the opportunity to catch up. Course leads/CMs will need to provide a timetable of rooms and resources outside of the student's regular timetable. This might include rooms that are in use but have available resources such as computers.

Student Progress and Development Tutors/Tutorial Mentors and Course leads are the main point of contact for late students and are expected to provide the necessary support - *Course Leaders, TMS/SPDT Tutors* are primarily responsible for supporting latecomers and should be the first point of contact. CMs/Personal Development and Wellbeing Managers will be responsible in deciding whether the latecomer is on the right course and at the right level prior to the 42 day period elapsing, through the Right Course Progress Review process.

Latecomers should be partnered with a suitable peer mentor - Latecomers should be partnered with a responsible, more experienced student who can support, mentor and help them get up to speed with their course requirements and activities.

Latecomers should be set to the appropriate risk indicator on ProMonitor depending on start and close monitoring of progress and full reason for this status entered on the system. The Tutor will closely monitor the student's attendance, attainment and progress and adjust the status of the student accordingly. If the student starts their course 4 weeks' or more after the start date, the student should

be automatically changed to red (high risk) and a robust plan in place to support; risk status will be adjusted following progress monitoring.

Encourage students to attend extra sessions outside of their normal timetable to complete the induction process and catch up on missed work.