

2021 Retention and Engagement of Students (HE08)

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Description:

Retaining students within higher education through to successful completion of their award is a key strategic agenda of TEC Partnership. This Code of Practice explains the processes followed by the TEC Partnership to encourage students to engage in their studies in order to give the best opportunity for success.

If you need any further advice on how the regulations work, you should contact the HE Quality Office.

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This document is available in alternative forms

Version	Notes
1.0	New Code of Practice
1.0.1	Addition of disaster recovery measures
2.0	Addition of ERC to the system Addition of withdrawal after 4 weeks of no contact.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This code of practice sets out expectations of engagement expected from students and shows the processes which the TEC Partnership will follow, to encourage engagement in study.

1.2 Decisions taken at boards, which are made within regulations, do not have to follow processes set out in this code of practice.

1.3 Retention in this policy relates to the continued study of students between the core stages of their enrolled programme through to completion of the entire programme.

1.4 Engagement where used in this code of practice refers to efforts made by the student towards the completion of the core stage. This can be in the form of attendance at sessions or by completion of set work outside of sessions. Examples of work may include:

- i. specific work set by the tutor for completion before or after a session;
- ii. completion of work towards assessment either formative or summative;
- iii. engagement with online tasks, either one to one or many to many interactions.

1.5 Throughout the code of practice where the term 'must' is used this relates to a process which has to be completed for the resulting action or sanction to occur. Where the term 'should' is used this relates to normal practice and resulting actions or sanction can still be followed if there is a rationale. Where the term 'may' is used no rationale for resulting actions or sanctions are needed even where the activity has not occurred.

1.6 This code of practice refers directly to enrolled students of within TEC Partnership. Information and guidance for applicants is crucial to ensuring engagement and retention of students, these processes are dealt with in HE07 Admissions, Admission Appeals and Accreditation of Prior Learning and HE02 Published Information.

1.7 The TEC Partnership must organise teaching and learning activities which match those described in validation documents and other associated published information.

1.8 Students must attend sessions and engage in follow up work as described in the validation documents and other associated published information.

1.9 TEC Partnership believes that in order to assure engagement in study by the wider student cohort, it is sometimes necessary to withdraw individual students who are not engaging in their studies.

1.10 The code of practice is underpinned by a range of values and principles which include those of:

- i. inclusion and integration;
- ii. social justice;
- iii. equal opportunities;
- iv. support and guidance;
- v. acceptance;
- vi. student and institutional accountability;
- vii. availability, accessibility and quality;
- viii. consistency;
- ix. impartiality;
- x. responsiveness;
- xi. monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement;
- xii. professional judgement.

1.11 It remains the responsibility of the student to ensure that they are engaging in their higher education and its component parts. TEC Partnership will support where possible this engagement through its activities whilst ensuring its activities meet standards of fairness across the student cohort.

2.0 Guidance for Students

2.1 Throughout the duration of study, there may be points where additional advice and guidance may be beneficial beyond that which is provided by the teaching team e.g. matters relating to finance, accommodation, health and well-being, concerns and complaints, careers advice, study support, quality and standards.

2.2 Students are encouraged in the first instance to seek advice and guidance from their programme leader/nominated year tutor or learner services staff, however where advice and guidance is insufficient or alternate services are deemed more appropriate, students are in all instances urged to make direct contact with the service best suited to their needs.

2.3 Where additional advice and guidance is required, a range of other services exist.

a. For students based at University Centre Grimsby:

- i. Learning Resource Centre: support with all aspects of learning
- ii. Student Records: enrolment and registration information, council tax exemptions, change of circumstances details, references;
- iii. Learner Advisors: applications to the student loans company, financial support, student's bursaries.
- iv. Academic Achievement Coach: available to deliver study skills workshops to groups;
- v. Success Coach: for matters relating to such issues as advocacy, support for student disability, accommodation, attendance;
- vi. Institute Counsellor: for matters relating to mental health and well-being and personal therapy;
- vii. Sensory Impairment Team: for matters relating to academic and holistic support needs in instances where a student has a visual impairment, is blind, has a hearing impairment or is deaf;
- viii. Disability Advisors: the service is available for students who may need assistance with regards to their disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. Disability and longer term support or short term intervention such as in the case of a broken arm, can be arranged in consultation with the Advisors;
- ix. Student Support Officers: deliver specific support as detailed in a learner's needs assessment report carried out by Educational Psychologists who, within the report, recommend and detail the type of support and allocated hours;
- x. HE Quality Office: for matters relating to the provision of Institute feedback regarding its services, all aspects relating to quality and standards, concerns and complaints.

b. For students based at Scarborough TEC:

- i. Learning Resource Centre: support with all aspects of learning
 - ii. Student Records: enrolment and registration information, council tax exemptions, change of circumstances details, references;
 - iii. Learner Advisors: applications to the student loans company, financial support, student's bursaries.
 - iv. Success Coach: for matters relating to such issues as advocacy, attendance; and mental health issues, or barriers to learning. In addition for appointments with Disability Advisors and Student
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Support Officers.

- v. Disability Advisors: the service is available for students who may need assistance with regards to their disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. Disability and longer term support or short term intervention such as in the case of a broken arm, can be arranged in consultation with the Advisors (service based at Grimsby);
- vi. Student Support Officers: deliver specific support as detailed in a learner's needs assessment report carried out by Educational Psychologists who, within the report, recommend and detail the type of support and allocated hours (service based at Grimsby);
- vii. HE Quality Office: for matters relating to the provision of Institute feedback regarding its services, all aspects relating to quality and standards, concerns and complaints (service based at Grimsby heqa@tecpartnership.ac.uk);

c) b. For students based at East Riding College:

- i. eLearning Centres: support with all aspects of learning
- ii. Data Services: enrolment and registration information, council tax exemptions, change of circumstances details
- iii. Guidance Team: applications to the student loans company, financial support, student's bursaries
- iv. Guidance Services: for matters relating to such issues as advocacy, support for student disability, accommodation, attendance
- v. College Counsellor: for matters relating to mental health and well-being and personal therapy
- vi. SEND/Learning Support Team/Disability Advisor*: for matters relating to academic and holistic support needs in instances where a student has a visual impairment, is blind, has a hearing impairment or is deaf
- vii. Disability Advisor*: the service is available for students who may need assistance with regards to their disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. Disability and longer term support or short term intervention such as in the case of a broken arm, can be arranged in consultation with the Advisors
- viii. Learning Support Team: deliver specific support as detailed in a learner's needs assessment report carried out by Educational Psychologists who, within the report, recommend and detail the type of support and allocated hours
- ix. Learner Services: for matters relating to the provision of Institute feedback regarding its services, all aspects relating to quality and standards, concerns and complaints
- x. Success Centres; for additional academic and study support
- xi. QTSU – Quality and Teaching Standards Unit for matters relating all aspects relating to quality and teaching standards and student voice activities

3.0 Induction

3.1 The principles underpinning the TEC Partnership's induction processes recognise that quality of information provided, student satisfaction and opportunities to enhance student 'preparedness' when entering into higher education is of fundamental importance to retention.

3.2 Teaching teams must ensure that a comprehensive programme level induction schedule is administered to each new student cohort (full and part time). Induction must not occur as a 'one off' event but as a planned programme of activity with sufficient time allocated.

3.3 As a minimum, the content of the induction programmes must include:

- i. information about how to access wider services and facilities;
- ii. activities to promote integration and group cohesion i.e. 'ice breakers', group activities;
- iii. library induction;
- iv. study skills information and signposting to the study skills web page;
- v. IT check to make sure all students have access to VLE, Office 365 and associated programmes;
- vi. provision and explanation of programme and module handbooks;
- vii. provision of the assessment schedule (a timetable of all assessment deadlines- formative and summative) and information in relation to feedback timescales;
- viii. how to submit assessments, obtaining extensions, late and over-length assessment penalties.
- ix. an explanation of academic regulations (within programme handbook) in particular the rules appertaining to absence with good cause from examinations, mitigating circumstances, applications for extensions, penalties for plagiarism or other academic misconduct;
- x. details of how to access codes of practice and policies on the Institute's web site;
- xi. timetable information and planned programme delivery;
- xii. attendance and punctuality including who to contact in situations of absence;
- xiii. completion of screening activities for the identification and support of learning disability;
- xiv. availability of and how to access learning support services listed in 2.3;
- xv. the role and appointment of student representatives and The Student Senate (See HE03);
- xvi. conformation that the email address provided (@eastridingcollege.ac.uk @grimsby.ac.uk or @scarboroughtec.ac.uk) will be the only ones used for official correspondence (Results, Mitigating Circumstances, Reenrolment etc.).

3.5 Programme leaders/Tutors must evidence how the above items have been covered for each student.

3.6 In instances of late enrolment (including students gaining approval for direct Entry on to an advanced stage within a programme), students must receive an induction programme organised by the programme team.

3.7 An assessment of students should be made in the first two weeks to consider the risk of retention of students, Pro-Monitor HE (or where not available local tracking) should be updated based on their risk. The following table provides indication of risk:

Green	<p>Student had full and timely IAG early in the application period</p> <p>Student had accepted their offer in advance of the enrolment</p> <p>Student has placement in place (where required)</p> <p>Student has DBS in place (where required)</p> <p>Student had excellent artistic portfolio at interview (where required)</p> <p>Student has recently completed Level 3 programmes of study</p> <p>Student finance is in place and payment is received</p> <p>Works within the area of study</p>
Amber	Student applied relatively close to the application period

	<p>There are concerns regarding application for student finance</p> <p>Student passed entry test but not at a high level</p> <p>Student had artistic portfolio at interview but some skill gaps remain (where required)</p> <p>Student had applied before enrolment but had not accepted their offer</p> <p>Indication that students need assistance in developing computer skills</p>
Red	<p>No student finance in place</p> <p>DBS is not in place (where required)</p> <p>Does not work within the area of study</p> <p>Student had significant gaps in artistic portfolio (where required)</p> <p>Student does not have a placement (where required)</p> <p>Concerns exist regarding work patterns</p> <p>Student started the course late</p> <p>Student applied during the enrolment period</p>

3.8 The Programme Leader and the learner services staff for the area should prioritise support in the first trimester to students who are graded as Red or Amber.

4.0 Attendance and Engagement of students

4.1 Attendance has a direct relationship to the likelihood of a student's success in higher education. However, there are times when engagement may be used as a measure of commitment to a programme. These measures can include:

- i. completion of summative assessment work;
- ii. completion of formative assessment work;
- iii. completion of tasks set to the whole group on the VLE;
- iv. completion of work set for an individual student;
- v. student evidencing reading and work beyond that set by the tutor.

4.2 In normal circumstances the TEC Partnership's expectation for student attendance for all HE programmes (unless specified otherwise by professional or awarding bodies) is 90% (or target set by local SMT). Where student attendance drops below this the impact is often on colleagues left within the cohort.

4.3 In instances where a staff member raises concern about a student's attendance; TEC Partnership may contact a student by phone or in person to discuss the absence further and suggest an early intervention. This should be viewed as supportive to solve the problems causing lack of attendance. This call and the proposed solutions should be logged on Pro-Monitor (or where not available local tracking will be used).

4.4 Attendance is not the only measure of engagement. As stated in 1.4 engagement may be

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conducted by working at tasks set by module tutors or programme leaders.

4.5 Principles of professional judgement underpin decisions made whether to make further interventions to reengage students. This process if student's engagement levels do not change may lead to withdrawal of students.

4.6 In instances where unapproved absence or lack of engagement are identified and initial support has been rejected or has not been successful in ensuring attendance and engagement, the following 3 stage withdrawal warning system must be implemented.

4.7 Should a student be judged by the programme leader/tutor to not be engaging with study a request for an intervention should be made:

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 1 warning email HE08A;
- ii. The student must meet with the programme leader or learner services staff within 7 days of sending of the email;
- iii. During the meeting the Student Engagement proforma on the Learner Management system should be completed, and the generated word document emailed to the student; where not available local tracking using forms HE08D (first stage) should be completed and uploaded to the Learner Management system;
- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the programme leader or learner services staff in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor (or where not available local tracking), and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form could make reference to methods of engagement specified in 4.1.

4.8 If a student's engagement fails to improve or they continue to attend below the desired level. The following process should be followed:

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 2 warning email HE08B;
- ii. The student must meet with the Programme Leader within 7 days of receipt of the email;
- iii. During the meeting the Student Engagement proforma on the Learner Management system should be completed, and the generated word document emailed to the student; where not available local tracking using form HE08E (second stage) should be completed and uploaded to the Learner Management system;
- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the Programme Leader in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor (or where not available local tracking), and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form must make reference to methods of engagement specified in 4.1.

4.9 If a student's engagement fails to meet the targets set out in or they continue to attend below the desired level. The following process should be followed:

- i. The student should be sent an attendance and engagement Stage 3 warning email HE08C;
- ii. The student must meet with the Curriculum Manager (or equivalent) within 7 days of receipt of the email;
- iii. during the meeting the Student Engagement proforma on the Learner Management system should be completed, and the generated word document emailed to the student; where not available local

tracking using form HE08F (final stage) should be completed and uploaded to the Learner Management system;

- iv. If the student fails to meet the team then the form is filled in by the Curriculum Manager (or equivalent) in their absence, stored on Pro Monitor (or where not available local tracking), and sent to the student.
- v. Targets set under this form could make reference to methods of engagement specified in 4.1.

4.10 A student who has attended the meeting and has met the targets set in HE08F should not be withdrawn from studies. If their attendance or engagement subsequently drops in the same academic year, they will enter the system at the third stage again.

4.11 TEC Partnership reserve the right to withdraw a student where there has been no indication of engagement and no successful contact for one calendar month on the proviso that the following statements are true:

- There has been at least 3 attempts to contact the student by both email and by telephone;
- That Safeguarding are informed that the student is not responding to attempts to contact them;
- That the Curriculum Manager (or equivalent) has attempted to contact the learner;
- A final letter has been sent to the student by the Curriculum Manager (or equivalent) detailing the date which the student will be withdrawn.

5.0 Removal from studies through lack of engagement

5.1 These actions should be completed if a student has not achieved the targets set at third stage (4.10) or has failed to contact TEC partnership staff for a calendar month (4.11).

5.2 The Programme Leader should process a change request within Pro-Solution.

5.3 The Curriculum Manager or (or equivalent) should review the case to ensure that all processes and steps have been completed and logged on Pro -Monitor (or where not available local tracking) before approving the request.

5.4 The Associate Principal or (or equivalent) should review the case to ensure that all processes and steps have been completed and logged on Pro-Monitor (or where not available local tracking) before approving the request.

5.5 The resulting withdrawal actions will be processed by HEMIS and a withdrawal email will be generated and sent to the student's college and personal email addresses (HE08G).

6.0 Student request for withdrawal or suspension of study

6.1 TEC Partnership recognises that sometimes students are uncertain if they have made the right decision in relation to a chosen pathway of study or sometimes, they may decide they wish to withdraw or suspend studies.

6.2 It is the responsibility of the student to complete the suspension form and once completed. TEC Partnership should process the withdrawal/suspension within 14 days of notification that a student wishes to withdraw. The student should provide this evidence in writing either by signed letter or by email to their programme leader and to studentrecordshe@tecpartnership.ac.uk.

6.3 The Programme Leader/Tutor should make attempts to contact the student and discuss the underlying issues with the student either by phone or by email to ensure that withdrawal is the last resort. All communication should be logged on their ILP.

6.4 Where a student expresses a wish to suspend the Programme Leader must arrange for a suspension form to be sent to the student's college email and a deadline for completion of 7 days should be set. Where a student fails to send in a suspension form by the deadline, a withdrawal should be completed.

6.5 When the Programme Leader/Tutor is convinced they have done all actions required they should request withdrawal/suspension via Pro-Solution. The Curriculum Manager (or equivalent) of the area should process the withdrawal/suspension for referral to the Associate Principal (or Equivalent).

6.6 Suspension of Studies is the means by which students request to take a break from their studies. This is usually because circumstances have changed during the course of study such as:

- Significant changes in the health of a student;
- Significant changes in the health of a dependant of the student;
- Significant changes in employment for a student;
- Significant changes leading to financial issues for a student;
- Other significant changes.

6.7 Suspension of studies usually means that a student returns to study one year after their last date of attendance.

6.8 For all HE programmes delivered by the TEC Partnership applications for suspension of studies must be completed on form HE08G (or HE08H for University of Hull, or using the relevant University of Huddersfield form) and sent to Student Records HE along with evidence supporting the suspension. This should be accompanied by a change request on Pro-Solution (See 5.2 above).

6.9a Students who request to return to studies without a repeat period or assessments can be processed and noted by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee.

6.9b Where a student has requested a repeat period or to have assessment results voided the application should be processed in lieu of the decision by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee or the relevant University partner.

6.10 The deadline for a suspension of studies is normally 1 week before the Easter Break in any
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given academic year. Applications outside of this period and/or applications for an earlier return to study must be considered by the HE Suspension of Studies Committee who report to the Academic Authority and Standards Senior Committee and have a strong evidence base before they are granted.

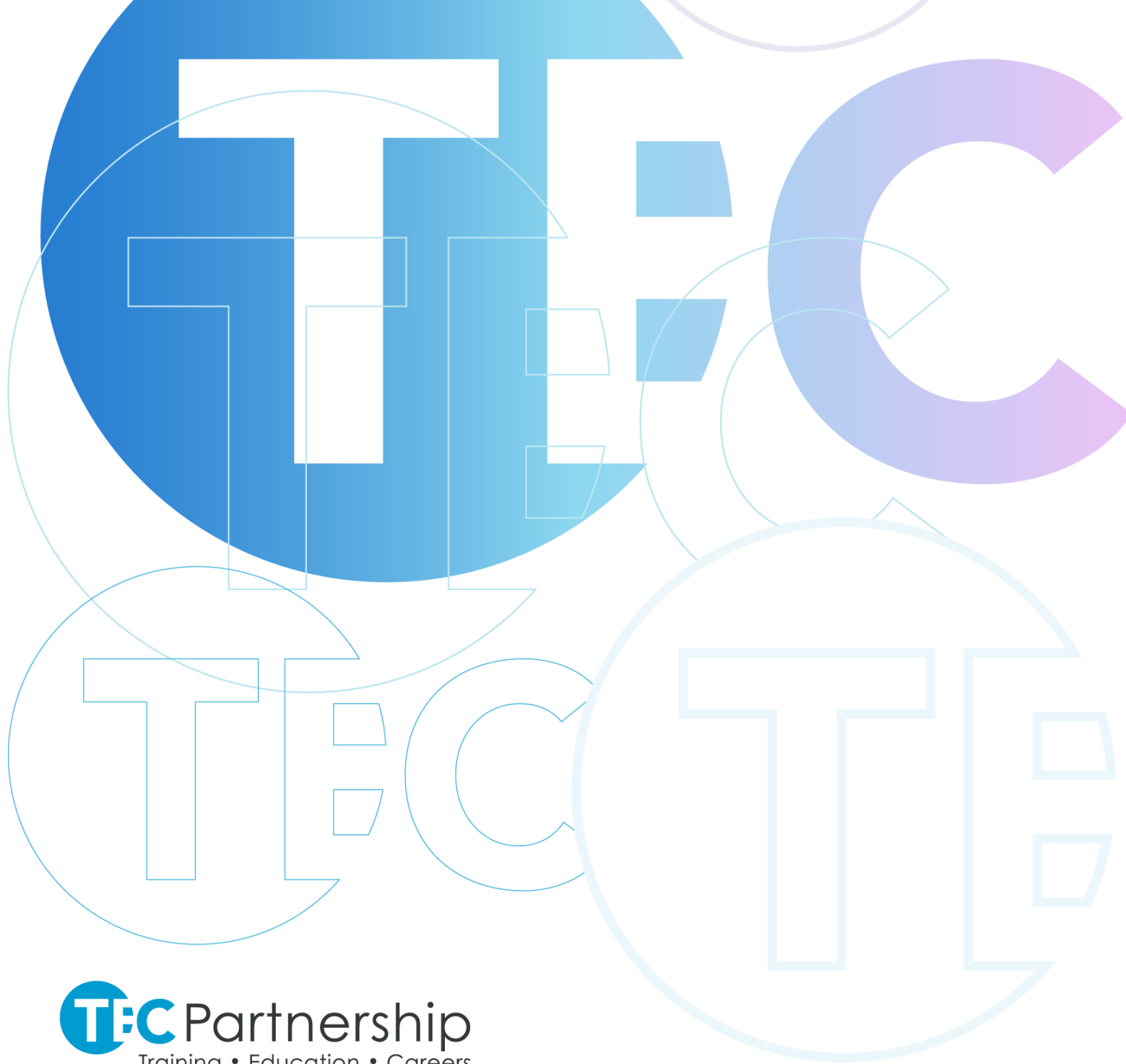
6.11 The HE Suspension of Studies Committee must view each application on merit and using the evidence base provided decide regarding the point of return. The committee must take into account the evidence provided by the student and comments from the academic and support team. Following the meeting the secretary for the committee will inform HEMIS, the student, and the academic team of the result.

6.12 A student has the right to appeal the decision of the HE Suspension of Committee if they feel that the process has been misapplied or the return time is unfair. To do so they should write to the Academic Registrar who will enact an appeal in line with HE16 Academic Appeals.

7.0 Complaints and Appeals

7.1 If a student thinks that this Code has been misapplied to themselves and this has affected their continuation on the programme because processes have not been followed, they are able to appeal under the processes set out in HE16 Academic Appeals.

7.2 If a student feels their treatment has been unfair they have to right to complain following the processes set out in Investigation and Determination of Complaints Policy & Procedure or by the online Complaints form, this is under HE20 or by this link <https://tecpartnership.com/partnership-feedback/#1501672889199-d0950462-b97c>



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