



PRINCIPAL'S BULLETIN

Tuesday 5th January

To all students and their parents/carers,

Firstly, Happy New Year to you and your families. We hope this briefing finds you all well.

As you will be aware, at 8pm on Monday 4th January 2021, the Prime Minister announced a third national lockdown. This lockdown will see Huddersfield New College close again until the end of February half term, at the earliest.

During this lockdown, the College will remain open for vulnerable students and those with a critical worker parent, although the DfE stipulate this time that a critical worker parent must provide proof of their critical work. The College has already requested that this is through an email from the work address. We are liaising with our vulnerable students individually about where they feel safest to learn during this lockdown, and to date we have had one request from a critical worker parent for their son/daughter to learn from the College rather than from home. We expect numbers of students in these two categories learning from the College rather than from home to be very small, given the purpose of the lockdown is to have as many as people as possible stay at home to reduce contact between households, and given the age range of our students, 16-19, which means that they can learn from home independently.

Learning expectations

For all other students learning will be from home. Students at home will be expected to attend every lesson on their timetable, as well as their tutorial, and this attendance will be monitored. The learning will be virtual with MS Teams as the virtual platform. Our students are already very experienced with this mode of virtual learning, as they have attended, via MS Teams, one online lesson per subject per week in each option block since September. As in this first week back after the Christmas break, until after February half term, they will now attend three online lessons per subject per week in each option block. Any student without the requisite IT resources and/or reliable internet access to enable such online learning will continue to be allowed on site to learn from the College. Progress Tutors will confirm this on an individual basis with these already identified and accommodated students.

Support for students

We appreciate that learning from home is much more challenging than learning face to face and can be detrimental to personal well-being. Please be reassured that all students will still have access to our Progress Tutor team via tutorial and email, to our safeguarding team via email (safeguarding@huddnewcoll.ac.uk) and to our Student Well-Being Manager via email (studentwelfare@huddnewcoll.ac.uk) or by booking an individual appointment on Moodle during this lockdown. Students can also access Careers Advice and Guidance by emailing our Careers team at careers@huddnewcoll.ac.uk or by booking an individual appointment on Moodle.





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Important information about exam arrangements

The BTEC exams scheduled for this week and in the week beginning 11th January will take place as planned because we believe that we can manage these exams safely. If you are meant to be sitting one or more of these exams this week or next, and are unable to attend, for whatever reason, please let us know in advance by emailing us on info@huddnewcoll.ac.uk

Please note at this point in time BTEC exams are still scheduled to take place in the summer, as normal. Whilst this might change before then, as a College we need to continue to prepare our BTEC students for examination, another reason why we have taken the decision to proceed with the BTEC exams this week and next.

On the other hand, the government have said that end of year exams in the summer for GCSE and A Level will not take place as normal. It has not yet clarified whether this means all GCSE and A Level exams are cancelled, and if some/all GCSE and A Level exams are cancelled, what will replace them. The Secretary of State apparently is due to make an announcement about this over the coming days. We will of course keep you informed of this announcement and its' implications for our GCSE and A Level students, as and when we are able to do so.

With so much uncertainty about the summer and about how final grades for GCSE, A Level and BTEC students will be determined, it is vitally important that all students engage fully with online learning during this lockdown. None of us know what will count and what will not count towards final grades. Students must engage as though everything they do now will count because last year's experience tells us it almost certainly will!

Free School Meals & College buses

Free School Meals will continue to be funded during this third lockdown. At Huddersfield New College, the Free School Meal allowance will be paid directly into students' bank accounts.

College buses will not operate during this third lockdown and College bus users will be refunded for the period of the lockdown.

Catering facilities will not be available for any vulnerable students or students with a critical worker parent or students with IT difficulties on site during this third lockdown, and so any such students should come prepared for their day of learning from College with a packed lunch, or with monies to buy lunch off site during the lunch break.

With a Level 5 alert in the NHS we fully understand the need for this third lockdown to protect the NHS and to save lives. We regret the further disruption it will cause to the learning of our students, but we will do our utmost to ensure this learning continues remotely, so that our students continue to make progress, and are well placed to achieve their goals for this academic year.

If you have any queries with the content of this briefing, or have any other general queries about the third lockdown and our response as a College, please contact us at info@huddnewcoll.ac.uk

And as always, please take care and stay safe and well.

Angela Williams
Principal

