

6 January 2021

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Dear Learners,

Sixth Form staff are disappointed not to be welcoming you back after the Christmas break, however it's fantastic that most of you successfully logged on to your live lessons this morning. Sadly, Coronavirus cases are rising sharply across the country and the government has announced that schools will remain closed for learners until at least the February half term. The Prime Minister has also announced that there will be alternative arrangements for exams this summer.

Understandably, the uncertainty may be causing some anxiety amongst learners and I want to reassure you that we are determined that you will have the support to reach the next steps in your education, whether that be to university or to apprenticeships in September and you do not need to worry about the summer arrangements. As yet, we do not know if all examinations will be cancelled in the summer and we are waiting for news from the examination boards.

It is likely that final A-Level grades will be based on a combination of an estimated grade and specific assessed work set by the examination boards (this may be in the form of an examination). The vocational BTEC qualifications have a large element of coursework and learners' success with their coursework will carry significant weighting in their final outcomes. With this in mind, you have the opportunity to make a substantial difference to your future by being in control of your learning now. All independent work you submit will be used to support your ranking within the subject and you should be aiming to finish all work to the highest standard possible. You will need to take an active role in your online lessons to ensure you know what is expected with your independent work.

Google Classroom

You are all aware of how to access the online learning platform and should be accessing resources following your normal timetabled lessons. The work will be varied depending on the subject and the topic being studied. You will find a mixture of live lessons and instructions with specific independent tasks to complete. I urge you to participate to ensure your learning continues.

January examinations

The examinations scheduled for January will continue and for those learners involved it is important that you isolate from each other prior to and after each examination. There should be no car sharing and you should be socially distanced on the bus to avoid the risk of having to self-isolate due to being a close contact of someone who tests positive. Please ensure that before you travel you feel well and do not have a temperature. To ensure your safety and that of others, I ask you to engage with the Covid testing we will ask you to complete prior to your first examination and please ensure you arrive at the academy at 8:30am if you have an exam starting at 9:00am. If you are on site for the whole day, please use The Lodge coach house and ground floor only and remain socially distanced. There will be no catering facilities, so please ensure you bring your lunch with you.

UCAS applications

You will have discussed your career aspirations with staff over the last few months and it's good to see that many of you have applied to university, even if only as a back-up plan. I spoke at the start of the year about being flexible in terms of how you reach your final destination and the importance of applying to university. We have worked hard to support those learners that have already applied and many have received offers of places starting in October. Those that have not applied may still do so but must be mindful that the process closes on 15 January and we will need a little time to check and process applications at the academy before the process closes.

If your application has been returned to you, you need to address the issues and return the application to Dr Sillitoe as a matter of urgency. If you have not completed an application and still intend to apply, then you must have everything complete, have paid and pressed send by 12 January.

Staff are available to support you, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any worries or concerns. Ms Sowden, Dr Sillitoe and I are available to help you with any questions you have about your next steps.

I wish you the very best and I will keep you informed with any information I receive regarding the summer assessments.

Yours sincerely



Mr P. Stanmore CEng MIMechE
Director of Sixth Form