

Dear Students,

I hope this email finds you safe and well. As you know, the Government has announced the return of Colleges and Schools from the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. This email confirms the College's approach to this. Please note that these changes are **in addition** to the Covid19 restrictions operated at the start of the academic year, in September:

**1. When will students return to face to face delivery at the College?**

From Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, the College's buildings will all reopen and the following approach will be implemented for return to College based learning:

**a. ALL 16-18 year olds and students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

- Some students have been attending throughout lockdown and they will continue to attend as timetabled.
- Other students in this age group will undertake most of their learning in College as well as continuing with some blended, online learning.
- When you are expected to be in college and online will be confirmed by your Tutor and this is likely to reflect the planned timetable that was scheduled for you from January, which continues to observe staggered start times and blended learning. You should have details of when you are expected to attend, confirmed by the end of this week.

**b. Adults in Further Education - aged 19plus with NO EHCP.**

We will continue remote learning as appropriate and prioritise your return based on Government guidance. Details

of when you are expected to return and your timetable will be provided by the end of this week.

**c. Adults studying Higher Education (HE).**

HE will remain mostly remote and on-line apart from any practical skills requirements that require College attendance. Details of when you are expected to return and your timetable will be provided by the end of this week. This is being kept under review.

**2. Are there any additional requirements or differences, to mitigate the risk of Covid19?**

Yes – in addition to existing regulations, provided in training, the following changes have been introduced in line with Government Guidance:

**a. Masks (Face Coverings) must be worn in all areas when attending College where more than one person is in the room.**

This is an additional safety precaution recommended that is likely to be reviewed in mid-April. When wearing masks for extended periods, it is important to ensure they are changed if they become damp and local guidance suggests that is around 2 hours. Please note a visor is not an acceptable alternative during this time because it does not afford the same level of protection. We will have additional bins placed around the College so that used, disposable masks can be placed in them.

**b. What if I cannot wear a mask?**

Anyone unable to wear a mask for medical reasons must ensure the Additional Learning Support Team (ask your Tutor

to advise if this relates to you) is made aware of this, so they can update your personal risk assessment as appropriate and provide the necessary lanyard sticker to signify your exemption.

### **3. Does social distancing still apply?**

- a. Yes, Absolutely! Social distancing of 2m plus should be observed **at all times in staff rooms, office areas, classrooms, workshops and around the College.**

### **4. Covid19 testing for asymptomatic staff and students.**

The College has established Covid19 Lateral Flow Testing Centres. **This is entirely voluntary and requires consent.** These are for people with no symptoms to undertake tests to check if they have contracted the virus. This is voluntary and you must provide your consent, using the official NHS consent form made available. It is understood that one in every three people may have the virus without displaying any symptoms and could therefore, be inadvertently spreading it to others. Staff and students who attend on site will be able to have 2 tests each week and this will be arranged as follows:

- a. **16-18 year olds and 19-24s with an EHCP who are attending College for any part of their learning.**

These students have received an email providing them with an opportunity to start testing from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021, at our Conway Park Testing Centre. They have been provided with the information and a number to call to make an appointment (0151 551 7777). These students will have three

tests in College and thereafter they will be provided with home tests.

**b. Adult students attending College for any part of their learning - who are 19 and over and do not have an EHCP.**

For adult students who are physically attending on campus, home tests will be available (2 per week). Although the guidance with the tests is very clear, if they would like to have the first test in our centre, they can book an appointment (0151 551 7777). The trained staff will provide them with any advice and assistance to give confidence to administer home testing.

**c. Staff or students who cannot undertake home testing.**

We will retain a small testing facility to support any students who require assistance and prefer to have the tests administered in the Centre. On Campus testing and home testing is designed to make this convenient for students, so we would recommend this is used. As previously stated, testing is voluntary and requires formal consent.

**5. Vaccinations:**

- a. The College will be pro-actively promoting vaccination and the UK is doing very well in the vaccination programme. Beyond our pro-active approach to this, the College has no influence over the order vaccinations are confirmed, so please stay aware of how the national programme is unfolding and if you have any concerns for your personal position, you should follow the general online guidance, provided by the NHS.

## **6. Students who are advised by the NHS to shield or who have symptoms of Covid19.**

- a. If you have received a formal letter advising you to shield, please provide a copy to your Tutor and we will update your personal risk assessment. The College will not permit students required to shield to return to College, for the duration of their period of advised shielding. In this situation, we will continue to support you with remote, online and home-based learning until it is deemed safe for you to return and no longer shield.
  
- b. If you become symptomatic or are required to isolate in accordance with guidance OR advised by NHS track and trace, **you should not come into College; remain at home and follow Government guidance.** In addition to continuing to follow the reporting regulations that we have had in place since June, you must let your Tutor know immediately and our Health and Safety Manager, Kenny Scott may contact you to confirm details of when you were last in College. Every case confirmed is then followed up with Public Health for advice and action.

Finally, all guidance provided is continuously reviewed to inform our Risk Assessment and you can access this on our website, or if you want to clarify any points, ask your Tutor in the first instance. I would like to thank the Students' Union for their continued input and support in promoting the regulations in place to help reduce the risks of Covid19. Unlike the return from lockdown one, this time, at least we have the positive developments of the vaccine but until such time as it is safe to do so, even with vaccination, we must

continue to observe all of the controls relating to ‘Hands, Face, Space’ to protect everyone as best we can.

I look forward to seeing you again from next week and, in the meantime, thank you all once again for your commitment and dedication to learning in these challenging times.

With kind regards,

Sue

**Sue Higginson**

Principal and CEO

Tel: 0151 551 7411

My pronouns are she / her

*‘Unexpected kindness is the most powerful, least costly, and most underrated agent of human change’ Bob Kerry*

