

Welcome to College!

COVID-19 Learning Safely

Dear students

A warm welcome to Bucks College Group and I know that you will enjoy your time studying at College.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year will be different from other years and I wanted to share with you how this may look and feel. We want to make sure that you and all our students are able to study safely and our staff are able to work safely during this time.

From September, the College will operate a blended learning timetable. This means that you will spend one week with your group and tutors on campus in classrooms and/or workshops, and one week with your group and tutors in virtual Zoom learning classrooms from home. This is to limit the contact with different groups of students and limit the amount of students we have on campus at one time for your safety. We want you to have a great learning experience and be successful, so this approach makes sure you receive a full timetable and all aspects of your programme you need. This is in line with government advice. This will be kept under review and where the COVID-19 situation changes we are able to quickly adjust the blend of learning between on-site and virtual at any point.

This will reduce the numbers of students on campus, and therefore the numbers of students using transport, catering and College facilities and services. Your course group will be your **nucleus bubble** and this is who you will spend the majority of time with in the classroom or workshop. Each course group belongs to different curriculum areas, for example, Gaming and Graphic Design belong within the Art and Design Curriculum Area. Course groups will form **Curriculum Area Zones**, which are zoned physical spaces for classrooms/workshops and these Curriculum Area zones will be used to stagger break times, lunches and cross college activities. The outside spaces will also be zoned so that during your time outside of learning in the classroom/workshop you can maintain social distances.

Please note it is not currently a requirement by the government to wear face coverings in the classroom but we do require that face coverings are worn in communal areas, corridors, toilets, refectory, learning centres and college transport.

Timetables and Learning

When you enrol, you will receive your induction timetable and you will attend according to this timetable for two days beginning the week 7th September 2020 with one further day of virtual induction activities completed at home. During induction, you will get to know your tutors, meet the rest of your group, find out more about your course, and shown how to access your full timetable ready for the start of teaching on 14th September. You will receive information on which weeks your timetable will be on campus, and which weeks your timetables are virtual Zoom learning with your course group and tutors.

If you are a second year returning to the same programme, you will undertake an on-line induction with your teaching timetables starting 14th September, again you will receive your timetable and information on timetabled lessons on campus and timetabled lessons that are virtual Zoom learning with your tutor.

Foundation Learning, Life Skills Centre, Future Skills Centre

Students in these areas will be physically attending College each week in a zoned area with separate breaks and lunchtimes. The teaching and support team will be working with individual students and parents to support your individual needs and requirements

Apprentices

If you are an apprentice, the Apprenticeship Team will work with you and your employer concerning attendance at College and assessors will continue to support you in the workplace

Attendance

It is important that you attend so that you do not miss any learning. Our 100% attendance requirements remain the same, whether you are attending your timetable physically or virtually, and you are expected to attend all aspects of the Study Programme: main qualification, English, maths, digital skills, tutorial, careers and progression coaching where appropriate.

Learning Safely on Campus

When you come onto the campuses, you will need to ensure that you take COVID-19 personal responsibility for your safety and safety of others. We have taken a number of steps for your safety including:

- 2m distance markings on entrance and around the building
- One-way or Give-way systems
- Hand sanitiser stations
- Perspex screening
- Classrooms arranged in rows for side to side or behind others to avoid face-to-face contact
- Staggered starts, finishes, breaks, lunches
- Revised Housekeeping and cleaning arrangements

The College has undertaken an assessment of the risks concerning COVID-19 and put in measures to reduce the risk of infection transmission. This is regularly reviewed and published on the website.

You can help keep yourself and others safe by following the COVID-19 College rules, paying attention to hygiene and regular handwashing and wiping down your desks, workspaces and equipment after use. Due to the seriousness of the consequences, we have a zero tolerance to anyone not behaving in a COVID-19 safe way.

Public Transport

Where possible we would encourage you to walk or cycle to College. Where this is not possible and you are required to take public transport, we would advise that you should follow the government's guidance for travelling safely.

For students who use the College minibus transport (mainly Amersham) we will continue to offer a normal service. You must follow these safety measures if you are using this service:

- Sanitising hands before entering the minibus
- Wear a face covering
- Provide contact details to the driver
- Pre-pay for tickets
- Travel side-side or behind others to avoid face to face

- Where possible leave space between seating
- Avoid shouting, singing or loud talking

Catering Facilities

The College catering facilities will be open as usual but will offer a reduced service. You may choose to bring your own packed lunch. If you are in receipt of free school meals, please talk to our Student Services department, so that we can continue to provide this service for you. You must wear a face covering at the food counter and in the refectory

Communal and Social Spaces including Outdoor Spaces

All students are expected to maintain social distancing in common and social spaces including outdoors. Face coverings must be worn in communal areas, corridors, toilets, refectory, and learning centres. All students are expected to remain within their zoned areas indoors and outdoors.

COVID-19 Symptoms

If you are showing signs of COVID-19 (temperature, new cough, and loss of smell or taste), you must not attend College and inform your tutor immediately. This is so we can track and trace others that you may have been in contact with at College. We will provide you with information on testing. You must self-isolate for 10 days unless your result comes back negative. If someone in your household is showing symptoms or has a positive test result, you must not attend College, you must inform your tutor and self-isolate for 14 days. If you are self-isolating due to someone in your household showing symptoms, you should continue your studies remotely. Contact your tutor for support.

Support with Resources and Technology

If you require support with access to resources, technology, learning or you have any other concerns at all about attending College; please contact your tutor or our Student Services Department who will be very happy to help.

I know this is a different time, but we are all here to help you achieve your goals. I hope this information on COVID-19 Safer Learning is helpful and if you have any questions, please do talk to your tutor or the Curriculum Manager for your subject area.

I wish you every success for this year.

Best wishes

Karen Mitchell

Principal/CEO

Buckinghamshire College Group