

Bexhill College: Coronavirus update for Students and Parents/Carers

Thursday 23rd April 2020

This is our latest update for students and parents/carers. It contains some information we have provided previously – where this has not changed along with new information where we have this.

The College site is closed to students, however, reception continues to be manned every day so if anyone needs to contact a staff member and cannot do so by email, reception are available to pick up calls.

There is currently a mix of lesson based activity for students depending on the year they are in and the Government directive. As we have always highlighted, it is important students engage in these until their courses are officially 'finished' and the process of grades being awarded concluded. Information on this for all courses is given below. This is happening in different ways for different courses so it is important you read the information for the different courses your son or daughter studies.

Throughout this difficult period, we remain committed to providing a high-quality education service for our students. These are unprecedented times with exceptional challenges, which are impacting on our ability to provide our normal services. As such, we have put arrangements in place for remote working for students until the College is able to reopen again for face to face lessons.

Ongoing updates

From this point forward, we will update once a week on **Thursdays**. We will increase the frequency in future if it seems needed and we will always provide additional updates if there is a significant announcement which requires one.

The Thursday update will be posted by 6.30pm. Please be aware that we may not be able to fully respond to that day's Government announcements but we will do so, as soon as we reasonably can.

Exams Updates

Results Days

It has been confirmed today that Results Days for 2020 will remain as originally published. These are

- A/AS Level & other level 3 results day – Thursday 13th August 2020
- GCSE results day - Thursday 20th August 2020

The College will issue details on how results will be issued, support available on those days and re-interview for return to College in September where needed later this term.

A/AS Level Exams and GCSE Exams – this information was provided before Easter and has not been changed

Remote teaching for A level and GCSE Courses from 20th April 2020

A levels and GCSE courses – Remote teaching will continue where the content of the courses has not been completed. This is intended to ensure students have covered everything needed to support them with progression and to provide an opportunity for students to keep occupied during lockdown. Any teaching from this point forward will not impact grading so students can choose if they wish to participate. Information for each subject will be on the subject MOODLE page after the Easter break.

Some subjects who have completed their content want to continue offering contact with students for the students' well-being and wish to offer an opportunity to participate in activity during the week. Again, participation is entirely up to the student and details will be on the subject MOODLE page after the Easter break.

Similar provision will also be made for our vulnerable students via the Study Centre.

Remote teaching for AS courses

Remote teaching will continue as students need to complete all of their specifications to have the knowledge needed for A level study next year when exams will be back to normal. In normal circumstances, AS teaching would move to second year teaching after exams, so continuing teaching will take this into account. Students will need to engage in online learning to be able to progress to year 2 successfully and to give them the best chance of performing well in next year's A level exams.

Vocational Courses - this has been updated

On Thursday 9th April. Ofqual released information on the grading of vocational courses. For year 2, level 2 and level 1 courses, this means that any teaching from this point forward will not impact grading. Students should therefore be completing any assignment work set to date and all work should be completed by 15th May for assessment purposes.

We do not have the specific detail of how grades will be awarded as yet but are aware that, as we have previously said, this will be a teacher assessed grade as with A/AS levels and GCSEs. However, the key difference is that these courses have a significant amount of coursework which will impact on the award of grades as students will have completed a proportion of this to date. Therefore, students should continue to completing assignments as required by staff. These courses, such as the First Diplomas, Extended Diplomas, Subsidiary Diplomas and the Certificates are heavily coursework based. We are therefore anticipating that grading will be based on coursework grades completed to date at the very least and therefore, all students should be completing coursework as set.

Remote teaching may continue where the content of the courses has not been completed. This is intended to ensure students have covered everything needed to support them with

progression and to provide an opportunity for students to keep occupied during lockdown. In addition, some subjects who have completed their content want to continue offering contact with students for the students' well-being and wish to offer an opportunity to participate in activity during the week. Again, participation is entirely up to the student and details will be on the subject MOODLE page after the Easter break.

Similar provision will also be made for our vulnerable students via the Study Centre.

Competency based vocational courses

Some of the vocational students are on competency based courses or courses which give them a license to practice when they achieve their qualifications. These are:

- Personal training
- Sports massage
- Catering
- Hairdressing and barbering
- Early years
- Arts award where work experience is mandatory

For these courses, there may be a requirement to complete all theory and practical elements which have not been completed to date. In some cases, online teaching will continue until June as would be the case if the College were open to enable students to achieve this. For others, students should complete all theory elements by 15th May. Please refer to your subject tutors for guidance on your particular course.

We are aware that the Awarding Bodies and Ofqual will issue further guidance on competency courses and we will confirm any further requirements students have to undertake as part of these courses when we are made aware.

Centre Assessed Grades

Ofqual has yet to fully confirm the full details on Centre Assessed Grades, the grades which the College will submit for each student for their courses. However, it is clear that the teachers and managers within Colleges are not allowed to reveal Centre Assessed Grades or the process behind the award of these grades to any student or parent/guardian. To do so places that teacher or manager at risk of accusations of malpractice and could negatively impact on the grades of all students and the ability of the College to award results/deliver examinations in the future. We would appreciate your support by you not emailing or contacting staff requesting information about grades or the grading process. Teacher and managers will follow the guidelines, when they are finalised as set out by Ofqual and will ensure that the grades we submit do not disadvantage our students in anyway against students from other educational institutions. Staff have been asked not to respond to communication concerning these two issues.

The direct quote from the Ofqual document reads as follows:

To further protect the objectivity and reliability of the centre assessment grades and rank order information, and to give teachers and centres certainty in responding to students and others who might ask for that information, we propose that they should be prohibited from revealing this information other than in the context of a formal request under data protection law, following the release of results. We therefore propose to require exam boards to treat any disclosure by any member of a centre's staff of centre assessment grades, rank order information, or the professional judgements which underpin them, to anyone not authorised by the Head of Centre, as malpractice or maladministration, unless such disclosure is required by law or takes place only after final results have been issued.

Year 1 vocational courses

Remote teaching continues for these courses with online lessons continuing at the usual scheduled timetabled times. Please ensure you follow the guidance of your teachers. Students need to complete all of their specifications to have the knowledge needed for study next year when assessment processes and exams will be back to normal. Students will need to engage in online learning to be able to progress to year 2 successfully and to give them the best chance of performing well next year.

Safeguarding:

If you have a safeguarding concern, you should report it to the Safeguarding Team using this email address: safeguardingteam@bexhillcollege.ac.uk. This email is monitored everyday between 8.30 and 4.30 Monday to Friday

Thank you for your ongoing support during this unprecedented time .

Karen Hucker
Principal

Previous information which you may have missed

Information from the Local Authority for Post 16 students

The Local Authority has provided the following information and links for post 16 students which you or your son or daughter may find useful.

<https://youthworksupport.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Covid-19-Young-people-final1.pdf>

County have also provided a link to ideas on home learning which may also be of interest.

<https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/6124/careers-home-learning-escs-march-27th.pdf>

Information from the DfE

The DfE have highlighted that it will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their son or daughter is being asked to do online. Throughout this period, your son or daughter will be interacting with their teachers and personal tutor online. They may also be supported by a TA. If you are at all concerned, you should contact the College via email.

The DfE have also highlighted that some parents and carers may choose to supplement the school or college online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. The DfE have asked that should parents choose to do this, they need to ensure they are completing safeguarding checks. Please ensure that any support you may choose to engage for your son or daughter is via a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

The DfE has highlighted the following support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carer

Online Learning:

Staff continue to work hard to develop and refine the content they are providing online. Subject staff will have been in regular communication with their students since the College closed for face to face lessons with regard to their remote learning.

All students should continue to ensure they check the following on a daily basis:

- Student Email

- College Website
- MOODLE
- Any other communication media which their courses use

With the current remote working situation, if students require any technical support, they can email: itsupport@bexhillcollege.ac.uk and the staff working remotely will endeavour to resolve any IT queries students may have in relation to their college account or accessing any of the services the college offers.

Online TA support has been allocated to those students who receive additional support already for their studies, to help facilitate their online learning.

Unless ill or unable to be available for other reasons, staff are following the usual timetabled periods and will be available online at usual lesson and tutorial times to respond to student queries. If staff are unable to respond during these times, students will be informed about alternative arrangements.

Online Student Services support remains available for students who need information on financial or student welfare matters.

UCAS Update for 2020 Applicants:

In case you did not see this in the Friday update, we have received this information from UCAS:

May's UCAS undergraduate decision and reply deadlines have been changed to give students and their chosen universities and colleges the extra time they need to fully consider any decisions and offer, and ensures fairness in admissions is maintained:

Original date	UCAS Undergraduate deadline	New date
5 May 2020	The deadline for applicants to reply to any offers received by 31 March 2020.	19 May 2020
6 May 2020	The deadline for universities and colleges to make decisions and reply to applications received by 15 January 2020.	20 May 2020

Cleo Morgan, our Higher Education Administrator is available for advice and guidance. She can be contacted at: cleomorgan@bexhillcollege.ac.uk

Guidance for Parents and Carers on Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>