

Bexhill College: Coronavirus update for Students and Parents/Carers

Thursday 7th May 2020

The rate of new information has slowed down this week and therefore we do not have any new information for this update. We have therefore left last weeks update below for your convenience.

There may be more to update next week after the expected Government announcements about the current lockdown this weekend.

We wish you a restful bank holiday weekend

Information from the update on Thursday 30th 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 by 6.30pm**. 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. 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.

Careers Advice and Guidance

Please see our Careers Newsletter.

If students would further advice and guidance or to request a careers interview with the Careers Officer, via a Microsoft Teams call, please email suerhodes@bexhillcollege.ac.uk.

UniTasterDays: Free on-line university guidance webinars #UTDIAG

These online webinars are aimed at **all First Year students** who are thinking of going to university at the end of their college course, and will deliver some very helpful sessions on researching University courses and making a good application

- Every Tuesday for the remainder of this academic year.
- Start time:
- Finish time: 12.45 p.m.
- Guest speakers from universities will deliver sessions on important aspects about making university choices and decisions.
- Opportunity for Q&As
- To book a place and/or browse these events, go to: <https://www.unitasterdays.com/ut-tuesdays.aspx>
- Here are on-line webinars scheduled for May:
 - 05/5/2020: Personal Statements
 - 12/5/2020: Making the most of researching courses
 - 19/5/2020: UCAS and Personal Statements
 - 26/5/2020: Choices, decision-making and student life

UCAS Update for 2020 Applicants:

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

These reply dates are based on when we get the last decision in from your unis or colleges. **Please check Track to see your personal deadline.**

Coronavirus update from UCAS;

Due to the ongoing outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Government has asked universities to stop making unconditional offers or amending existing offers for two weeks. This is because they're worried, you'll feel pressured to accept these offers over others you might be better suited to.

Our advice to students who have received an unconditional offer is always to consider whether this is the right provider and course for you, before you make any decision.

To give the universities and you more time to make decisions, the 6 May deadline which was for unis to give you a decision if you sent your application by 15 January has now been extended for two weeks. If you're affected by this extension, we'll email you your new decision deadline once it's set. View the latest coronavirus updates.

To support you, we will be giving all students more time to make decisions on their offers:

If you receive your last decision on or before 4 June 2020, your reply date is 18 June 2020 (except if you're using Extra to find a place)

If you receive your last decision on or before 13 July 2020, your reply date is 20 July 2020 (including Extra choices.

HE Support in College:

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

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

In addition to the website links previously provided, we have been asked to highlight this additional link, [neurolove](https://neurolove.org/), which aims to support young people's mental health. It is a platform providing a friendly ear and human support for young people to help them to keep virtually social and safe online <https://neurolove.org/>

Other useful links

<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>

Free webinar for parents

The College works with Elevate who are keen to support our students during this time with Coronavirus and College closures. A useful focus the team have identified, from talking to different schools and colleges, is helping parents adopt an optimistic approach to helping their son or daughter work and study independently at home.

As a result, Elevate are hosting a **free webinar only for Elevate client schools and Colleges for our parents on Tuesday 12th May.**

It is a 60-minute webinar that will delve into practical strategies to show parents how to improve their child's time management, study skills and boost motivation while studying independently at home. We will also share best practices on how parents and teachers at our 3000 client schools are improving their students' metacognitive skills.

If you are interested, please use registration link below

Details of the event are as follows:

Title: How to help your child study effectively without becoming the enemy

Date: Tuesday 12th May 2020

Time: 6:00 – 7:00pm

Cost: Free

Sign up link: <https://www.elevatecoaching.info/webinar-uk-1/>

Online Learning:

Staff continue to work hard to develop and refine the content they are providing online. In line with the updates on teaching and learning below, 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

It is important students regularly check email and also look at the weekly tutorial slides as these will contain useful information including the following over the coming weeks:

- **Results day processes for second year students including results day UCAS support**
- **Leavers form which will be needed as part of the deposit return process**
- **Returned information for first year students and single year students who are returning to college in September**

Many of these processes will be different this year due to Covid-19. Many will be remote and it is important students follow the guidance issues to gain the support needed.

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.

Coursework deadline

As previously outlined, for any students completing coursework or other work for courses where grades are submitted this year, the deadline for this is **15th May 2020** to allow time for marking and to allow staff to meet the deadline for submission of centre assessed grades to the exam boards. Please make sure your son or daughter liaises with their teaching staff to ensure they meet this deadline.

Centre Assessed Grades

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and students about the process for the Centre Assessed Grades. These are the grades which the College will submit for each student for their courses. These will be provided for the majority of our courses and will need to be finalised by staff before half term to meet the expected window to upload the data.

Ofqual has yet to fully confirm the full details on Centre Assessed Grades, 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.

Exams

Results Days

As previously reported, it has been confirmed 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

Please put these dates in your diary. 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. This will be via student emails, tutorial slides and the parent update.

A/AS Level Exams and GCSE Exams – this information has been provided previously 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.

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 change of performing well in next year's A level exams.

Vocational Courses

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.

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.

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 change 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-escc-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 parent 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