

01 April 2020

Dear Student

I hope that you and your family are well and that you have settled down to your new routine of working from home. I know that the current circumstances are far from ideal at such an important stage in your studies but I am sure that you will want to work with your teachers to make the best of the situation. The work and effort you put in now will stand you in good stead once we have overcome the virus and return to more normal lives.

This email is to alert you to our arrangements for teaching and learning (including over the Easter holidays)

How will you be learning?

Different teachers have different approaches to teaching their classes from home. Some will teach lessons at the normal timetabled times and are using on-line platforms to do this. Others prefer to set work at the beginning of the week and give students deadlines for when it should be completed. Similarly some teachers allocate specific times to respond to queries and e-mails whereas others will respond when you ask them to. What matters is that you are aware of what is expected of you and especially the work that you need to complete. If you are not sure then please ask your teacher to clarify this for you.

How much time should you spend on your studies?

This will obviously depend to some degree on the subject and qualification you are studying but I would expect a student to be studying for a minimum of 8-10 hours per subject per week (more if you are taking an applied course worth 3 A levels). This would be the equivalent of your time in lessons as well as time spent on assignments, homework, core support or supported study etc. I expect the same high standards from you studying at home as I would if you were at College. This includes behaviour online and I have asked Heads of Year to follow up if there is anything that does not meet our expected standards.

Can you take paid employment?

Some students have approached us to ask about taking up part-time jobs. If you are considering this please discuss it with your parents and make sure you consider any additional risk to your health or that of family members. Please remember that you are a full time student and as such any paid work must not interfere with your ability to complete the work your teacher sets you or any assignments you need to complete.

What will happen over the Easter holidays 6th – 20th April?

We expect your teachers to set you work. As this would usually be a holiday period we do not expect on-line lessons to continue and teachers may not be available for support in the way we would usually expect them to be. Nevertheless you will be set work that you will need to complete over this period.

How will your final grade or predicted grade be determined?

Final Year students

We are still waiting for confirmation from Ofqual as to how grades for Year 2 A level and Applied and Level 2 (GCSE and Applied) students will be determined. We do know that teachers will be asked to provide the information for this from their assessments over your course so it is vital that you complete any work they set you over the rest of the year to the highest possible standard. I will let you know as soon as I know the details. We will also look to complete all specifications so that those who might wish to sit exams in the autumn as

well as those who are progressing to higher level study in this subject are not disadvantaged. We would expect your course to finish on the 22nd May.

Year 1 students

For Year 1 A level and Applied students it is important that we complete specifications so that you are properly prepared for year 2. We will consider how to recap in the autumn but the harder we work now the easier it will be to complete your course and attain the grades you are aiming at. Unless your course is assessed via coursework you will sit an end of year examination in the first week of June, which along with the other assignments set by your teacher will form the basis for progression onto year 2 of your course as well as the information we use for references to universities or employers. It is vital that you complete all work set by your teacher to the best of your ability to ensure that we can fully support you in this. We would expect your courses to finish in early to mid July.

Can you come into College?

The College is closed to all students unless they are the children of key workers or the government classifies them as vulnerable. If you or your parent thinks that this might apply to you and that you would not be safe studying at home then please contact Julie Ferman (j.ferman@wsfc.ac.uk) who will discuss this with you and make arrangements for you to come into College where necessary. Please can we ask everyone else to do their bit to beat the virus by minimising contact with others and working from home.

What if you need further support?

Your tutor will stay in touch with you each week. If you have concerns or haven't been able to get a response from a teacher please let your tutor know and they will follow it up for you. Similarly if your teacher has concerns about your work they will ask the tutor to contact you. Tutors will also send you some advice and tips for maintaining your mental health and well-being which we hope you will find helpful. If you have further concerns please alert your tutor, Head of Year or the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead Julie Ferman (j.ferman@wsfc.ac.uk).

Best wishes
Ed Senior