



ATTN: Students of Higher Education, New College Swindon. 05.03.2021

This communication is to provide you with information about the current position of the College, with regard to the HE provision, following the gradual lifting of National restrictions from 8<sup>th</sup> March.

Those of you who are studying with us on a course franchised with our university partners, will have received email bulletins to update on the University's approach at this time, and so we are writing to explain the approach the College is taking in line with latest Government guidance for [FE Colleges](#) during the Coronavirus pandemic. We are taking into account advice provided by Government to the [University sector](#) and from the [Office for Students](#), recognising that our provision does not have student accommodation and we are operating in a different context to that of the University sector.

From week commencing March 15<sup>th</sup>, we will be returning to the arrangements that were in place from September to December 2020 for all programmes. This means you will be offered face to face teaching once again. This could be as a whole cohort, or in groups as they were previously designated, according to group numbers, in order to maintain our Covid secure campus procedures. Exact arrangements for your return to college, will be confirmed and communicated to you by your Programme Leader.

**Please note:** Before we can have all the student population back on our campus we are required to encourage everybody to undertake Covid testing. You are asked to book in for and have a negative test before you can return to the classroom. This test can be at one of our college sites, a local test centre, via your workplace or by ordering a home testing kit, please feel free to choose the option which best suits you. If you wish to use the college testing facilities please book in for your test by using the links below. **It is important that you make the booking using your college account.**

#### **North Star**

NS - Lateral Flow Booking Site – please click [here](#) to book. You will also need to complete a consent form which can accessed using [this](#) link.

Once you have your test result please would you log the result [here](#), this includes tests that have been undertaken elsewhere.

#### **Queens Drive**

QD - Lateral Flow Booking Site –Please click [here](#) to book. You will also need to complete a consent form which can accessed using [this](#) link.

Once you have your test result please would you log the result [here](#), this includes tests that have been undertaken elsewhere.

Once you have had a test at one of our test centres we will be able to provide you with home testing kits which will enable you to check on the day of your on-site classes that you are safe to join the group.

We would encourage you, where possible, to attend all planned sessions and to observe the hygiene and social distancing practices put in place for your safety, and the safety of others. Please note the requirements have changed slightly and you are requested to wear a face mask in all areas of the college, including the classroom. We believe these measures give you the best possible opportunity

to safely continue your studies. However, we will review and revise this should we have any concerns or a change in advice comes from the local Public Health Team.

If you are unable to attend due to shielding, concern for vulnerable household members, or the need to self-isolate, your lecturers will work hard to provide live streaming, using Teams and other platforms to help you engage and successfully continue with your studies. If you are having any difficulties with your course, such as access to teaching, learning or assessment please contact them in the first instance. If you are experiencing financial hardship which is affecting your ability to participate in your studies then please contact [HEsupport@swindon.ac.uk](mailto:HEsupport@swindon.ac.uk) for advice on how to apply for hardship funding, which is also available from our University partners. There are also other avenues of support available within the College which we can also refer you to.

We understand the impact the current situation may have on your well-being. There are resources to support your mental health and wellbeing available through the platform [Student Space](#) including email, text and phone support. Please continue to access all avenues of support during this time, including study support, and keep your Tutors informed of any potential barriers which may impact on your return to college, so that we can support you to continue your studies and be successful.

We look forward to welcoming our students back to our campuses.

Best Wishes,

Higher Education at New College Swindon.