



ATTN: Students of Higher Education, New College Swindon. 26-02-2021

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

Those of you who are students studying with us on a course franchised with our university partners, will have received email bulletins to update on the approach of that University 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 8<sup>th</sup>, we will be returning to the arrangements that were in place from September to December 2020. This means you will be offered face to face teaching once again, and 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. Arrangements for returning to college, will be communicated to you by your Programme Leader.

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. We would also advise you to take the opportunity to undertake the testing we now have available at the College, to ensure we further mitigate against the risk of an outbreak. 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 outbreaks or a change in advice 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 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.