



Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Coronavirus update, Friday 20th March – exams and future study

With school closing today, Friday 20th March, for an indefinite period, I wanted to update you on the arrangements and plans for the coming weeks. I have been meeting with our staff team all this week to devise a clear way forward in these difficult times. As I am sure you will appreciate, these plans may change depending on the length of the school closure.

The previous letter that was sent detailed information about the education provision for children of “key workers”, those with an EHC Plan and students who may be vulnerable during the closure. These parents have been contacted directly about the offer of provision during the current situation. Thank you to those parents who have already completed and returned information about their key worker role and whether or not their child will be attending school from Monday. If you are a “key worker” please inform us by Monday 23rd March on whether your child will be attending school or not.

Exam arrangements – GCSE and A Level students

The UK government has now released more information about how students who were due to sit their exams in the summer will be awarded their grades. Teachers will work with the exams regulator Ofqual and the exam boards themselves to award grades to GCSE and A Level students.

Ofqual will set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student that reflects their performance as fairly as possible. Teachers will take into account a range of evidence such as mock exams and non-exam assessment. The exam boards will then combine the information from teachers with other relevant data to calculate a predicated grade. The details on how we will do this fairly and robustly will be provided in due course.

The aim is for these calculated grades to be issued to students before the end of July and the grades will be indistinguishable from previous years when they are permanently recorded.

The government has also set out plans for students to have the option to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity once schools are open again. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

Continued study – Year 10 and 12

All students have access to Microsoft Teams where teaching and learning will take place during the period of closure. Each subject has created a class team and work has been populated for each subject in each year group. Resources and learning materials will be continuously updated over the coming weeks and we are confident that the transition to online learning will be smooth.

To access Office 365 and Microsoft Teams, please do the following:

1. Access www.office.com on your computer/laptop
2. Click sign in
3. Username and password are the student log in for accessing computers at the UTC
4. Click the Teams icon to access subject groups

Some departments are also using Seneca Learning to deliver lessons in the coming weeks. Details of subject access codes have been published in our weekly newsletter and we will be compiling a range of additional online resources that your son/daughter can utilise in the coming weeks.

Our staff, many of whom are parents and key workers themselves, will be continuing to work during the ongoing situation. They will teach from home and from the college building, where possible and safe to do so. If you have any questions about subject content or work that your son/daughter should be accessing, please use their staff emails which are available on our website. In addition, we will be issuing a daily communication each day with a brief overview of what resources each year group/subject class should be accessing. This will be sent via Parent Mail and our social media channels.

The last week has been difficult and distressing for some of our students. I am confident that the kindness shown by all students and staff will lead to an excellent shared team effort to continue delivering a good education to our students, albeit in a change of routine. For those students who may require some additional support during these uncertain times, please make use of online support platforms such as Kooth who can help offer guidance. You can access their resources here - <https://www.kooth.com/>

The latest health guidance remains as it did before. Public Health England advises that anyone who has symptoms of Coronavirus - flu-like symptoms – defined as a fever above 37.8C or a “new continuous cough” – is advised to self-isolate for **7 days**. If you live with someone who has symptoms then the entire household will need to isolate for **14 days**. Latest information is available here - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Rest assured that UTC Warrington will still be here to support you and your family in the coming weeks and months. In these uncertain and changing times, it is more important than ever to support each other and be kind.

Please stay safe.

Thank you



Amanda Downing
Associate Principal