

Information for Students 30.04.20

There is a lot of discussion in the media about when schools/colleges will re-open once lockdown is lifted. No decisions have been made regarding the opening of schools and colleges and we will remain closed until we are asked to reopen. When this does happen, it is important that you carefully follow the guidance sent to you directly from the College, about when and how to re-start any on-campus classes. Please do not make any unnecessary travel to the College campuses until you are told exactly what we want you to do. The College regularly reviews how we are supporting vulnerable students and children of key workers and if there is a need to re-open for them, we will be in contact with them directly, but at this stage that need is not required.

Teaching and Learning

To prepare you in the best way possible for whatever your next steps will be, your teachers will continue to work with you and set exercises and activities for you to complete at home. Although this work may not count towards your outcome grades, it will be vital to your personal and academic progression for when colleges and universities reopen, as well as helping you to develop important employability skills.

Staff are providing you with essential learning, with individual feedback and support, to help you to prepare for your next steps over the remainder of the summer term. This feedback, along with suggested research and other activities will help you to continue with your studies and make sure that you are ready to move on to the next stage in education or work.

Assessments and Grading

As you may have read in the public information provided shortly before the Easter break, students' final grades for some academic and vocational qualifications will be awarded based on a Centre Assessed Grade (CAG) which will be suggested by the College and confirmed or adjusted by national exam boards as part of an external review process. Centre Assessed Grades will be based on a combination of student work, data and professional judgements.

Unfortunately, the College and teachers are bound by strict confidentiality rules NOT to discuss or reveal students' Centre Assessed Grades. We fully understand that these are unprecedented times and it may be a very stressful time for students but we ask that you do not contact your teachers in an attempt to find out or discuss your CAG under any circumstances. Please be reassured that the College continues to do everything we can to support you to achieve your full potential.

GCSE results will be published on Thursday 20th August.

We are still awaiting final clarification from the Government and Ofqual on some points, these include:

- Resits (for all qualifications) - A national process is still to be agreed. We will let you know about this as soon as the process has been published.
- BTEC External assessments - the results for external assessments that were completed last year or in January 2020 will be used, and a process similar to the A Level and GCSE Centre Assessed Grade process will be used where you were unable to complete an assessment.
- BTEC Internally assessed units - Teachers will continue to work with students to support the completion of outstanding internal assessments as soon as possible for courses that will complete/certificate in the summer.

As soon as the college has further clarification on these points we will communicate these to students and their families.

Update from Careers

Careers Advice and Guidance

There is a range of support that is available for you to help with your next steps. The Progress Coaches have uploaded lots of useful careers and employability resources, which can be found in the tutorial/evolve page on Blackboard and there are lots of useful resources and information on the careers page on our website. The Progress Coaches will be in contact with you over the next few weeks to discuss your next steps.

If you are still unsure about your plans for next year you can book an appointment to meet with the Careers Consultant, who can help you with your careers planning. To book an appointment please go through the website.

UCAS update

Universities were requested by the Government to delay making Unconditional Offers until 4th May to avoid students feeling pressured to make an early decision. Students should not feel pressured to accept an unconditional offer.

Universities have confirmed that Calculated Assessment Grade (CAG) results will be used primarily for progression to higher and further education. Clearing will be available as normal for students not happy with where they are placed.

If you need any further careers advice and guidance please contact your Progress Coach or the Careers Consultant, details available on the BLC website.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship recruitment is still continuing as normal with applications via the website. However, interviews are being carried out remotely by the apprenticeship team. Please continue to apply for your chosen apprenticeship subject area; many employers are not advertising currently but are intending to once we are back to full operation. We will continue to support apprenticeship applicants to find jobs. Degree Apprenticeships will be advertised

over the summer, but research shows that a quarter of graduate employers say they expect to take on fewer staff.

PwC, an accountancy company have developed an online employability hub that has really good resources for anyone applying for apprenticeships, completing application forms or having virtual interviews. <https://www.pwc.co.uk/careers/school-jobs/employability.html>

Key Messages for Students

We fully understand that you may have a lot of questions about the next few weeks and months. As a College we aim to reassure all our students that we continue to do everything we can to support you. Not all details have been confirmed, so we may not yet be able to answer all of your questions, however, below are some of those frequently asked that we have already started to receive, along with the information we have provided so far. Further information will continue to be sent to students regularly.

Q&A

Q: Can Students be told what their Centre Assessed Grade (CAG) is?

A: Unfortunately NOT. The qualifications regulators have made it clear that under no circumstances is the College allowed to share CAG with students. This process is to be treated as highly confidential until final grades are officially published (GCSEs-20th August). We therefore ask that you do not ask staff to discuss or disclose your CAG.

Q: I was approved for access arrangements before exams were cancelled and/or I receive additional learning support from the college. Will this be considered in my CAG?

A: YES. If you have approved access arrangements for exams this summer and/or you currently get additional learning support towards your academic study, it will be considered by the College as part of our professional judgement when allocating your CAG based on current academic/additional learning support already in place.

Q: When will grades be published to students?

A: GCSE Results day remain unchanged and (like in previous years) this is when students will find out their overall grade.

- GCSE Results Day - Thursday 20th August

Dates have yet to be confirmed for when results will be published for other qualifications. Further information about publication and collection of results will be given to staff and students when we receive information from awarding organisations or the Government.

Q: Why was I asked to continue to complete work after the college closed if this won't all be considered as part of my final grade?

A: Ofqual are advising all schools and colleges to exercise 'extreme caution' when using work completed post 20th March when agreeing a CAG. This is due to the differences in learning conditions students may face at home since the college closed. CAG judgements will not discriminate against students. It is important that students complete the course content for each subject and to understand that the work teachers have set since the college closed is a

vital part of students continuing to invest in your own learning progress and supporting transition to your next step, whatever that may be.

Q: Will resits be available to students this year?

A: The arrangements and processes around resits are still to be confirmed by the Government. It is, however, likely that if resits are available they will take place in the Autumn Term, more information will be shared with staff and students as we learn more.

There will no doubt be a number of questions from students and their families over the coming days and weeks and we will continue to keep everyone updated with developments as we learn more.

As always, please stay home, stay safe and we look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Many Thanks

BLC Senior Leadership Team