



COVID-19 Lockdown (from January 2021) – Remote Education at Richmond upon Thames College

Remote delivery of teaching and learning

The College will continue to make full provision for remote teaching, learning and assessment during this time of closure. The majority of students will learn remotely until further notice, with the exception of certain groups of students for whom on-site provision will be made by arrangement (see below).

All lessons will be taught according to your full timetable and all planned learning hours will continue to be delivered. Full-time (16–19-year-old) students will engage in all elements of their study programme remotely (including tutorial and English & maths); adult learners will be taught remotely for all planned hours; apprentices will receive their 20% off-the-job training through remote delivery.

All timetabled lessons/training will be taught 'live' via Microsoft Teams for at least the first part of the session. In many cases the entire lesson will be delivered live (synchronously), while in other cases, where appropriate to the intended outcomes of the lesson, a blended approach will be adopted, with live content combined with guided study work to be completed during the remainder of the timetabled session. Where an element of teaching and learning has been delivered 'off-line' (i.e. asynchronously), this will always be combined with live practice/tutoring/feedback to ensure that learning takes place effectively.

Attendance at remote lessons will be recorded in the same way as would normally be the case for on-site lessons.

Learning materials and resources will be available through Microsoft Teams and/or Moodle (depending on the curriculum area) and will be updated regularly. Lecturers and tutors will continue to communicate with you in order to advise you on:

- how to access your learning and assessment activities and resources while you are not in college
- the ways in which assignments/assessments will be set, submitted and marked and how feedback will be given
- how support for your learning will be provided

Assessment and Examinations

As announced by the Prime Minister on 4th January 2021, exams for GCSE and A level courses are cancelled for this academic year. We are awaiting an update from Ofqual and the Department for Education on how these qualifications will be assessed. For vocational qualifications, it is currently the Government's intention that those exams scheduled for the Summer term will be allowed to go ahead. We will monitor closely the situation for all qualification types and will keep our students updated accordingly. Please be reassured that it is our priority to ensure that our students are not disadvantaged by these circumstances in any way.

Expectations of Students

It is vital that you continue to engage fully in your learning. This means that you must:

- Attend every timetabled lesson (including English and Maths) and continue with your learning – a missed online class may affect your tutor's ability to assess you
- Complete and submit all set work – this will be required for ongoing assessment and for any calculated grades that your lecturers may be asked to award
- Get involved – be an active participant in the learning process and find ways to demonstrate what you have learned
- Go the extra mile – if there are any opportunities for additional project work, work placements or other experiences, put yourself forward
- Tell us if you are struggling – we can and will help you

Please do not assume that your grade will be calculated in the same way that they were for last year's students – early indications are that the process will be very different this year. Given that we are only one term into the academic year, it is almost certain that teachers will be required to base any estimated/calculated grades not only on work completed to date, but also on students' work from now until the end of the academic year.

In advance of a 'live' online lesson, you should:

- Set up your workspace appropriately. This should be a quiet and comfortable place suitable for learning and away from distractions where possible.
- Make sure there are no inappropriate items, imagery or wording in shot of your webcam during your online lesson.
- Dress appropriately for an online lesson (as you would if travelling to college for a lesson)
- Let others in the household know when you are due to start and end your online lesson, so they know not to disturb you.
- Use a desktop computer or laptop to access the online lesson. If you must use a mobile/tablet device, turn off notification and social media platforms, as these will distract you from working
- Use your normal College account details to access the learning platform on which your online lesson is taking place.

During a 'live' online lesson, you should:

- Have your camera turned on, with a virtual or blurred background applied.
- Respect others taking part in the lesson. Do not mute others or take control of presentations unless instructed to do so.

- Remain on mute until you are invited to contribute to the lesson by your lecturer, and then do so verbally (rather than via the 'chat' function).
- Be prepared to engage in the lesson. Use the 'chat' or 'raise hand' function to ask the lecturer a question.
- Benefit fully by actively participating in activities the lecturer asks you to complete.

At the end of the online lesson, you should:

- Make sure you have left the online lesson. Do not remain in the lesson once the lecturer has left.
- Check you have all the information you need to carry out any work set for you to complete before your next online lesson.
- Make sure you take a significant break from looking at the screen for your own personal health and wellbeing.

Students studying courses that require specialist equipment or facilities

Where students require access to specialist equipment or facilities to continue with their studies, plans will be put in place by Heads of School and authorised by the College Leadership Team. In some exceptional cases, this might involve students being invited to attend on site in a limited way. In such cases, safety will be the absolute priority and all arrangements will follow strict COVID-secure guidelines. Students will be contacted directly by curriculum staff who will explain the arrangements.

Support for students without devices, connectivity or a suitable environment for learning

During both the first national lockdown and the Autumn term 2020, the College has lent laptops to a significant number of students who have limited or no access to devices to support remote digital learning. We have limited further supplies of devices available. If your access to digital equipment and/or connectivity are impacting on your ability to access remote learning, please contact your Tutor or Head of School and they will arrange for an assessment to be made of your situation. In some cases, you may be invited to attend on site to access IT equipment; in other cases, we may arrange for you to borrow a device.

If you feel that the workspace in your home is not adequate for you to successfully learn remotely, please contact theadvicehub@rutc.ac.uk so that we can contact you about alternative arrangements.

Support for vulnerable students and those with SEND

The College continues to offer on-site provision for vulnerable students as defined by the Department for Education. This includes those who:

- have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities

- are living in temporary accommodation
- are young carers
- are care leavers
- are at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (see above)
- need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

The Student Services team and Individual Learning Support team have already been in contact with students known to us who fit into these categories and on-site provision is being made for those who have requested it. If you are in one of these categories and have not yet discussed access to on-site provision but would like to, please contact theadvicehub@rutc.ac.uk so that we can contact you to discuss your support needs.

Finally

These are challenging times for students, staff and parents/carers alike. We find ourselves in an ever-changing situation, with the ongoing necessary restrictions impacting on all our lives. Please remember we are all in this together and the staff of RuTC are here to support you in any way we can. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with your Tutor, Head of School or any other member of staff if you need our help in any way.