Remote Learning During College Closure – A Guide for Students

As you are aware, in response to Government guidance related to the Coronavirus outbreak, Richmond upon Thames College will be closed to students from 5th January 2021 until 15th February 2021 at the earliest, subject to the government's review of the lockdown situation on that date. We will remain open for vulnerable students and students of critical workers.

It is the College's intention to continue to make provision for remote learning and assessment activities during this time of closure. This guide provides information and instructions on what you should do to access your learning resources, assignments and guidance.

You should by now be aware of the following:

- how your lecturer/tutor will communicate with you remotely during lockdown (e.g. by email, Moodle or Microsoft Teams)
- 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

If you are unsure of the arrangements for any of the above, please email your lecturer/tutor or Head of School and they will give you clear instructions.

Whilst the College intends to support learning and assessment as fully as possible by remote means, it is important to understand that it is not possible to replicate the learning experience of being in college during a period of distance learning and that there will be challenges for both students and staff in using online platforms for teaching and learning. Staff will be working normal hours remotely (provided they are not absent for reasons of illness or other normal circumstances) in order to give the best possible service during these unprecedented times. Similarly, it is important that students maintain a regular learning routine to ensure that you keep on top of the work that is being set while you are away from college. Please note that all timetabled lessons will be taught 'live' via Microsoft Teams for at least the first part of the lesson. In some cases the entire lesson will be delivered live, while in other cases live content will be followed by the setting of work to be completed during the remainder of the timetabled lesson. Attendance at remote lessons will be recorded in the same way as would normally be the case for on-site lessons. Your lecturers/tutors will make clear the arrangements and expectations relating to your lessons.

In order to ensure that you are able to fully access the remote learning and assessment activities and lecturer/tutor support provided, it is vital that you:

(i)   make sure you can access Microsoft Office 365 at home through a browser such as Chrome

(ii)   check that you can log in to whichever remote learning platform your lecturer/tutor is using (e.g. Microsoft Team, Moodle, Edmodo) and access your course content

(iii)   ensure that you are able to access your college email account and check it daily throughout the period of closure

Expectations for student remote learning:

In advance of the 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 the online lesson, you should:

- 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 teacher.
- Be prepared to engage in the lesson. Use the 'chat' or 'raise hand' function to ask the teacher a question or contribute to the lesson when asked.
- Benefit fully by actively participating in activities the teacher 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 teacher 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 are required to act responsibly and professionally at all times. Any misuse of college systems or poor behaviour during remote learning will still be subject to the student support and disciplinary action.