



Remote education provision: information for learners and parents

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on everyone and we need to ensure that we continue to give every student the support they need to successfully achieve their qualifications and progress to further training or employment.

This information has been developed for our students and their parents to let them know what to expect from the college if there's a need to self-isolate or where restrictions require them to remain at home. It's a strange time for everyone and this information is intended to provide clarity and transparency during the pandemic.

The remote curriculum: what will I be taught at home?

When it's necessary to deliver remote learning, our primary aim is to minimise any disruption to you and ensure that you have the opportunity to complete your studies successfully.

During periods of remote learning we'll continue to deliver your planned schedule of teaching, learning and assessment as closely as possible. The content and pace of teaching sessions will be aligned as closely as possible to your original timetable.

However, we recognise that there may be some learning content or assessment activity that we're unable to deliver without face-to-face contact with you or without access to specific resources. For example, the development of practical skills or an activity which requires the use of our specialised industry equipment. If that's the case we would postpone that activity and other delivery would be brought forward to take its place. Where these delays are forced upon us, we'll aim to make them as short as we can for you.

How will I be taught when studying at home?

This depends on the situation. If there's a local or national lockdown you and the majority of our students would be taught at home. Alternatively, if you need to self-isolate, you and other students may be learning at home, while some of your class are being taught on campus.

In both of these scenarios, on the days and times you would be having lessons and workshops, these would continue according to the planned timetable, just virtually.

If there's a local or national lockdown and you and your class are all being taught remotely then your teacher will usually use live video technology to deliver the session. There may be periods during the session where the teacher is not live – for example when a task is set for you to work on offline. There may also be periods where you're working remotely in a group on activities and then you re-join as a whole group to discuss the outcomes or for a question and answer session just like you might do if you were in college. Your teacher will use their judgement to decide how to structure your virtual lessons and workshops to make them as engaging, relevant and interesting as possible. They may also use some pre-recorded



content within the lesson and homework and other tasks may be set for you to work on independently outside of live sessions.

If your teacher sets you tasks to work on independently outside of your virtual lesson, they will aim to ensure that these are fully explained, deadlines are clear and you have an understanding of what is expected of you.

If there's a need for you to self-isolate while the rest of your class is on campus, the lesson or workshop will be broadcast to you via a webcam. We have webcams in the vast majority of our classrooms and workshops for this purpose. You'll be able to see and hear the session, and we ask that you take part in the live session, just as you would if you were in college.

How will I access online remote education?

There's a range of methods which your teachers can use to ensure you can access online remote education. These include our own online delivery platforms, video conferencing software, external websites, commercial platforms, email communications and in some scenarios your teachers may send resources to you through the post.

We use video conferencing software including Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and Zoom to deliver live sessions. Whenever possible, we ask you to engage in live sessions using video as we believe that this is the best way of fully participating and learning within sessions, although other methods and resources are also used.

You may be signposted to online resources and learning activity within the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or Google Classroom to support you when completing tasks and you can also access feedback from your teachers through these systems.

Your teachers will use our in-house Learner Portal/On Track system in order to record your reviews, performance and progress records. You can access the Learner Portal by logging into the college network via the virtual desktop. Our Linkup site provides handy links to all of these key systems: <https://web.gateshead.ac.uk/linkup/Home/Students>

There's also a student guide to logging into college systems [here](#).

You may also be signposted to other websites and online resources to support your studies.

During a lockdown or periods when you may need to self-isolate, you will still be set assignments and projects to work on from home, just as you would if you were in college. Your teachers will support you while you work on these and provide guidance and feedback.

How long should I expect to work at home each day?

If you are well, we ask that you to try to follow your normal timetable and to study for the same number of hours as you would if you were in college.



Many of our courses require you to work independently and it is vitally important that you continue to do this, completing relevant homework and assignments just as you would during periods of face-to-face delivery.

I don't have digital or online access at home, how will you support me to access remote education?

We recognise that some students may not have access to suitable IT equipment at home and where this is the case we've been supporting those students with laptops and data access. To be able to make this happen, we have used support funding and have introduced equipment loans. Unfortunately, during a lockdown, laptops and other devices can be in short supply and funds can be limited, therefore we have an alternative arrangement in place.

If you find it difficult to access technology during a lockdown you can use the IT equipment within our Baltic Campus library. This is in line with current Government advice where students can come into college during lockdown to continue with their studies where parents are key workers or those without IT equipment.

If you need to come into college to use IT equipment, simply send an email to library@gateshead.ac.uk. You'll need to let them know your student number, course, curriculum leader, the days and times you need to come into the library and whether it is a regular booking or a one-off requirement. The library staff will then get in touch with you to confirm the arrangements.

If you need to access live or recorded teaching sessions please bring headphones so you can take part in the session without disturbing other people in the library.

All arrangements described above are subject to Government lockdown rules. If these rules were to change then we would let you know.

Work can be submitted by uploading to college systems and sending to your teacher by email. If the proposed method is proving difficult, then please speak with your teacher and we will look to find an arrangement that meets your needs.

What are the expectations for engagement and what support should parents and carers provide at home?

While you'll be asked to join lessons virtually from the comfort of your own home, you are expected to engage fully in live online sessions just as you would in college.

Great attendance, attitude and positive behaviour are expected in all lessons whether that's online or in a classroom or workshop.

We expect standards of behaviour and appearance that are in line with the world of employment and have prepared a netiquette document which you might find useful [here](#).



During lockdown we will be taking registers for all taught sessions and will be tracking your attendance. If you aren't attending, we will contact you to discuss your non-participation.

If you're at home self-isolating while the rest of your group are in college face-to-face then the same rules apply during your remote learning. You will be expected to participate (if you are well) and your virtual attendance will be tracked on the class register.

Please make sure that you take regular breaks if you are using IT equipment for long lengths of time at home and please follow good health and safety guidance in terms of your posture and use of equipment.

We ask parents and carers to encourage their child to participate fully and help them to set good routines to support their learning. Taking time to discuss what they've learnt and ensuring they are engaging and participating in lessons and workshops is extremely useful. We've got a list of useful contacts on our website if you're a parent or carer and have any worries or concerns – [here](#).

If you're a mature student then please keep in contact with your teachers and email them directly if you have any questions or support requests.

How will you check whether I am making progress and how will I be informed if there are concerns?

Checking and providing you with ongoing feedback on your progress is vitally important whether you're in college or working remotely. Your progress will be assessed through your contributions within taught sessions, outputs from class activities and both informal and formal assessments. We will ask you to continue to submit work and your teachers will mark your work and provide feedback. You can check some of the details of your progress through the Learner Portal and other online systems.

Our programmes for young people have a learning facilitator who's on hand to monitor your welfare and progress. During periods of face-to-face learning, they carry out one-to-one reviews with you and discuss your engagement, personal development and progress.

During a lockdown, we'll be increasing these reviews and aiming to undertake them on a fortnightly basis. These check-ins will give you the opportunity to have meaningful discussions of around 30 minutes to discuss your wellbeing, attendance at virtual sessions and any concerns or worries that you may have. The discussions and any agreed actions are logged in the Learner Portal.

If you have particular support needs identified during the review or are not engaging in sessions, then the learning facilitator or another member of staff may follow up and discuss any additional support requirements that we can put in place for you. Depending upon the situation we may contact your parent or carer if permission has been given to do so.



If you are self-isolating and most of your class group and staff are working on campus, the learning facilitator or another member of staff may carry out a review with you by video or telephone to discuss wellbeing, engagement and progress.

How will you assess my work and progress?

Assessment and feedback take many forms and are an integral part of what we do. Assessment can include formally marked, graded work and providing written comments for individuals, but can also include whole-class feedback, tests marked automatically via digital platforms, in-class discussion, in-class activities and question and answer sessions. We encourage teachers to use a range of approaches based on what is most effective.

We know that students value ongoing individualised feedback and will continue to provide this on assessments and assignments during lockdown. Your teachers will continue to follow the established processes and schedule for assessment, tracking and recording progress, recording one-to-one reviews and similar activity. Progress records will be maintained and available in our online systems including the Learner Portal.

As a result of the pandemic, the Government and Ofqual may find it necessary to change the assessment process or cancel exams. We will aim to publish on our website what this means to you as soon as the information becomes available.

Whatever the national plans are regarding exams and assessment, the most important thing is that you continue to develop your skills, knowledge and understanding. Therefore, we ask that you continue to engage with your studies to ensure you receive the highest grades possible and the best outcomes to meet your future career aspirations.

I am an apprentice or an adult learner – what should I expect?

The approach in the event of lockdown outlined above also applies to apprentices and adult learners. In particular we will aim to maintain the planned schedule of learning and assessment as far as we can and will use tools to support your remote learning.

If you're an apprentice you should continue to engage in remote online sessions as per your timetable. We'll aim to carry out individual reviews according to the planned schedule and your trainer/assessor will carry out regular welfare checks. Depending upon the situation, we may not be able to carry out site visits and therefore reviews may be undertaken using video technology and in some cases the telephone. We aim to continue to work with your employer so that you are able to maintain progress. If you are furloughed then we may still be able to continue to carry out training activity with you even if you are not working; each case will be looked at on an individual basis.

Adult Learners should aim to engage in remote online sessions. As with all our learners, we will aim to minimise any delays or disruption to your learning. In some cases, if you were due to start or progress to a new qualification during the year, we may consider delaying the start of this new learning until restrictions are lifted; we will let you know if this happens.



What additional support is there if I have particular needs?

In line with Government guidance, on-site face-to-face learning will continue for relevant learners who have support needs. This can include learners with specific learning difficulties and disabilities and an Educational Healthcare Plan (EHCP). We will liaise with parents/carers and local authorities to design and deliver appropriate learning and support during lockdown.

Some learners may be able to work remotely but may need support from family members in order to do so. In this case we will work with parents/carers to guide and support; please contact your teacher or learning support worker where guidance is needed.

Welfare checks take place with all of our study programme learners and we aim to prioritise contact with learners who are considered vulnerable or at increased risk during lockdown. Learning facilitators carry out these welfare checks and reviews, and will continue to liaise when necessary with colleagues in Learner Support to support your wellbeing during lockdown.

What should I do if I want to feedback on how I'm being taught remotely or want to make a complaint?

If you'd like to give general feedback, need further information or have a query, please speak to your teacher or the department contact ([click here](#) for list) in the first instance.

If you'd like to make a formal complaint, please take a look at our complaints procedure which you can find by [clicking here](#).