

We understand that this is a challenging time for our students and we have put the following plans in place to support learning and keep our community safe.

**Changed Delivery of Teaching, Learning and Support from Monday 23 March:** In response to the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education and the Prime Minister on the evening of 18 March 2020, from 23 March onwards, the college mode of delivery of teaching and learning will be online for all theory aspects of learning programmes and support of learners which will include English and maths. No further practical lessons will take place on site until further notice. College colleagues have been planning for this, in the expectation that schools and colleges would be instructed to close to physical, face-to-face teaching and learning which has now occurred.

**Student timetables:** will be as normal for theory lessons, but lessons/classes will be delivered online. The Faculties/Departments of the college have provided their students with details of how to access their online learning and will keep in touch regularly.

**Online and IT/Mobile:** we will use a range of online learning techniques, all of which can be accessed by computer/tablet/SMART mobile, and these techniques have been widely tested by colleagues to ensure they operate as expected. If any student or parent is concerned about access to IT equipment, they should contact the college via tutors so we can evaluate if there is any support that might be offered.

**Tutorials:** these will continue as normal online and colleagues at the college will provide information about this directly to students.

**Wellbeing and Counselling:** the Wellbeing team and College counselling service will continue to operate as normal; appointments will be by telephone. Students have already received an update from the Wellbeing Team via Moodle providing details on how to access this service. Students currently receiving counselling will be contacted direct by the College counsellor to confirm appointment times.

**Exams & Assessments:** Ofqual, the exams regulator in England, has announced that no exams will take place in May or June this year. As a result, students will receive a calculated grade which reflects their performance as fairly as possible under the current circumstances. Exam boards across the country will ask teachers to submit their judgment about the grade they believe students would have received if exams had gone ahead. This score will take into account a range of evidence including assessments completed to date (including mock exams and non-exam assessment previously known as 'coursework') and other forms of prior attainment. These predicted grades will be monitored by exam boards to ensure fairness. Exam boards believe this will provide the best assessment of the work they have put in. However, Ofqual have not yet provided precise guidance to schools and

colleges about how or when this process will commence, therefore more information will be provided as soon as this detail is shared with the College.

**College applicants:** This is how we will be managing offers and interviews for applicants looking to study at college in September following the recent government announcement that all exams – GCSE, A Levels, Technical and Vocational, and International Baccalaureate – have been cancelled for this academic year.

Whilst we understand that this announcement is very unsettling for applicants and you may be concerned about your place at college, ultimately we do not expect this announcement to adversely affect students enrolling to study with us in September 2020.

The Department for Education has stated that:

“The calculated grades awarded will be formal grades, with the same status as grades awarded in any other year.”

“The grades awarded to students will have equal validity to the grades awarded in other years and should be treated in this way by universities and colleges. There is no reason for the usual admissions cycle to be disrupted.”

Once we receive the grades you have been awarded we will confirm in the same way we do every year. Please be reassured that any applicant who does not achieve the grades required to meet the conditions of their offer will have their application reviewed, taking into account the grades awarded, prior achievement and references from their teachers, before a final decision is made. Where possible we will try to be flexible and we will ensure that all students are enrolling onto the right programme for them to be successful.

Where applicants have applied but not yet received an offer we will be in touch shortly either with an offer or for an interview – which we will conduct by telephone. We will continue to accept applications from those who have not yet applied to college.

Your school will have information about how grades will be awarded for your GCSEs; if you have specific enquiries about joining college, please feel free to contact our Admissions teams:

[courses@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:courses@sparsholt.ac.uk)

[coursesandover@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:coursesandover@sparsholt.ac.uk)

The Department for Education has published guidance that you may find helpful:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>

**Library and Learning Resources:** the college libraries and learning resource centres will be available for the collection and return of books. A further timetable of the opening hours will be published next week.

**Careers Guidance:** guidance about next steps can still be booked in the usual way and consultations will be available via email and telephone with further information on the Moodle Careers page.

**Work Experience/Work Placement:** as a result of the announcements on the evening of 18 March 2020, there is no longer any requirement to continue to attend work experience/work placement and there is no impact on the final grade for any student who is not able to/chooses not to continue with work placement.

**Free School Meals:** The government has yet to supply colleges with the details of how they would like free school meals administered and so for now, we have sent a supermarket voucher to the parents of all students eligible for support. **Once you have used the credit, please keep the card that you have been sent** as we may choose to remotely top it up in four weeks' time when the next credit becomes due, unless the government puts alternative arrangements in place.

**College transport:** because the college will not be open for face-to-face teaching, any student wishing to have their bus pass refunded on a pro rata basis, for the remaining weeks of the year, should contact the college by emailing [coursesandover@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:coursesandover@sparsholt.ac.uk).

**Children/students of Key Workers:** parents who are "Key Workers"\* or where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should contact the college by 12pm on Friday 20 March, if they wish for arrangements to be made for on-campus attendance or residency, in line with the announcement by the Secretary of State.

**\*Key Workers include:**

**Health and social care**

Includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment

**Education and childcare**

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach

**Key public services**

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

**Local and national government**

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies

**Food and other necessary goods**

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines)

**Public safety and national security**

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

**Transport**

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass

**Utilities, communication and financial services**

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors