Sent via email

31st December 2020

Dear Student

**Important Notification Regarding the Start of Term**

In light of yesterday’s government announcement, I am writing to set out the college’s revised plans for the start of term. I am sorry that this all comes at such short notice but I’m sure that you understand the need for us to respond to what continues to be a rapidly evolving situation.

Since the start of the academic year, our priority has always been to achieve the right balance of college based and virtual learning to enable our students and staff to be as safe as possible whilst also ensuring effective and meaningful learning takes place. I believe that for the most part, we achieved this last term, and the progress that you have all made, particularly in light of your engagement with online learning, is both something to be proud of and which will now stand us all in good stead for the coming weeks. As I have always said, our blended delivery model was developed to enable us to scale up or down as necessary to respond to any change in circumstances, which we must now do.

**Start of Term**

Week commencing 4th and 11th January:

There will be no college based lessons during these two weeks and instead all of your lessons will take place virtually through MS Teams. These should follow your normal timetable, but if there are any slight variations, please expect to hear from your Programme Manager.

Please also take the opportunity to catch up with your personal tutor to discuss your progress on the course so far, receive feedback on work completed to date and agree targets for the coming semester.

I am afraid this does mean that the scheduled examinations that were due to take place during these weeks will now be postponed and re-scheduled for a little later in the year. Further details of that will be provided by the central HE team here in due course once we know more about the earliest opportunities to do so.

Week commencing 18th January:

Based on the current guidance, I would expect and hope to have all of you resuming your normal blended (mix of college based and virtual lessons) timetable in this week.

**Residential students**

As a result of the above, residential students will now move back into residence from Sunday 17th January. Further details of that will be provided by our Student Services team in due course.

**Covid Testing**

The college will be proceeding with its plans to have lateral flow testing in place for students and staff from Monday 18th January. I will share more details of what this is, how it works and who it will be for in due course, but needless to say at this stage, please be reassured that it can only help to ensure we minimise risk of transmission further.

We are currently working on mobilising a team of staff to administer this and would ask that if any student or parent has friends or relatives with relevant experience in any form of medical setting or would be willing to volunteer to help with the administration side, please do get in touch with our Deputy Principal, James Hibbert james.hibbert@plumpton.ac.uk.

I hope this provides you all with sufficient clarity regarding the next two weeks. I apologise again for the disruption this will cause you, but ask that you all please maintain your commitment to your studies over the coming weeks, despite the very difficult times happening around us.

I know that you enrolled onto your course because of your passion for your subject and your desire to gain the skills and knowledge to progress into the workplace. That desire and ambition to work in the industry you have chosen, or simply to better yourself is more important than ever. I encourage you to use it to keep yourself motivated, keep thinking about your future and the wonderful opportunities that will be available to you and for now, to keep focused on being your best self.

Stay safe and I look forward to seeing you back at college soon.

Yours sincerely



Jeremy Kerswell

**Principal**