

Returning to College

We have been working hard to identify the steps that need to be taken in order to enable students and staff to be able to return to classes at the College whilst maintaining social distancing.

Thorough risk assessments have been completed, based on the latest government guidelines and we are now confident that we have sufficient measures in place to limit the risks of spreading the Covid-19 virus. We have prepared this guide to inform you of the measures that have been put in place and to clearly state what will be required of all students and staff attending site in the new academic year. If you have any further queries after reading this guide please do not hesitate to contact Student Services on studentservices@swindon.ac.uk who will be able to refer you on to the relevant person to help you with your query.

We look forward to welcoming you to our College.

HOW TO USE TRANSPORT SAFELY

In accordance with the latest government guidance we would ask that, wherever possible, students are transported to College without using the local bus network. Where this is not possible, Swindon bus has put into place a series of robust measures to ensure you remain as safe as possible during your time on the transport network. These measures include the deep cleaning of the vehicles the night before they are used on our routes and thorough cleaning of all hard surfaces before and after use. Please click on the following links from the two main bus companies to read more about the safety measures they have put in place and what is expected from passengers.

We also ask that you stay at home, do not travel to College and isolate yourself if you have any of the recognised COVID-19 symptoms. Bus companies have instructed their drivers not to let anyone board if they recognise any of these symptoms. (Symptoms are listed on page 7.)

Information on local public transport, timetables and coronavirus updates can be found on the Swindon Government web page; please click on the following links from the two main bus companies to read more about the safety measures they have put in place and what is expected from passengers.

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20031/roads_parking_and_transport/496/find_out_about_public_transport_companies

<https://www.swindonbus.co.uk/coronavirus> and <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/help-and-contact/national/travelling-safely-faqs>

BOARDING THE BUS

Social distancing will be observed at all times; you must maintain a 1m plus space between yourself and other students whilst waiting for the bus, boarding the bus and then getting off at College.

When you get off the bus please allow the students and other passengers seated at the front to get off first and then begin working towards the back. For your own safety and for the safety of others, please follow the directions given by the driver. Please ensure that you go straight to your lesson and do not congregate outside the gates or inside or out of the main entrance.

Students will not be able to travel on College minibuses under current conditions, but this will be reviewed when guidance changes.

Once on site please ensure you walk on the left of all paths and corridors, this will help maintain the 1-metre plus rule and keep you as safe as possible.

RETURNING HOME

The normal routine of departure from North Star will be observed; if you need to queue to get out of the building or for the bus please don't forget to social distance! Face coverings must also be worn at all times when travelling home.

PLEASE NOTE: If students start to display symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at College they will be removed from the classroom and should not use public transportation to get home. Parents or guardians will be contacted to arrange transportation to get the student home to ensure all other students and local residents remain safe.

WHAT'S OPEN AND WHAT SERVICES ARE RUNNING?

North Star will be open to students. The Learning Development Centre will remain open with restricted access and strict social distancing rules in place. The Wellbeing Centre will remain closed.

CATERING

A reduced number of outlets will be open at the North Star campus, whilst students are on site. They will be marked out with a one-way access system and will be offering one hot food counter and cold refreshments, drinks, snacks and sandwiches at the other outlets. Preferred payment will be by contactless methods. Please ensure that you use the hand sanitiser before entering and leaving the restaurant area.

NOTE: The vending machines will be in operation.

TOILETS: These will be open at College with a recommended reduced capacity or 2 per toilets. However, to assist with social distancing, some cubicles, urinals and sinks will be marked as not in use. Please ensure that if you do need to queue to use the toilets, you maintain social distancing at all times. Markings on the floor will help you to do this correctly.

LANYARDS: Your lanyard and ID will need to be worn all day so that we know who should be on site.

SWITCHBOARD: Our Switchboard continues to be operational, covered by staff who will be working remotely and onsite. There may be limited support staff on site so if you do call Switchboard our Receptionists will take messages and forward your enquiries to the relevant staff member. Please be patient and they will reply ASAP.

IT SERVICES

The IT helpdesk will be open in the Avenue during normal daytime opening hours. Alternatively, log a support request at <https://support@swindon.ac.uk> or phone (01793) 491591

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FEEL ILL

The main symptoms of COVID-19 have been identified as a: High temperature. This means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back. New, continuous cough. This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours. Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. This means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal. IF you have any of these symptoms, we ask that you DO NOT come into College and ring 111 for advice.

IF you attend College with any of these symptoms or symptoms develop whilst you are at College, you will need to be collected by your next of kin and taken home and should ring 111 for advice.

Whilst you wait for a lift you will be isolated from other students and staff to ensure your safety and theirs. ANYONE with symptoms should then self-isolate for seven days following advice from 111 and NOT COME to College.

IF anyone you live with has symptoms you should NOT COME to College, ring 111 and self-isolate for 14 days as advised.

IF you feel unwell whilst on site, please inform your Course Tutor/Lecturer who will contact your parent/guardian and/or arrange for you to go home. If you are unable to leave the college

immediately your Course Tutor/Lecturer will take you to the Isolation room. You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire and your details may be shared with track and trace services.

MOVING ABOUT WHILST ON CAMPUS

Always walk on the left of paths and corridors, which have been marked out with floor tape and arrows. When queuing for rooms, food or toilets observe the 1m plus social distancing rules. Use hand sanitiser frequently and ensure you wash your hands, in accordance to published guidelines, regularly. It is essential to keep everyone safe, that we all follow the rules of social distancing. Face coverings should be worn in all internal public spaces, wearing them in the classroom is optional. Please cooperate with us to keep you and your families safe. Persistent refusal to follow staff instructions will result in suspension from College and you will not be able to return until after a review has been held with your Curriculum Manager.

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE DURING LESSONS

As part of our preparations for students returning to College each curriculum area has carefully reviewed the steps that need to be taken during classes to keep both students and staff safe. These measures include but are not limited to:

- Signage to indicate social distancing around the campus (1m plus as a minimum).
- Teaching classes outdoors wherever possible.
- Limiting class sizes to enable social distancing.
- Identifying seating/working points within classrooms and workshops so that students know where to sit/stand to maintain social distance.

- Encouraging hand washing and sanitising at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Thoroughly cleaning all equipment, desks and work areas at the end of each College day.
- Not sharing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) between students.
- Maintaining a safe 1m plus distance between students and 2m distance between staff and anyone else at all times.
- Removing anyone from College who exhibits any symptoms of Covid-19.
- Disinfectant wipes are available for classrooms and shared spaces throughout the campus.

For the safety of everyone on site it is essential that we all follow the safety procedures that have been put in place. This will enable us to ensure that every possible step is being taken to minimise the spread of the virus.

SOME QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

Q: What will I be doing while I'm in College?

A: You will attend your classes as normal and as timetabled according to whether you are in Group A or B. You will receive your timetables during induction week. If you are in any doubt please speak with your Course Tutor who will be able to help you.

Q: Will I have to wear a face covering and gloves?

A: Your safety is our utmost priority and we will be following Government advice at all times. You will be required to wear a face covering while moving through all public areas such as corridors,

staircases, the Refectory and the LRC. You will not be required to wear a face covering in class. We do not encourage the wearing of gloves as regular handwashing is the best way to stop the virus spreading.

Q: Will I have to keep distance from my friends?

A: You will not be required to wear face coverings in class or while having lunch but you will need to maintain a social distance of one metre plus between yourself and your friends including during breaks and lunch times.

Q: If I don't feel able to attend College will this affect my attendance record and my grades?

A: We believe that the College is as safe as we can make it and that it is vitally important for your education and chances of progression that you attend College as required by your timetable. If you genuinely feel unable to do so, please speak to your Course Tutor so that we can support you.

Q: Will the canteen area be open?

A: The Refectory will be open but with reduced capacity, with appropriate distancing measures in place. We would ask you whenever possible to make a contactless payment. We will also open up other areas in the College where you can have your lunch. Where it is appropriate you may also be able to have lunch in your classroom but we would ask you to act responsibly by tidying away your litter and ensuring that your classroom is in a fit state for your next lesson.