Hi Students,

We wanted to reassure you that we are here for you, and we want you to know we understand how worrying this moment in time can be for you. We wanted to share some helpful information.

As you will be aware, the College remains closed until further notice. Please keep up to date with developments by checking sandwell.ac.uk

Latest government advice can be found here www.gov.uk/coronavirus

STAY SAFE

THANK YOU FROM SANDWELL COLLEGE

We want to thank all of you for the amazing way you have pulled together as the college community to support each other during the Covid-19 crisis.

Our thanks go to all the staff who have been supporting our 10,000 students through our online learning by continuing teaching, marking and assessing, through to staff who have delivered food prepared by our catering staff, and other essentials, to students’ homes, and our amazing IT and finance teams who are keeping things running.

Thanks to all our students who are continuing to study to make sure they are ready for when they return. Thanks to all those who continue to apply to our college looking forward to the next stage of their education and careers.

But it’s not just our college. It’s everyone who is involved in combating this disease. A massive thanks to all the staff in the NHS, all the key workers, everyone who is staying at home keeping others safe, and all those supporting their neighbours.

A thank you to all our partner organisations and stakeholders including local authorities in Sandwell, Birmingham and the West Midlands.

The practical steps we have taken include:

• Guaranteeing a place to anyone who applies to the college. We know that many students are concerned about their futures but we can reassure you we will support you at college.

• We are providing online and telephone interviews for those students applying but needing further information.

• For existing students we will continue to support you to achieve your next steps - don’t worry!

• For students, if you need support please call us on 0121 667 5000.

It’s a difficult time but with so many people pulling together we will come through this.
Sandwell College has been providing young people across Birmingham and the Black Country access to vital resources and support during the period of lockdown following the COVID-19 outbreak.

Since the national lockdown, and the temporary closure of the College building, teachers and colleagues have maintained their commitment to supporting some of their most vulnerable students.

Whilst maintaining social distancing guidelines, staff have been taking safe measures to deliver essential packages to students, to ensure they have vital supplies during the pandemic. Those living independently or away from parents are receiving individualised parcels, which include food, financial aid and information technology, so that the most vulnerable can stay connected through the isolation period.

As part of its dedication to ensuring that studies can continue for everyone, whether they are young or adult learners, thousands of students at Sandwell College are in regular phone contact with staff, have access to online learning platforms and stay updated with weekly newsletters.

Upon its temporary closure, Sandwell College donated all surplus perishables to a local food bank within the community and to Elim Community Church in West Bromwich.

Graham Pennington, Principal of Sandwell College, commented:

“These are extremely challenging circumstances for everyone and I am incredibly proud and grateful for my team’s dedication and their efforts to ensure that our students stay safe and secure, whilst enabling their continued access to learning and support.

“We would like to reassure all of our students and their families that we are here for you throughout this difficult time, and that any student who has been offered a place to join Sandwell College from September, or would like to apply, will still be able to do so.

“We thank our partners, stakeholders and most importantly all NHS staff and key workers, for their ongoing support and efforts in the fight against COVID-19. We urge everybody to stay safe by following government guidelines and staying at home. If you have any concerns or we can help you in any way, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.”
ARE YOU READY FOR A SPORTS CHALLENGE?

Our Sports staff have been busy setting daily challenges for our students to recreate and are giving out prizes to the best attempts. Check out the Head of Sports, Scott Thomas doing a backflip.

Tag us @sandwell.college and the sports department @sandwell_college_sport_ on Instagram for the chance of winning a prize!

TELL US YOUR STORY

During this crisis, there have been amazing stories of gratitude and kindness throughout the world. If you’d like to show your gratitude to a particular staff member or college team, contact marketing@sandwell.ac.uk to share your story and we will republish your story across our social media channels!

KEEPING FIT AT HOME

Whilst we’re at home it is still important for us to stay active, as it is good for our minds and bodies. The Sports department have been busy filming examples of quick exercise activities you can do at home without any equipment.

Give them a try and tag us @sandwell.college and the sports department @sandwell_college_sport_ on Instagram.

SUPPORTING YOU: CORONA ANXIETY

We understand how worrying this moment in time can be for you. Angela Tombs, Director of Student Services has the following top tips for helping you with Corona anxiety. Watch our video on Moodle.
The college may be currently closed due to the COVID-19 but this does not give you an excuse to neglect your studying. This is a very unusual and unexpected time for all of us. But it is important to keep up to date with your studies, regardless of whether your exams have been cancelled. It is a good way to keep your brain occupied and stimulated.

Here are some tips on how to study at home!

1. Create a study area

The current situation means your family members might be working from home and your siblings are home from school. Therefore, we understand finding somewhere quiet and peaceful may be difficult. However, creating a study environment will help give you the mindset to take a few hours out of your day to study.

2. Timetable

Check out our printable Timetable on our website under School Leavers Courses > School Leavers Guide. It is a great template to get you started. A timetable will help you feel focused and organised. Be kind to yourself, there is no need to be studying every hour of the day, however, spending a few hours daily won’t do any harm.

3. Daily Planner

Check out our printable Daily Planner on our website under School Leavers Courses > School Leavers Guide. It is a great template to get you started. Creating a list of things to do daily will encourage you to be productive with your time. You don’t just need to use the To-Do List for studying; write things you want to accomplish for the day and be realistic. This will encourage you to feel good about yourself and not waste the day in bed.

4. Ask for help

If you are struggling with understanding your coursework or a subject do not hesitate to contact your lecturers. They are here to help you. We also offer mentors and have a welfare team who are free to talk to you about any of your troubles.

5. Reward yourself

You deserve it! It is so important for you to be kind to yourself during this unusual time. Reward yourself after studying by going into the garden, watching your favourite show on Netflix, read a book, play a game on the XBOX, FaceTime a friend, have a relaxing bath, meditate, or have a whole bar of chocolate to yourself.

For more guidance on how to revise check out our Revision guide on our website, under School Leavers Courses > School Leavers Guide.
Podcasts you need to listen to!

Dissect:

This is a great podcast suggestion for all of you music lovers out there. “Dissect picks one album per season and analyses one song per episode measure by measure, word by word.” Examples of albums they have covered are “To Pimp a Butterfly” by Kendrick Lamar, “My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy” by Kanye West, “Blonde” and “Channel Orange” by Frank Ocean. The podcasts discover the journeys each artist experienced to produce their album and offer the audience an in-depth analysis of each song.

Available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

Dogs and the City

Are you a huge dog lover? Jo Good takes us on her walks with her bulldog Matilda, around London. She discusses her experience of bringing up a dog in the city and is joined by like-minded celebrity dog owners and their dogs. She has previously spoken to Alexandra Burke, Jess Wright and Matt Edmondson. Listen to them discover dog-friendly places and talk to London’s dog shelters.

Available on BBC Sounds.

The Peter Crouch Podcast:

Are you a football fanatic? Check out Peter Crouch’s podcast where he is joined by Tom Fordyce and Chris Stark. They discuss in detail what really happens in the dressing rooms, transfers, relationships with managers and include lots of juicy footballer stories.

Available on BBC Sounds, Spotify, Apple Podcasts.

‘MÉTIER CLASS: 3.55’ BY CHANEL:

Studying fashion and want to know what it is like behind-the-scenes? Chanel’s podcast offers an insight into the House of Chanel. Chanel has always been the pinnacle of fashion. Learn what it is like behind the scenes of their infamous runway shows and listen to fashion icons such as Pharrell Williams, Kristen Stewart, Margot Robbie and the late Karl Lagerfeld. The podcast is a great opportunity to expand your knowledge of the fashion industry!

Available on Apple Podcasts.

Kermode and Mayo’s Film Review:

Staying at home has given us all the perfect opportunity to binge-watch all the movies on our ‘must-watch’ lists. Mark Kermode is a famous and well-respected film critic, he is joined by Simon Mayo a BBC Radio presenter. They review each week’s movie releases. This is a great podcast to listen to if you are studying Media or are a huge film enthusiast. They are here to help you choose through Netflix’s long catalogue as they are currently focusing on essential streaming films.

Available on BBC Sounds, Spotify, Apple Podcasts.
FREE SCHOOL MEALS

If you have received credit on your College ID Card as payment for meals, you have already been identified and contacted. If you do receive credit and have not yet received our email then please contact welfare@sandwell.ac.uk

Our email to identified students has requested bank account details so that money can be paid directly into your accounts.

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS
Papyrus Hopelineuk - Call: 0800 068 4141
Text: 07860039967

MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINES
No Panic - Call: 0330 606 1174
Anxiety UK - Call: 03444 775 774 Text: 07537 416 905
CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15-35) - Call: 0800 58 58 58
Mind - Call: 0300 123 3393
Samaritans - Call: 116 123
SANE - Call: 0300 304 7000

HEALTH CONCERNS
NHS Helpline - Call: 111

ABUSE
Refuge - Call: 0808 2000 247
NSPCC - Call: 0808 800 5000
Police - Call: 999

ADDITION
Alcoholics Anonymous - Call: 0800 917 7650
FRANK - Call: 0300 123 6600

BEREAVEMENT
Cruse Bereavement Care - Call: 0808 808 1677

LEARNING DISABILITIES
Mencap - Call: 0808 808 1111

EATING DISORDERS
Beat - Call: 0808 801 0677 (adults) - Call: 0808 801 0711 (under-18s)

FOOD BANKS
West Brom
Opens Mon, Wed, Fri 1pm-4pm
01215800068
https://fis.sandwell.gov.uk/kb5/sandwell/directory/service.page?id=cTYcPlkUNHU

Smethwick
Opens Tues and Fri, 1.00 -3.00
0121 517 0141
https://smethwick.foodbank.org.uk/

Salma on Smethwick/West Brom border, just off Spon Lane
Opens 5 days a week Mon-Fri 9.00 - 6.00 plus the delivery service.
07767164246
https://www.salma-foodbank.org/

The Emergency Food Bank Project; 07767164246
Birmingham Food Bank -
https://birminghamcentral.foodbank.org.uk/
0121 236 2997

CAREERS ADVICE/UNIVERSITY PROGRESSION SUPPORT

Still unsure about your next steps? Our careers service is still here to help and support you in making the right career choice or progress to university.
If you would like to speak to one of our careers advisors, please email careers@sandwell.ac.uk

STAY AT HOME, PROTECT THE NHS, SAVE LIVES