

Dear Student,

As we come to the end of our second week of the summer term, I would like to update you on some of the developments that have taken place at College.

Firstly, we are taking advantage of a government scheme to pair schools and colleges with Microsoft institutions, to make sure our online platform, Microsoft Teams, is optimised to deliver teaching and learning effectively online. We are one of the first institutions in the country to take advantage of the scheme, and are working with Softcat plc, a local IT Infrastructure and Service Provider.

Part of our work with Softcat is in developing Microsoft Teams as the College's new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), replacing LearnZone, which will no longer be used. The integration of Microsoft Teams as an online learning platform and VLE allows groups of students and their teacher to work on documents at the same time together. The opportunity to work online in real-time with students in your class, and to receive real-time feedback on your work is a great step forward in enabling teaching and learning to take place online.

We have also adapted our routines of learning in line with these developments. For the period of time covering the College closure, you will develop alternative routines of learning with your teacher and fellow students. For example, you may be asked to attend your first timetabled session in the week on Microsoft Teams with your whole class, so that your teacher can give instructions about the content you should cover during the week, who you will work with to complete shared activities, and the days/times during the week when you will meet with your teacher online. You may also be asked to submit work via Microsoft Teams or email.

We are aware that some students have found the lockdown situation distracting and overbearing and have found the routines of learning online difficult to sustain. Now is the time to re-engaging in learning online with the College. The impact on next year's results of the work you do now cannot be emphasised enough. You should contact your tutor or a member of staff in Student Services to discuss any personal issues or concerns you may have.

Please check your College email regularly to be sure you are familiar with when online sessions are taking place and how you should access the sessions. If a password reset is required, please email gmol@henleycol.ac.uk. Microsoft Teams can be accessed either via www.office.com on the web or by downloading the app for free from Google Play or the Apple Store.

All students will be welcomed into their groups, whether or not you have been engaged in learning online since the College campuses were closed. I would also like to let you know that access to the College's online Portal is now available, following the recent resolution of the issues the College had with some of its online applications.

I'd also like to let you know that Year 1 student end-of-year exams we will be re-scheduled to take place in September. This will be a target to work towards, to help keep on track as you prepare for Year 2 of your course.

The following information is regarding applications to university or for an apprenticeship, to start in September 2021. This period of time is a good opportunity to research subjects, universities, and work on your personal statement.

Our in-house UCAS Application Guide 2021 (UK universities) is on the college website [here](#). This document contains a timeline for college UCAS applications. The college has an internal deadline of 4th November 2020 for completed UCAS application forms to be submitted to college. We then guarantee to check the applications, add the reference and predicted grades and submit the applications well before the 15th January 2021 UCAS deadline date for 'on-time' applications.

Please note that UK applications for Medicine, Veterinary, Dentistry and for Oxbridge have an earlier UCAS deadline of 15th October 2020. Conservatoires and private Arts and Drama Schools also have earlier deadlines.

Universities are working hard to reach out to potential students at this time to support them with their exploration, choices and application. Surrey University have produced a great presentation [here](#). Universities are running virtual Open Days and Taster Days / Summer Schools (registration is required) and are happy to answer students' queries. [See Uni Taster Days](#) to search for opportunities.

[Unibuddy](#) is a new resource through which College students can chat to university students relevant to their subject or choice of university. [UCAS](#) is the central point for information on university and related topics, as well as the application form. Parents/carers can sign up for a parents' newsletter [here](#). Non-UK university applications have different processes and deadlines and require the student to research in depth. See [Fulbright](#) for US universities and [AStarFuture](#) to explore worldwide.

We understand that everything is different this year for students deciding about university. However, it is also a time of opportunity. Students can use this time to research different subject options in depth, read around their subject of interest and perhaps do some online learning via MOOC platforms such as [FutureLearn](#) and [Coursera](#). There may be opportunities to do some volunteering, write a blog or learn to code! Students could make a start on their personal statement for university. Unifrog, UCAS and [PurePotential](#) can help the student get started and tutors will be happy to review personal statement drafts. We may find that students can return to college in September extremely well-prepared for their university applications.

Many of our students consider an apprenticeship after college. It is never too early to start exploring this option. Unifrog is a useful source of information, but see also [Gov website](#), and [RateMyApprenticeship](#). Students can consider which skills their chosen industry area require and use this time to improve their knowledge and expertise in those areas. A draft CV is useful which can be added to as new skills and activities are completed.

All students and parents have access to [Unifrog](#), our web-based one-stop shop application for careers, university, apprenticeship, job search, gap year and well-being resources. Julia Lock, our Careers Adviser, is available to students and parents on julo@henleycol.ac.uk, and our Careers Newsletter is produced fortnightly and emailed to all students. The Newsletter contains a variety of information and ideas to encourage students to think about their futures.

Yours faithfully,

Satwant Deol
Principal