



17 August 2020

Dear Student, Parent and Carer,

I hope you are all well and have been enjoying a break from college work over the summer and enjoying some of the heat. I wanted to thank students once again for the fortitude and maturity in which they approached learning during lockdown. We can't wait to welcome you back to site soon.

Before then, I wanted to update you on our plans for teaching you safely when term starts.

The Government guidance to us states that we *'...must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a full programme of study. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in 'bubbles') and through maintaining social distance between individuals.* There is a lot of flexibility for us to interpret this guidance as we see fit.

As a college that offers our 3,000 students any combination of 40+ subjects, it is impossible for us to create small bubbles in the same way primary and secondary schools are able to. However, we are confident that we have appropriate measures in place to maximise face-to-face learning.

To minimise mixing, we will be staggering our timetable to offset lesson start and end times for first and second year students, which will have the benefit of reducing congestion in corridors and other areas. We will also separate year groups out as much as possible in centrally managed communal spaces.

To minimise contact, we will be maintaining physical distancing on site at a minimum of 1 metre. To this end, our site capacity will be restricted to roughly 2/3rds of normal functioning. This inevitably has an impact on classroom delivery as lessons will be taught at two-thirds their normal capacity to ensure physical distancing can be adhered to. This means that students will be in the classroom for two out of three lessons each week for each subject. Two lessons (2 x 90 minutes) will be delivered as normal in the classroom with students having to complete work remotely for the remaining one 90 minute lesson each week. In addition, there will be the usual independent work set weekly that would normally be completed by students.

We are confident that this model of delivery minimises risk and maximises face to face time in the classroom for students. It is really important to us that we get you back in the classroom as much as we can and maintain momentum with your learning, and this model will allow that to happen. No single college or sixth-form is following the same delivery pattern, but all will be making adjustments to their normal delivery to adhere to the government guidance.

Whilst there is nothing we want more than to have all our students back full-time, it would seem reckless to abandon any attempts at physical distancing on-site when a) we can't 'bubble' our students and b) the expectation is that distancing measures occur in every other area of society – particularly given that our students are virtually adults. We expect students to adhere to social distancing measures whilst on-site and see the inherent value in reducing Covid transmission rates to ensure their studies remain face to face. We will review this delivery model constantly in light of changes to government guidance.

I expect this letter will have triggered a whole host of additional questions from you and there is far too much information for me to cover in one letter. Therefore, please can I encourage you to look at the FAQs section on our website by following the latest information pop-up. The 'Autumn Term 2020 Arrangements' section will be available from the middle of this week when we have finalised this page. This content provides answers to everything from our stance on face coverings to how we will teach you if you are self-isolating.

Despite ongoing restrictions, I hope that students experience a very positive start to the second year of their time at BHASVIC. We aim to maintain as much of the rich extra-curricular and social opportunities as normal – whether virtually or on-site and continue to hope that over the next year we will be able to return to business as usual. BHASVIC is an exciting place to be at an exciting stage of life and we aim to ensure that as far as possible this should be no different for those starting their final year with us in September.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Baldwin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

William Baldwin  
Principal