



16 September 2022

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

Enrolment

It has been fantastic to see the college full of students this week as we start the academic year. Students have made a fantastic start to the year and it is great to see them excited to be here and eager to learn. We are very pleased with how enrolment has gone and have met our planned numbers almost exactly with the college at 3,440 students, identical in size to last year.

Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The news of the death of the Queen is something that will have saddened us all. Much has already been written reflecting on her life and achievements and I am not going to try and compete with that. For most of us, her constant presence throughout our lives was a source of comfort and continuity. She was a truly remarkable person.

As you will know, there is a Bank Holiday on Monday 19 September and the college will be closed as a mark of respect.

The news of the death of a monarch is an unprecedented event. The impact of this on individuals will vary - for some staff and students this will be an emotional period but such feelings of national grief and the gravitas of this historical event may not be shared by all and it is important for us to be alert to this while remaining sensitive to those who are upset. We also need to be aware that for many, such collective events also awaken our own individual experiences and memories of grief as we process this news.

With this in mind, we are also remembering the lives of two incredibly talented individuals Thomas Weich and Charlie Chandler, who were part of the BHASVIC community and who tragically died over the summer. We share tribute to them now with the permission of their families. Thomas was due to join us this September to study Music, Graphics and Health & Social Care but who sadly passed away in July following a two-year illness. Thomas was excited about the prospect of starting at BHASVIC and would have been an exemplary student. Charlie studied Business, Geography and Physics at BHASVIC and died in a tragic accident very recently, after leaving BHASVIC this summer. He was a delightful and engaged student with a strong interest in, and commitment to, environmental issues. We send both their families and friends our love and sincere condolences and may they both rest in peace.

News like this reminds us of the fragile and preciousness of life and puts some of the day-to-day messaging below into perspective.

Starting with Confidence – Wellbeing Workshops

During the first two weeks of term every student at BHASVIC is expected to join one of our workshops to give them information about key metacognitive skills to help them prepare for the exciting learning journey ahead. The schedule for **A2 student workshops** has altered slightly as a result of the Queen's funeral on Monday. A2 students need to [book onto a workshop via BHASVLE](#) next week and complete the follow-up [worksheet](#) by Friday 30 September. A1 and A2 tutors will let students know more about this in tutor time next week.

We want to include parents and carers in this conversation, so we are also inviting you to our **Change Your World Webinar on Thursday 22 September at 8pm**. In this webinar, our partner organisation [ActionYourPotential](#) will share the wellbeing, mind management and learning habits that help all of us live inside our brain every day. To register for the webinar click on [the link here](#).

Absence Procedure

As part of enrolment, we want to remind you that both first and second year students have signed the [college contract](#) which asks for a commitment to excellent attendance and punctuality; full participation and positive communication; and to be constantly mindful of safety and security. At BHASVIC we expect an individual's attendance to remain well above 90% and we have a dedicated attendance team who follow up all absences to ensure they are properly

authorised. It is particularly important to understand that absences can quickly lead a student to fall behind at college and there is no substitute for face-to-face learning in the classroom.

We understand that we are emerging from an exceptional time, but it is a relief to be starting a new academic year with Covid numbers declining and we therefore expect that our attendance levels will also now return to normal. Current [Government guidance for children and young people under 18](#) who are displaying Covid symptoms is that they should stay at home and avoid contact for 3 days if they have tested positive or are displaying symptoms. However, testing is not recommended unless directed by a health professional. The full NHS guidance for those over 18 can be viewed [here](#).

To report an absence, we ask that parents/carers phone the usual college number before 10am (01273 552200); email studentabsence@bhasvic.ac.uk; use the [Studybugs](#) App or text 07860 022847. Although it is always useful for students to message their teachers using Teams to let them know they will not be in the lesson and to ensure they get the classwork they have missed, all absences must be reported and authorised by a parent/carer to our Student Attendance team. We also expect that students do not take holiday during term time and only make appointments outside lesson time. Full absence instructions and further detailed advice on our procedures can be found on our [Attendance and Absence](#) page.

Timetable and Course Change queries

We are running an [A1 virtual help desk](#) for first year students who have queries about their timetable or wish to get advice on course changes. We have a limited number of spaces in A1 classes so it is best for students to post their request here and an adviser will let them know if there is availability. Our course change 'window' opens from Tuesday 20 September and we aim to respond to all queries within 48 hours. Once you have contacted the help desk, please keep checking your Microsoft Teams messages. We always ask students to discuss their intention to change courses with parents and carers as well as their subject teachers, so to allow time to do this, the course change 'window' is open until 7 October – however, we suggest that **requests to change are posted as early as possible on the help desk**, as, if we are able to meet the course change request, students will need to complete a 'late starter pack' in order to catch up on work missed.

An [A2 Virtual Help Desk](#) is also running to resolve timetable queries. Please do check on the [FAQs](#) under 'A2 start of term arrangements' or BHASVLE, for further information.

Save the Dates

Look out for further communications about upcoming Refreshers' Fair on Wednesday 28 September and Meet the Tutor evenings on 12 and 20 October; and remember to check [the College Calendar](#) for all term dates and key events.

We hope students have enjoyed a positive first week back in lessons and we look forward to a busy, productive and enjoyable Autumn Term.

Kind regards,



William Baldwin
Principal