

# REMOTE EDUCATION

## OUR APPROACH – JANUARY 2021

Everyone is doing their part to ensure that we stop the spread of Coronavirus and keep ourselves and each other safe. An important Government strategy to support this is reducing the amount of contact people have with each other, through social distancing, local and national lockdowns and limiting the reasons people have to travel. Whilst these measures are in place students and apprentices will likely have to access some or all of their programme remotely. The amount of remote education a student or apprentice will access will depend on government advice, the type of programme and the needs of students and apprentices.

Remote education contains two important elements, both of which are valuable, and we expect students and apprentices to participate in both elements as required.

- Synchronous learning – this is where students take part in the same session at the same time. The session is facilitated by a teacher and is delivered live.
- Asynchronous learning – this is where there are resources and material for students to access but do not have to be accessed in ‘real time’ and at a required time. Students instead access the materials independently at an appropriate time. Often a member of staff can provide remote support with this.

### WHAT PLATFORM IS USED TO ACCESS REMOTE EDUCATION?

For most students and apprentices, sessions that are participated in remotely are conducted through Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams is a collaborative tool that supports group conversations and sessions, and facilitates video calls. In some cases, teachers will also use wider Microsoft applications, such as OneNote, to support learning.

Sessions that are organised on Microsoft Teams will have invites/session access information that are provided to students and apprentices by the teacher. This may be an invite sent via email or as part of the wider Teams application. Whilst use of the downloaded Teams application is helpful with functionality, students can also access Teams through their internet browser. Teams can be accessed on various devices, including laptops, PCs, tablets and smartphones.

Teachers will also draw on other applications and resources to support their delivery of remote education. Examples of this include Padlet, SmartScreen, Blended Learning Consortium Resources, Youtube and GoToWebinar.

### WHAT DOES REMOTE EDUCATION MEAN FOR FULL TIME AND PART TIME STUDENTS AT THE COLLEGE?

Students on most academic, vocational and skills courses are likely to have an element of remote education. The exact amount will be dependent on the level and type of course, and government advice on local or national lockdowns.

We are endeavouring to maintain a schedule of activity that is as close as possible to a normal timetable to make sure that students have the opportunity to access sessions, resources and contact with their teachers and support staff. Where we are unable to provide face-to-face sessions due to government advice, then students will be provided with a timetable that will be similar to their normal timetable. It is extremely important that students attend their timetabled sessions and engage in any set activities or work. This not only ensures that students access the learning they need to be successful but will also provide students with

structure to their day. This timetable and remote education offer includes maths & English sessions and tutorial sessions where part of your programme.

If a student accessed additional learning support, then this will continue during periods of partial or full remote education. The way in which that support is provided may be adapted to suit remote working but will still ensure that a student gets the support they need.

NHC will monitor attendance and participation in remote education by taking registers for each session. Attendance will still be dealt with in the same way as we would do outside of remote education, with any non-attendance being marked as 'absent'. Our normal interventions will take place to support students who are not attending and supporting them to do so. This will include contact with the curriculum team and student services.

Assessments are expected to take place as normal, unless notified by an awarding body or Ofqual, and so students should continue to complete and submit their work as scheduled. There may be some amendments to assessment schedules where certain activity is prohibited due to social distancing or lockdown situations. Different courses will have different ways to submit work and teachers will explain this to students.

Many of our courses contain practical elements. In these cases, teachers will complete online demonstrations and ask students to complete practical work and practise at home whenever possible. When it is possible and safe to do so, teachers will provide intensive sessions and support on-site to enable students to complete any practical elements of their programme.

For students where they have significant barriers to accessing remote education or, due to their own specific needs, are unable to do so, then one of the following may be put in place:

- Students attend our Study Hub at the Stevenage campus
- Packs of resources are delivered to a student's home
- Through an assessment of need, technology is made available for students to make use of at home

## **WHAT DOES REMOTE EDUCATION MEAN FOR AN APPRENTICE?**

Many of our apprentices already access remote education as part of their planned programme. In these cases apprentices should continue to follow their normal planned programme of study. OneFile remains an important part of an apprenticeship programme and apprentices should contact their tutor if there are issues with access.

Apprentices that normally access training and sessions at one of our campuses, or at a venue local to them, will continue to access learning remotely if it is not safe or possible to undertake this learning on campus or at a venue. In these situations your tutor will provide you with a schedule of activity which will be made available through OneFile.

Practical and workplace learning form integral parts of an apprenticeship programme. Apprentices will continue their role in line with the latest government guidance, employer guidelines and sector advice. Where practical sessions cannot take place, tutors will focus on theory elements, complete online demonstrations and ask apprentices to complete practical work and practise at home or in the workplace whenever possible. When it is possible and safe to do so, tutors will provide intensive sessions and support on-site to enable apprentices to complete any practical elements of their programme.

Workplace assessments and observations may not be possible and so in these cases alternative or adapted assessments will be put in place or assessments will be delayed. Apprentices will be asked to continue formative or practise tasks and learning to continue their knowledge and skill development. Other assessments may still be able to take place dependent on the impact any lockdown or government guidance may have on the structure of a programme. For exams, we will look at alternative ways that apprentices may access these including remote invigilation or completion of these in a COVID secure environment at a campus. If this is not possible, then exams may be delayed.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT OR APPRENTICE CANNOT ACCESS THEIR REMOTE EDUCATION?**

If students or apprentices cannot access their remote education due to not having the necessary technology to do so then they should contact their teacher or tutor in the first instance, and then [support@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:support@nhc.ac.uk). There are different options to support students and apprentices and these will be dependent on the meeting of particular eligibility requirements. Options include the provision of a device through a learner support fund, support from an employer, support using different forms of technology or allowing students to access their learning on a campus.

### **HOW DO STUDENTS AND APPRENTICES CONTINUE TO ACCESS PASTORAL, WELFARE AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT?**

Throughout any periods of remote education, our support offer will continue. The student services team are on hand to support students and apprentices. Students and apprentices can have a regular 'check in' call or ask for help at any time.

Support contact information is shown below.

General support and safeguarding concerns: [support@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:support@nhc.ac.uk)

Careers: [careers@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:careers@nhc.ac.uk)

Finance support: [moneymatters@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:moneymatters@nhc.ac.uk)

To contact our support services by phone, call the main phone line on 01462 424242 and select option 1, then option 2 and then choose which support function is needed. Students and apprentices can also speak directly to their teacher, tutor or curriculum manager who will be able to signpost them to the right place.

All students and apprentices have access to our online mental health service, Togetherall. This is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Through this service students and apprentices can chat to others, speak to a healthcare professional and access lots of online courses related to health and wellbeing. Go to [www.togetherall.com/en-gb](http://www.togetherall.com/en-gb) and simply create an account. Students and apprentices must make sure they use a college email address to register.

For more specific academic support, our two academic coaches are available to help students with their work. To access support please email [support@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:support@nhc.ac.uk).

## SOME TIPS TO HELP WHEN UNDERTAKING REMOTE LEARNING

To help with your remote education and your wellbeing we suggest following the 6 S's approach.

<b>SPACE</b>	Identify and prepare a space in which you can study. This space should ideally be quiet, in a place where you won't be distracted and you are comfortable. If you are going to be on a session with your camera on, it needs to be appropriate and professional.
<b>SHARE</b>	Recognise that the place where you will likely undertake your remote education from will be shared. You will need to identify spaces for you to work and live, and be clear about when you will be busy and when you will be free to avoid unnecessary interruptions.
<b>STRUCTURE</b>	Keep important structures that enable you to have a good day. Get up and get dressed so it sets the tone for you doing something in the day. Have breakfast and regular food and drink breaks. Know when you will finish and can switch off.
<b>SCHEDULE</b>	Understand the schedule of the day so you know when things happen, what is expected of you and how to access your learning. If you have self-directed study to do, schedule this time as well.
<b>STEP AWAY</b>	Make sure you take the time to step away from your learning and take a break. You might go outdoors for fresh air, get a drink or just take half an hour to refresh your mind by doing something else. Your timetable will identify break times for you. You should ensure you follow the latest Government guidance.
<b>SOCIAL INTERACTION</b>	Take the opportunity to interact with your teachers, tutors and other students/apprentices. Working remotely can be lonely and isolating and, as social beings, people need to take opportunities to connect and engage with others. If you feel isolated then ask your teacher or tutor for help or contact <a href="mailto:support@nhc.ac.uk">support@nhc.ac.uk</a> .