

Frequently Asked Questions

We asked for your questions about starting at Colchester Institute, and are covering these questions and answers, please read it to the end.

These will apply to all students and it doesn't matter which course you are on.

If you have questions related to your course area then these will be answered to the course specific PowerPoints on the website.

Q: What happens when I get my GCSE results?

On 20th August your school will confirm your GCSE results, either by email or another electronic way.

You will need to send these to us for review, as the schools can't, we will let you know how to do this nearer the time.

If your grades meet the entry requirements for your course, you will be given a place on the most suitable level for you, and you will be told how to complete your enrolment.

Q: What happens if I don't get the results I need?

Most importantly, don't panic!

Lots of people don't get the grades that they hoped for, and we are sure that this year won't be any different.

We will still have an 'Advice Event' at GCSE results time so that you can talk to teachers from different course areas, to see what else might be suitable for you. Our careers team will be around to help.

If social distancing allows it, this will happen face to face, but if not this will happen by phone or maybe zoom. We are still working this out!

Q: Will my course actually start in September?

Yes, this is what we are planning for and what we fully expect to happen.

Of course, we will need to do things differently because the safety of everyone is the most important thing.

To follow social distancing guidelines, most classes will take place on campus, but some learning will take place remotely from home, to start with at least.

Q: When will my course actually start?

If you have already been a student at Colchester Institute this year, and you are progressing onto the next level of your course, you are most likely to be starting in week commencing **31st August**. We will be sending out progression letters very soon.

If this is your first course at Colchester Institute, or you have changed subjects, then you will be starting in week commencing **7th September**. We will tell you the exact date as soon as we can.

Q: What will I need to bring with me on my first day?

All students should bring a pen and a notebook to make notes, and if you need to bring any course specific equipment you will be told about this separately.

Please also bring a mobile device that you will use to work from home, such as a smart phone, tablet, laptop or Chromebook. You will need to be able to download apps that we use, and also find out how to sync your devices to your College email.

Q: How will I know where to go on my first day?

You will be sent joining instructions and the name of your first 'meeting point'. There will be lots of staff around to help you find your way as soon as you arrive on campus. Your new teachers will collect you and take you to your classroom.

Your first day will be your induction, you will meet your tutors and other students, and learn about your timetable, and be given lots of helpful information to help you to settle in. You will also be given a tour of the College to learn your way around.

Q: What will my timetable be like?

In normal times, students will usually attend College for 3 days a week.

For September 2020 we are planning one full day a week in College, for about 7 hours of teaching, and another 5 hours learning online from home. You might also have English and maths classes too.

This arrangement is likely to change with Government safety advice. Ideally, we want all of your classes to take place on campus as soon as this is safe and possible.

Q: Will I have to still study English and Maths?

Yes. If you haven't yet achieved a GCSE grade 4 or above in English and / or maths you will have sessions on your timetable to keep working towards achieving your grade 4. These are compulsory and you must attend and engage with these sessions to continue on your course.

If you have already got your GCSE English and / or maths at grade 4 or above, you will still be developing these subjects throughout your subject related learning.

Q: What will the College be doing about COVID-19

We have put lots of safety measures in place, and these will be reviewed at all times in line with Government Advice.

We have created a separate video which describes all that we are doing and you can watch this by clicking [here](#)

Q: When will I know what special kit, equipment I need ?

If you have chosen a course where you need to buy something extra, this will be described in your course welcome day PowerPoint, and we will also send you an email with more information.

This can include for example, uniforms; kit, personal protective equipment (PPE), a DBS check or a particular textbook.

Some courses don't need you to buy anything at all to start with.

Q: Will I need to pay any fees?

If you are 18 or under on 31st August 2020 then there will be no fees for your course itself, just any kit or equipment that you need to buy.

If you are 19 or over on 31st August 2020 then fees will apply. There are different fees for different courses, and depending on your circumstances you could take out an advanced learner loan, or maybe have these fees waived.

All students over 19 will be written to separately to explain this, and when and how any fees need to be paid.

Q: Can I get help with buying anything that I need?

The College has a bursary scheme which can help with course related costs, such as kit, equipment, travel, free meals at College and with the loan of IT kit for working at home if you don't have this.

This is based on household income and family or individual circumstances.

There is an online application form and applications are now open - click [here](#) if you are aged 16-19 and click [here](#) if you are over 19.

Q: Is there a dress code?

Unless you are specifically told otherwise you can just wear your normal clothes to College, and certainly on your first day.

You shouldn't wear anything with pictures or writing which is rude or offensive, or clothes which could be considered too revealing.

There are some courses which have very clear uniform requirements, but usually in practical sessions in kitchens, salons and workshops, but you will be told if this applies to you.

Q: How can I get Additional Learning Support?

If you needed extra support to help you to achieve on your course, and if at school you needed extra exams concessions, it is important that you let us know so that we can look into this. Support is assessed and put in place based on your own needs, and the type and level of course you are on.

If you want to talk to someone about support then please email als@colchester.ac.uk , and if you have an EHCP then you must let us know.

We hope these have helped!

We are sure there will be lots of other questions, and we do know how difficult it will be for many of you coming to Colchester Institute for the first time, especially after so long at home!

You must make sure you read the PowerPoint for your chosen course as there will be lots more information there, and there will be other Q&A chances.

You can also email admissions@colchester.ac.uk if you have any other concerns.

Thank you

Thank you for reading this, and we really look forward to meeting you in September,

Good luck with your GCSE and other exam results, and please try not to worry, we are here to help make this transition as easy as we can.

Best wishes from the Admissions Team

admissions@colchester.ac.uk