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05 January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers and employers,

I wish you a happy new year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the start of the new term, in view of ongoing pressures created by the pandemic.

Fortunately, we have been able to operate all departments as usual, except for Engineering, where staff absences and specific health and safety requirements for practical workshops, mean we have had to cancel motor vehicle groups this week.

There are some vacancies in our Learning Support Team and Student Life (the pastoral hub) which means student support may be curtailed or delayed. I would encourage you to contact the named personal tutor for the group if you have any concerns.

As a precautionary measure and in line with government advice, we will be operating all staff meetings via TEAMS and reducing visitors to the College. Otherwise, staff are on-site as usual, being student facing and frontline. Lecturers and support staff are working very hard to cover classes, as are our colleagues in schools. Today we have 24 students isolating and 12 staff. There are over 1000 full-time students and 3000 part-time students, plus 200 full-time and 150 part-time staff.

All staff and students are now required to wear masks in all indoor spaces from the 4th of January 2022 to reduce the risk of transmission. We have been reminding students and providing masks if they have none; please could you re-iterate this requirement. In addition, regular lateral flow testing is a good measure in reducing the spread.

Please continue to telephone our main switchboard or email info@highlands.ac.uk to notify us of absences. The Contact Tracing Team confirms any positive PCR results for our full or part-time students and staff directly, but there may be a slight delay from a positive lateral flow result to a positive PCR being processed, so it is always best to contact the College.

On a more positive note, last term, the College received an uplift in its budget from the Government of Jersey/CYPES for full-time students aged 16- to 19. This was an outcome of the schools and colleges funding review, published at the end of 2019. It means similar investment in vocational programmes as is invested into 6th form academic programmes.

We are also refunding registration fees for parents of full-time students of that age; it is important that education is free at point of access for young people and their families in the 6th form and I thank the government for its support. Our Finance Team is contacting those parents affected.

I hope you enjoy a healthy and happy 2022. We are very proud of our students, but we know they wouldn't be as successful as they are without your ongoing support so, please accept our gratitude.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo Terry-Marchant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'M'.

Jo Terry-Marchant
Principal