

March 2023

Dear students, parents and carers,

I want to share some important messages with you, as well as some highlights of the year so far.

Many hundreds of our students have taken part in trips and visits since September, and I would like to offer my thanks to the staff who have taken the time to organise and supervise these events. It is a significant commitment above and beyond their 'day job' and I'm certain that the students have benefitted hugely.

Coming up later this month on 22/23 March is the Trust Varsity event when there will be competitions of many kinds between the students from our three colleges. Non-sporting events will take place at Pontefract on 22 March and sporting events will be hosted at Hull University on 23 March. For those students who are not involved these will be normal college days, but I would encourage all to consider getting involved.

I'm delighted to announce that the college has been shortlisted for the Educate North FE College of the Year award. This is a huge honour, and I will of course let you know if we are successful after the awards in April.

It is wonderful to see our year 13 students receiving their university offers and securing apprenticeships. Please use [this link](#) to see an important letter to students about the types of offer they may have received and what to do next.

Our Revision Countdown to internal and external examinations and controlled assessments is well underway, and we wish students all the best with these. Please see important information later in this letter regarding the exams, and take note of the following advice to help students perform to the best of their ability:

- A healthy diet and getting some exercise are crucial to support good physical and mental health.
- Getting into a good sleep routine will help with your preparations as well as your performance on the day.
- Plan ahead to make sure your revision is structured. This will help to reduce your anxiety as well as maximising your performance.

Please see below some events and dates for your diaries.

**Careers and Progression event for families of students with SEND – Thursday 16 March**

**College closed to students unless they have an external exam or assessment – Tuesday 28 March**

**Next Steps evening for families of students in Y12 – Thursday 11 May**

**Y12 Progression Exams - Friday 5 to Friday 12 May**

**College closed to students unless they have an external exam or assessment - Wednesday 17 May**

**Y13 Leaver's Celebration – Friday 26 May**

**W/B 19 June** These events provide valuable opportunities for next steps; attendance is compulsory for all:

**Progression Day for Y12 students – Monday 19 June**

**Careers and HE Day for Y12 students – Tuesday 20 June**

Lessons as normal – Wednesday 21 June

**Employability Skills day for Y12 students – Thursday 22 June**

Lessons as normal – Friday 23 June

**Y12 Last day in college – Wednesday 5 July**

**First day of term for Y13 next academic year – Monday 11 September**

## Exams and assessments

As mentioned above, year 12 students will sit their **formal progression exams** in May and these are used to check that students are ready for a second year of study. These are internal exams but we use the same protocols in place for external exams in order to give students experience of the procedures. Students should attend their lessons as normal when they do not have an exam. Please arrive at 8.45am for morning exams and 1.00pm for afternoon exams, and check Cedar in advance for venues and seat numbers. Switch off your phone and leave it in your bag with any watches, calculator cases etc. Wear warm clothing as you will not be allowed to take an outdoor coat into the exam room.

Many students, including most year 13 students and some in year 12, will also sit **formal external examinations** and controlled assessments from now until June. Please note that the JCQ contingency date is 28 June which means that if an exam is cancelled nationally this date will be used as the alternative. It is important to note that the regulations are strict and are set by the examination board regulator, JCQ. We do not have any flexibility with dates and times except in the event of exam clashes, and there will be no opportunity to sit a missed exam within the series. Absence from an exam without evidence of a substantial reason can result in failing overall. Students must contact student services ([ncp-studentservices@nclt.ac.uk](mailto:ncp-studentservices@nclt.ac.uk)) and also their Progress Tutor on the day of the exam or earlier to make the college aware of their circumstances or the reason for their absence. Appropriate advice can then be given, including information about whether or not the student needs to provide any documentary evidence and whether or not they need to complete any paperwork for the examination boards if the exam is external. Applications for special consideration must be supported by the senior leadership team and it is important that students contact student services on the date of their exam.

I would strongly recommend that all students read the FAQs for exams carefully and visit the exams office in the LRC if anything is unclear. This document gives details of absence procedures and special consideration.

Cedar will show your candidate number, as well as details of times, venues and seat numbers for all internal and external examinations. Again, please arrive at 8.45am for morning exams and 1.00pm for afternoon exams. Switch off your phone and leave it in your bag with any watches, calculator cases etc. Wear warm clothing as you will not be allowed to take an outdoor coat into the exam room.

[Link to Exam and assessment FAQs](#)

## Attendance and Holidays

Holidays taken during term time cannot be authorised and can have a significant impact on academic progress. In some cases, where attendance is already low, holiday absence will result in escalation of intervention levels. Please support the college in trying to ensure that missed learning is minimised and refer to the term dates and exam timetables when booking holidays. It's worth noting that our holiday dates often differ from local schools so please check in advance.

<https://ncpontefract.ac.uk/term-key-dates/>

### Cedar

As many of you are no doubt aware, Cedar is a great way to keep track of students' progress and attendance at college, and also allows you to email teachers. If you haven't created an account, please use this link to do so. You will need a next of kin email address that we have on file and the student's reference number that starts with L00.

<https://cedar.ncpontefract.ac.uk/auth/account/create>

Please note that this, and all general letters can also be found on our website.

<https://ncpontefract.ac.uk/letters/>

Yours sincerely,

Vicky Marks



Principal, New College Pontefract