

The Mount Camphill Community

Remote Learning Policy

1) Remote Learning Policy

Rationale in the event of a college closure, The Mount Camphill Community is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote (online) learning. Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the college is closed for an extended period, but a high proportion of students and tutors are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term college closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the college, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as longer-term illness, assuming students are able to complete college work at home. Another relevant instance would be if, following an infectious disease outbreak, students are self-isolating at home but are not suffering with relevant symptoms.

There is no obligation for The Mount Camphill Community to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from college, with or without parental permission, in contravention to college or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents/carers choose to take students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents/carers made the decision, without prior agreement with the college, to absent their son/daughter from college 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, tutors will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents/carers. All communication should take place during usual college hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 4.30pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day in normal practice. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work.

2) Remote Learning for Individual Students

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the college, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the college will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the collation of work and communication with the parent/carer will be coordinated by the student's tutor or member of the Education Faculty.

Though every case will have its own specifics, a rough guideline for the frequency of communication between college and parent/carer would be once per week, although this will be personalised for each family. Work will only be provided to students in this way if there is an agreed absence lasting more than three working days.

If a significant number of students are absent from college, but the college remains open, the Education Coordinator will decide whether the method of remote learning operated will take the form outlined here, or as outlined below.

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3) Remote Learning in the event of extended college closure

In the event of an extended college closure, the college will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

- a) Regular direct instruction from teaching tutors, with the ability of students / parents/carers to ask questions online (via email or via one of the teaching platforms listed below).
- b) The setting of work/tasks that students complete are completed electronically or handwritten. Work packs can be posted home to enable the student to have access if this is a preferred format.
- c) The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to tutors electronically and on which feedback is provided. Students and tutors are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home; the college recognises that some families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material.

If a family does not have the equipment necessary to participate in remote learning or access to the internet, the college will endeavour to support the families with this access. If necessary, by lending laptops and supporting families to acquire equipment needed. Once learning onsite has resumed families would need to return borrowed equipment.

The primary platforms the college will use to deliver continuity of education and face to face interactions are:

Zoom or Microsoft teams: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL: <https://zoom.us> or <https://classroom.google.com> or <https://teams.microsoft.com>

The extent to which different methods of instruction are employed is likely to be determined by the length of any college closure and the ability of both students and tutors to participate in remote learning. The college reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure, based on our experience and based on individual student needs.

4) Live Sessions

Academic subject areas may also arrange for tutors to deliver content in a 'live' manner (either by text or audio and/or visual means). There is no expectation of tutors to carry out live sessions.

Zoom, Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams are platforms that allow for resources to be shared, tutors to provide exposition, and students to ask questions in 'real-time'. Students will be provided with sessions and will be expected to participate in them if they are healthy enough to do so. Live sessions can be particularly helpful as they can help communication with students and help maintain the tutor - student relationship.

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5) Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, tutors will endeavour to provide regular feedback to students on pieces of work that they have completed. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by tutors and this would continue to be the case should the college employ remote learning.

Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback tutors can provide may not have the same format as marking a student folder in the workshop. Tutors are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods may include:

- Providing whole class feedback rather than feedback on individual pieces of work – this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research
- Using the “Comments” function on online documents or Microsoft
- Sending a direct to students with specific feedback / targets
- Feedback through direct 1:1 sessions

6) Expectations of Students

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting tasks promptly and to the best of their ability.

If students or parents/carers have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant tutor. If there are questions about a student’s overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the Education Coordinator.

Tutors must work on the assumption that students will not necessarily have the full range of equipment that they would usually have in college. However, if advance notice is possible, tutors will discuss with parents/carers to ensure that the resources are ready and available at the home. The Mount Camphill Community does not expect students to have access to any specialist equipment that would usually be provided in college. Tutors should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home.

The college expects that parents/carers have internet access at home to access remote learning resources, but tutors will make no presumption of the student’s ability to print at home.

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We understand and appreciate the pressure you and your family may be under at this time so please support your son/daughter when you are able to and let us know if there are any issues with the home learning work set for whatever reason.

7) Expectations of Tutors

Tutors should ensure they have effective internet and a phone connectivity at home. If this is not available for any reason, tutors can request a college device.

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with college and subject area policies.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, tutors are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. This is quality assured and monitored by the Education Coordinator. All tutors should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen. Tutors are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner.

In the event a tutor is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the Education Coordinator to ensure work is set to her/his classes.

Tutors should be available to contact parents/carers if needed, by email or phone (when phoning from personal devices, dialling 141 before the number will ensure the tutor's own number is kept anonymous). If contact is deemed excessive the Education Coordinator will be able to support.

If parents/carers ask for additional work beyond that set as part of the requirements above, tutors should have a bank of general resources available and point students and parents/carers in that direction.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, tutors will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents/carers. All communication should take place during usual college hours, with no expectation for colleagues to read or respond to emails after 4.30pm, although responses should be made to electronic messages within one working day in normal practice. For those who are on part-time contracts, communication is expected only on the days on which they would usually work. If tutors are unable to work for any reason during this time, for example due to sickness or caring for a dependent, they should report this using the normal absence procedure.

Communication must always occur via official college channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites. Permitted methods are:

- Email using college email addresses only
- Zoom, Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams

8) Pastoral care during a college closure

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In event of a college closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents/carers. However, tutors (under the guidance of the Education Coordinator) should check in regularly to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Tutors will be expected to pass on feedback to the Education Coordinator, particularly if there are concerns or a lack of communication, or any safeguarding issues.

9) Safeguarding during a college closure

In the event of a college closure, students, parents/carers and tutors are reminded that The Mount Camphill Community's Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between students and tutors. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which tutors must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at college.