

Ivybridge Community College

Year 12 Weekly Bulletin

Edition 1: Monday, 30 March 2020



COVID 19 Update

Firstly, and sincerely, I hope you are all well. Nothing is more important right now than your safety and that of everyone else in the world, for that matter.

The coronavirus pandemic has caused a massive disruption to everyone's daily lives, but compared to much of the world, we are set up considerably better to cope. Reading about the lockdowns in the Indian subcontinent, with many stranded, starving and homeless, really brought home to me just how fortunate we are, relatively speaking.

Well-being

That being said, this is a time of change and uncertainty for you, and that brings with it a great deal of stress for many. The infographic below contains some advice on facing change head-on (more details here, if you want: [Coping with change](#). Also, [Every Mind Matters](#) now has lots of advice and tips about how to look after your mental health while you're staying at home, and how to deal with anxiety about the coronavirus outbreak).

Acknowledge your feelings
It doesn't matter what your reaction to change is – your emotions and feelings are part of what makes you, you. Listening to them is a crucial step in accepting changes in your life.

Be the instigator
Don't let change boss you around. It's going to happen, but it can be on your own terms. Come up with a list of positives that may come from the change to help you understand what you hope to achieve from the new circumstances.

See it as an opportunity
Change may seem like it's going to turn your life upside down, but that doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing. It can be an opportunity for you to start afresh and make positive alterations to your life.

Look forward and back
When big changes are taking place, they can sometimes take up all of your thinking (and worrying) power. Try to look past this time and focus on what you want life to be like after it passes. Similarly, look back at other times you've overcome changes in your life.

Seek support
It's easy to bottle your emotions up in times of change. You may want to avoid dealing with upcoming situations. However, this isn't always the best strategy. Turn to friends and/or family to help you deal with change. Even if they just listen to your concerns, it can be enough to help you organise your thoughts.

My favourite piece of advice is seeing change as an opportunity. This period of confinement brings an opportunity to connect more with family who you are living with, and although only remotely, with friends. Moreover, you can't use the excuse that you don't now have enough time to exercise, read a book (although all libraries are now temporarily closed, that doesn't mean that you can't enjoy a good book: the [Devon Libraries Digital Library](#) lets you stream loads of free eBooks, eAudioBooks, eMagazines and much more) or pick up whatever hobby you've always been wanting to do.

Your Sixth Form courses may be the last thing on your mind right now, and your setup at home may not in any way be conducive to learning. Even in those households that are calm and have working space, competition for resources such as a laptop may scupper your plans. So, you'll need to be flexible and work with those in your home.

This is also an opportunity to improve, or for some, reinvent yourself as a student. You're going to need to be very self-disciplined to

study at home remotely, and it is going to be all-too-easy to just switch off. If for nothing else than your own well-being, we really need to you resist this.

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Home Learning

You'll all be familiar with the Sixth Form Mindset VESPA model, encapsulating the 5 key attributes that some believe are crucial for success in Sixth Form. The situation we have now is an extreme form of independent learning, and you'll need these skills more than ever. Luckily, my friends (well, I had a nice lunch with one of the guys once) who wrote the *A Level Mindset* book from which this model derives, have an online course that uses some of their activities to help you develop the necessary skills of working from home. You'll already be familiar with the Energy Line, 25 minute Sprints and Revision Questionnaire. I encourage you to sign up to this course and complete it.

<https://www.vespamindset.co.uk/p/the-vespa-mindset-programme>

What work to do?

As we previously said, teachers will be in communication via e-mail and/or e-praise, so it is important that you check these regularly.

It may be that your teachers will set work to cover new topics, but **the main focus for most students** should be consolidating work completed so far as if you were still sitting the mock exams in w/b 15 June. Firstly, schools may reopen by then, and, secondly, you need to build a solid foundation for your Year 13 studies, so to not prepare would be foolish. Again, my guidance:

- Try to keep your routine as close as possible to what it would be at College: divide your time into working weekdays and leisure time at the weekend. Split the work days into 2-3 hour morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Work for 2 out of 3 of these sessions.
- Plan out when your revision times will be (or how many hours you can give per week) and total up the number of hours of revision you have until when your mocks are planned (w/b 15 June). Then work out how many hours you have to dedicate to each topic.
- Have dedicated content learning and practice time.
- To streamline content learning, perform an audit of understanding using the specification (RAG rate, ticks and crosses, etc.). Schedule more time for areas of weakness than areas of strength.
- Also, remember the forgetting curve – you want to revisit topics multiple times, so take a spiral approach to timetabling.

If you want guidance on learning techniques, see the *Top Tips* in your learning journal or your subjects' individual Independent Learning sheets.

Going forward

In the coming weeks, I will share thoughts on preparing for life after Ivybridge – choosing a route, such as university or apprenticeship, writing personal statements and CVs, boosting your resume with super-curricular activities that you can do from home, etc.

Please be aware that unfortunately we are not yet in a position to be able to set a date for return to College.

Lastly, one considerable upside to the current situation is the sense of community and togetherness that is building despite our social distancing, and I encourage you to think about when all of this is over, what act of kindness or helpfulness or compassion will you be remembered for.