



NEWSLETTER, SPRING TERM, WEEK 1

Not quite the smooth start to term we were all hoping for, but we are thankfully in a reasonably good position (all things considered). Thank you so much for sticking with us through the many communications and changes and for your patience. I appreciate it is hard to believe that we also receive these changes in policy live on the news and that we don't have more information than you as parents receive from the BBC and newspapers. However, please be assured we are working very hard in the background to make the information work for our students and families.

Our online learning is up and running well. Engagement is strong and students are contributing to their lessons. Attendance is good and is being monitored closely. We are checking in with students where they miss lessons and will of course bring this to your attention quickly. If you are having any technical issues, please do get in touch and we will do our best to help.

Notes for this week...

Principals Surgery and Head of Sixth Form Surgery

Thank you to all the parents who joined us last night, we really appreciate your questions, your feedback and significantly your ideas. We will definitely take this on board and will have information about additional reading lists and social opportunities available for students in our next newsletter. Sessions will take place fortnightly so please do join us on the 21st January if you would like to chat.

Parents Evenings

Parents Evenings will go ahead as planned this half term.

- **19th and 20th January** - Year 12 Parents and Carers.
- **2nd and 3rd February** - Year 10 Parents and Carers

Details will follow by email to help you register for your slot.

Data for Remote Learning

If you are relying on mobile data, we can now request additional data to support your child's online learning. We are so grateful to the phone companies for making this possible. The scheme temporarily increases data allowances for mobile phone users on certain networks. This is so that children and young people can access remote education if their face-to-face education is disrupted. We can request mobile data increases for children and young people who:

- do not have fixed broadband at home
- cannot afford additional data for their devices
- are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education

If you need to increase the data allowance on your phone please email: admin@lifesciencesutc.co.uk

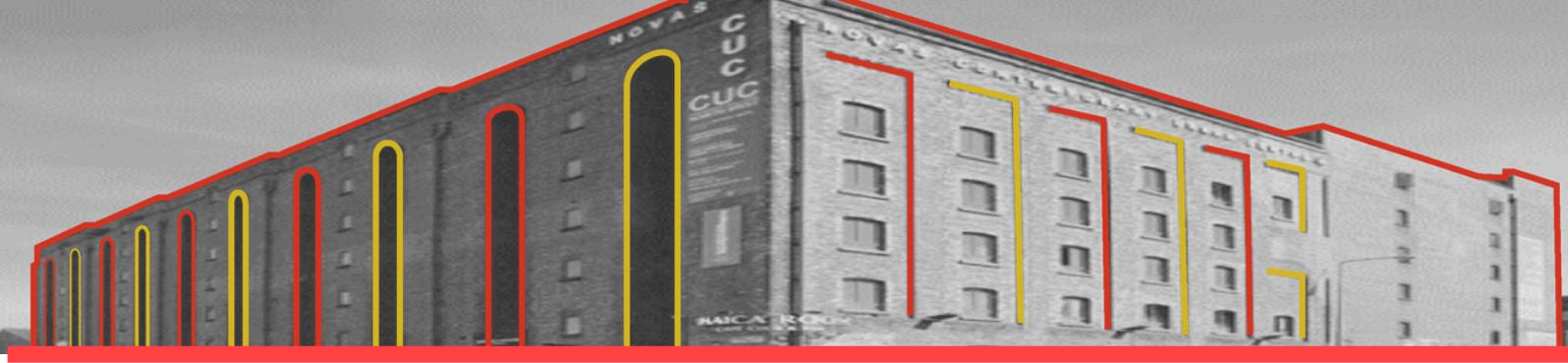
- account holder's name
- mobile number
- mobile network
- whether they pay monthly or pay as they go

Devices for Remote Learning

A very innovative student in Wales has shared details to support families who may not have access to as many laptops as they need. This guide may help if you have any gaming consoles at home, but please do still get in touch and we will do what we can to support you. We have requested additional laptops from the Government as promised.

Xbox - Plug a keyboard into the Xbox USB slot. Go to my games and apps. Find and select Microsoft Edge. Navigate to your online learning platform.

PlayStation - Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (WWW with dots around it). Press the PlayStation logo on the controller. Go to the library and find options for games and applications. Go to applications and you will find the internet browser. Navigate to your online learning platform and log in as usual.



Bulky Bob's Computer Offer

Bulky Bob's are now offering computers for students across the Liverpool City Region at a hugely discounted rate.

The latest offering sees high-spec full pcs with MS Windows operating system, monitor, keyboard, mouse and base unit offered at a rate of £50 (subject to minimum order of 10 units). If you would like us to collectively order a discounted PC on your behalf, please get in touch with us at the admin email address.

Keeping in touch

We are working on new systems to improve our email communication with you. Next week you will receive an email from us. The email will just contain your child's name. If you receive this, and there are no errors in the name you do not need to take any further action. If there are errors, please do get in touch with us.

Free School Meals

The Free school meals voucher scheme has been reinstated to commence from Monday 11th January. If you have any issues accessing your vouchers please do get in touch. If you have had a change in circumstance and may now be eligible for support, please do check the website for details on how to apply.

www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims

We appreciate that many families may be struggling but not eligible for formal support. Please do reach out to us in confidence and we will do what we can to support you.



Free school meal vouchers

Liverpool Citizen Support Scheme

If you find yourself in crisis you can apply for support to get food and basic necessities for you and your family including gas and electric vouchers (urgent needs) and furniture and household essentials (home needs). An emergency or crisis might be a fire or flood, or you have had to move due to violence or fear of violence, or you are leaving care or prison and need support to stay in the community. Find all the details on the Free School Meals page of our websites.

Exam Cancellations

The hot topic has again been the cancellation of the summer exam series. Centre assessed grades will be used as an alternative to formal public exams. There is now a two week consultation into how this process will work. We have been assured that we will receive training on how to apply these new robust and fair assessments. We will provide more information as we receive it. In the interim, it is vital that your child completes the work set by their teachers as these assessments may build the picture that contributes to their final grade. Thank you for your support in motivating and encouraging your child to take this seriously at this challenging time.

We are also now confident that all exam boards have cancelled their January exam series. We are so sorry that our students had to go through the stressful, last minute change in decision. We received guidance after 11pm the night before the first exam which had to be fully reviewed to ensure students would not be disadvantaged either way by a decision left to each school to make independently.

Additional Support

We have added a page to each website with additional information on support services that you can access during lockdown.

We appreciate that this is a very challenging time for our families so please do reach out to us at any point if you have concerns or questions. We will do our best to come back to you promptly.

Take care, stay safe.

J Davies