

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

July 2020

Many of you will have questions about the start of term this year, however, rest assured we are preparing for it. Below you will find some of the more frequently asked questions.

Don't forget to check the website for updates and if you have any further questions, please email us at info@btc.ac.uk

I am planning to start college in September, what happens if Covid 19 is still an issue?

Your health and safety is of paramount importance, and we are reviewing and following government guidelines for schools and Colleges. This includes social distancing measures and we will continue to follow the guidance as we move into the new academic year.

Rest assured, you will start your course in September with BTC and we will keep in touch with you over the summer.

What are the social distancing measures that you will have in place for September?

We are working to ensure we keep you safe at all three campuses so will be implementing a range of measures. These will include reduced group sizes, staggered timetables, one-way corridors systems, hand sanitizing stations, a zoned system and staggered attendance.

If I need additional support, how will you support me if I'm learning at home due to Covid-19?

As you can imagine, this is a new situation but our dedicated Learning Support team and your tutor will put things in place to ensure you're able to study at home.

What happens if I don't get my predicted GCSEs?

The important thing to remember is not to panic. Once you have your results, please call a supportive member of our Information, Advice & Guidance team on 01278 441234. There are a number of alternatives that they'll be happy to explore with you.

If I get better grades than expected in my GCSE's, can I change from a Level 2 to a Level 3?

In most cases yes, but some courses such as plumbing and professional cookery need you to start at Level 2 to develop your skills. Once you receive your results, please get in touch to discuss your options.





START OF TERM

What day will I start?

The first day of the academic year will be Monday 7 September.

Different courses will start on different days to ensure social distancing. You will be emailed all the information prior to starting.

Please ensure your email is correct and that you check it regularly.

How can I prepare for my subject?

You will receive a welcome pack in the summer term which may include suggested reading or a project to complete (depending on your course), but just reading around your chosen subject will be useful.

Will I get my timetable and kit list before I start?

If you have applied for a course starting this September, you will be emailed all the information you need for your first day at College, details about your course, kit list, travel details and your timetable.

Please ensure your email is correct and that you check it regularly.

I would like to change my course, what should I do?

Please email our admissions team at admissions@btc.ac.uk to let them know which course you'd like to change to. You may need to chat to a tutor if it's a different subject completely, or it could be as simple as changing your record and you'll receive start of year information from the new course team.

Do you have many students in Year 13 joining the College?

Yes, we often have students join us. Sometimes they've come from a different college or moved to the area.

Will there be a chance to meet others doing the same course before the first day?

Due to the Covid-19 rules, if you have applied to start this September, you will be invited to an online welcome event during the summer term where you will be given all the information you need before starting the academic year and meet your classmates virtually.

Do you have uniforms or can I wear anything I want?

There are no uniforms but some departments have branded clothing such as sport and automotive and Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) is expected to be worn in most workshops. You will be issued a lanyard which you must wear on campus for security reasons. It also gives you access to certain areas and you can use it to pay at food outlets.

THE COLLEGE DAY

Are there breaks during the day and can I leave the campus?

Breaks are usually 15 minutes in the morning and afternoon, with an hour for lunch. There are no bells and you are welcome to leave the campus, but you will be expected to be in the right place at the right time. If you have enough time, you could make use of the College gym or other facilities during your breaks.

What catering facilities do you have?

We have a wide range of catering outlets on each campus including a restaurant where you can get hot meals and snacks, coffee shops selling sandwiches and cakes etc. We also cater for vegans, vegetarians etc

How do the courses and timetables work?

If you've chosen a full-time course rather than an Apprenticeship, you will be expected to attend College on certain days of the week. Apprenticeships work differently - you could be at work all week and only come into College one day a week, or you could spend a few weeks at College then work full-time, or never come in to College and learn everything on the job (including being assessed at work by a College Assessor).

If you are at College, on a typical day, lessons start at 9am (9.30am at Cannington to allow for travel) and finish by 4pm with breaks for lunch.

If I study a full-time course how many hours will I have to be in College each week?

It varies per course and your timetable will be issued and discussed at your online welcome day. The timetable will be set, so if you have other commitments, you should be able to arrange things around the time you need to be at College.





I really love sport, are there clubs I can join?

There is plenty to get involved in, Team BTC is our over-arching term for our Sports Academy programme and is open to all students, regardless of their course or campus. We have a number of high-quality teams with students regularly training to compete. These include football (men's and women's), rugby (men's and women's), hockey (men's and women's), netball, golf, basketball and trampolining.

However, don't worry if you play a sport outside of these at a competitive level. Whilst we don't complete weekly training in all sports, we will still ensure all students have the opportunity to represent the College at regional and national competitions such as badminton, cricket, tennis, squash, athletics, table-tennis, swimming and many more.

We have a number of clubs and societies designed to enhance your studies as well as your leisure time. For example, Cannington has its own Young Farmers' Club (YFC), and we have a coding club, an engineering club and a driving club – all of which develop your skills and enhance your employability.

For more information and to sign up for a club, please visit www.btc.ac.uk/students

I don't enjoy sport, are there any other clubs I can join?

Academies offer you the opportunity to pursue your aspirations, to make new friends and to relax and enjoy time away from your studies. We have many clubs you can join, we call these academies of which we have many, including, public service, animation, performance, design, drama, fashion, honours, media, music, photography and the show choir. They are a great way to relax and make new friends between your studies.

How do I join an Academy?

You can join before enrolling or after you start College by visiting the academies page at www.btc.ac.uk/students/academies or speaking to one of your tutors to find out more.

I'm really good at sport, are there any scholarships available for me?

We offer scholarships across a range of different areas, so if you have a particular talent, you can apply for a BTC scholarship.

Available scholarships include:

- Academic Scholarship
- Performing Arts Scholarship
- Sports Scholarship
- Luke Buckingham Sports Scholarship
- West Country Dairy Awards
- Taunton Maids Bursary
- Doris Southcott Bursary
- Agriculture and Horticulture Scholarship

Please visit www.btc.ac.uk/students/scholarships-and-bursaries to apply.

I've applied for a course and I'm concerned I can't afford the materials.

We offer a range of bursaries which you apply for online. Please visit www.btc.ac.uk/students/scholarships-and-bursaries for more information.

You could also apply for help with transport, childcare or accommodation plus there is a 16 to 19 Bursary Fund. There is also a Vulnerable Groups Bursary and Free School Meals are available to those in low income households.



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

How does the additional support work at College?

Student Support is essential to a successful learning experience and we pride ourselves on the level and quality of learning support on offer to ensure everyone gets all they need to bring out their best.

Our well-qualified and award-winning learning support staff provide one-to-one or small-group tuition for students with:

- Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia
- Conditions on the Autistic spectrum
- Difficulties with core skills, such as maths or English

Our dedicated team also provides in-class or break-time support for students at every level, this is available to any student who has learning, mental or physical difficulties.

We pride ourselves on the fact that every student, regardless of their precise needs, has full access to our curriculum, and is given every opportunity to realise their potential.

To access our first-rate support, you need to make us aware of your needs at the point of applying to College. That way, we can set up the right structures from the start of your time with us.

Please visit the Supporting your Learning page on the website for more detailed information about our Tutorial Support, Additional Learning Support, Health and Wellbeing, the Local Offer and how the BTC Advantage supports your learning whilst at College.

APPRENTICESHIPS

I've applied for an apprenticeship but haven't found an employer, what should I do?

Don't worry, you will be offered a place on a full-time study programme until you are able to secure an employer. In the meantime, on a full-time study programme, you will be learning the valuable skills an employer is looking for which will help you find an apprenticeship.

I'm starting an apprenticeship, when will I be expected in College?

That depends on the Apprenticeship. Some are one day a week, others don't expect you to attend College at all, and you're taught and assessed in the workplace. Some are 'block release' which means you spend several weeks or months at College full-time, then the rest of the year working.

Your starter pack at the beginning of term will have all the details.

How will the T Levels industry placements work?

The T Level is going ahead as expected and we're working with employers to ensure we have the industry placements ready. As you can imagine in the current climate, there will be some changes but each setting will be risk assessed and safe. You may start the year at College full-time and your placement moves to the spring and summer term, so there's flexibility built in to the course.

All three T Levels will start this September as planned, but the industry placement may move to later in the year when businesses have resumed their activities.



TRANSPORT

How much is the annual bus fare?

We are currently waiting for updated prices for buses. General transport information can be found at www.btc.ac.uk/students/essential-information/transport

Are there buses that go right to the College?

Yes, buses come into the College campuses. General transport information can be found at www.btc.ac.uk/students/essential-information/transport

Is there any way we can get a bus pass or are there buses to the College?

We have both College and county buses that drop and collect students from our campuses.

Please visit www.btc.ac.uk/students/essential-information/transport for timetables and an idea of the costs.

How long does it take to walk between the Bridgwater train station and the campus?

It takes approximately ten minutes to walk to the Bridgwater campus from the train station.

How long does it take to walk from the Taunton train station and the campus?

It takes approximately twenty minutes to walk to the Taunton campus from the train station.

More information about transport can be found on our website.

