

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE

WELCOME

At Hertford Regional College (HRC) our students are given the best opportunity to learn and develop their skills in our state of the art facilities. Our aim is to ensure that each student obtains the skills and qualifications they need in order to reach their chosen destination.

Our goal at HRC is to prepare all of our students for their future careers, whether that is straight after they finish College or after going to university. We believe that the experience they gain as a student at HRC is critical to ensuring they have the necessary skills to get ahead of the competition and to get that dream job, apprenticeship or place at their first choice university.

Our students learn in cutting edge, state of the art facilities and are taught by industry experts.

All our students have opportunities to meet and work with local employers so that they can develop their technical and vocational skills.

We help students improve their employability skills, the ones that employers tell us they value and that set the best applicants apart from the rest.

Above all of this, our staff provide advice and support to help every student to succeed and, in so doing, we respect them and give them the encouragement and opportunities they need to grow as a person.

We expect that our students will go on to achieve great things in their lives and we are proud to witness the successful careers our alumni have forged for themselves across all industry sectors.

We encourage you to be involved with your child's education. Your support makes a difference to your child achieving to their full potential, particularly with their progress in gaining GCSE English and maths (grades 1-4) should they not have achieved this in school.

This guide is designed to show you how we will support your child during their time with us and help them get the most out of their time at HRC. We firmly believe that the best education relies upon a shared commitment between teachers, students and supportive parents and carers.

Tony Medhurst
Principal & Chief Executive



ABOUT HRC

HRC is a medium-sized further education college with two main campuses in Broxbourne and Ware. We offer a wide range of full-time study programmes, T-Levels, apprenticeships, higher education, inclusive learning and part-time courses.

The learning experience at HRC is different from school because your child will have a chance to work in real-life environments, on real-life project briefs and be taught by experienced industry experts.

They won't be in a classroom all the time; they might be in a studio, workshop or salon. Alternatively, they might be employed as an apprentice and be earning a wage while they gain qualifications at the same time.

Making the decision to study in a college is the first step on an exciting journey that will bring your child new opportunities and help prepare them for their future career.

SUPPORT AT HRC

Our staff are here to help your child get the most out of their time at HRC and we have a team of people dedicated to making their College experience as enjoyable and productive as possible.

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (INCLUDING CAREERS ADVICE)

We have qualified careers advisers at HRC who can offer free, confidential and impartial advice to all full-time students. Students also receive career tutorial sessions as part of their study programme as well as opportunities to discover the progression opportunities that are available to them through the College.

PROGRESS REVIEWS

As a full-time student at HRC, your child will participate in group professional tutorials that give them opportunities (through themed topics) to develop their personal, social, learning and employability skills. These are in addition to one-to-one meetings to review their progress and offer individual advice and direction to help your child get the best from their course.

WORK EXPERIENCE

As a student at HRC, your child will undertake meaningful work experience which is directly related to their vocational specialism wherever possible, giving them valuable experience of the work environment, developing their skills for success and enabling them to apply the learning from their course to real life situations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GCSE ENGLISH AND MATHS

Achieving a good standard of English and maths is important for young people to compete in today's labour market. Surveys repeatedly show that some employers are dissatisfied with the literacy and numeracy skills of school and college leavers, and many use maths and English qualifications as a filter in their recruitment processes with a GCSE achieved at grade 4 (previously a grade C) being the standard aspired to.

It is a requirement that any student who has not yet achieved at least a Grade 4 in GCSE English and maths has to be working toward this standard. Those who have achieved a GCSE grade 3 will study a GCSE course, while others with lower or no GCSE grade will follow the stepping stone Functional Skills courses in English and maths at a level appropriate to them.

Students will take these additional classes alongside their chosen vocational course with programmes timetabled in a way to support this progress. This means that students do not need to stay on at school to achieve the English and maths grades required, but can come straight to HRC.

It is critical that your child takes their English and maths seriously and have good attendance in both subjects. As a parent, it is really important that you support and encourage your child on a pathway to achieve their GCSE English and maths when they are at college. Students who do not, may struggle to progress to their next level at the end of the year, even if they have done well with their vocational specialism.

WELFARE & COUNSELLING

We have professional counsellors who work in the College offering confidential advice and counselling for students. Our experienced Student Welfare Advisers are available to support your child with any learning or personal issues.

welfare@hrc.ac.uk and
counselling@hrc.ac.uk

STUDENT LIAISON OFFICERS

Our Student Liaison Officers are here to help your child make the most of their time at HRC. They can help provide a programme of sports, volunteering, fundraising and recreational activities.

SAFEGUARDING

We are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of our students. We provide and maintain a friendly and safe learning environment for all of our learners.

We act immediately on any concerns that a student might have in relation to bullying, abuse, neglect or harassment. All of our staff are trained in safeguarding.

safeguardingteam@hrc.ac.uk

LEARNING SUPPORT

The College welcomes learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and aims to provide the most appropriate support it can to meet specific need. There are a number of specialists available within the College, these include: SEND Assessors, providing specialist advice/guidance and individual support for complex learning needs; Learning Mentors, providing additional one to one and small group support outside of the classroom and Learning Support Workers who provide in class support where appropriate, to help students to develop independence and get the most out of their time at College.

LIFE AT HRC

Our two campuses at Broxbourne and Ware offer students exceptionally supportive learning environments.

Your child's studies are the reason why they are here but life at HRC doesn't stop at the classroom. Outside of lessons we have lots of activities that can make their time with us even more enriching. They can find out more about all of these added extras by talking to our Student Services Team.

STARTING THE DAY RIGHT

All full-time students and apprentices can enjoy a free breakfast at either campus, available Monday to Friday between 8.30am – 9.00am during term time.

THEIR OPINION COUNTS

Your child's views on life at College are important to us because every student helps shape the future of HRC. They can become a student representative and have their say on all aspects of College life. They could even work their way up to become a student governor.

GETTING ACTIVE

Sports and activities are a great way for your child to take a break from their studies and make new friends. Students can access the gym at our Broxbourne campus or join in with a range of other activities during their lunch breaks. They can get involved with football, karate, badminton, basketball and many other sports and meet new people along the way.

THE CHANGE FROM SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

College is a more adult environment which requires a more mature and independent approach. We expect a lot from our students:

- We expect students to attend all their lessons.
- We expect students to fully engage with work experience opportunities to support their development.
- We expect students to aim to be the very best that they can be, and that their learning behaviours support this.
- We expect students to fully capitalise upon their time at College, to make use of available resources and develop the skills and qualities that they will require for progression and employment.
- We expect students to fully engage with College life, ensuring they enjoy what they are doing.
- We expect students to own and reflect on their academic progress, seeking advice and support where necessary.
- We expect students to keep us informed of any circumstances that might affect their ability to learn.





SOAK UP SOME CULTURE

HRC is a great place to experience culture with the Michael Morpurgo Theatre at Broxbourne and the David Gentleman Gallery at Ware. Your child can watch our Performing Arts and Music students showcase their talents at the theatre or check out the latest student exhibition at the gallery.

JOIN OR START A CLUB

Your child can join an existing club or start their own! The opportunities are endless and all they need is a group of like-minded students to take part.

GAIN AN ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR FREE

If your child is a full-time 16-18 year old student they can study for a free qualification to boost their CV, including:

- First Aid
- Duke Of Edinburgh Bronze Award
- British Sign Language (Introductory Qualification)

BRAVO

HRC's students all live by the BRAVO code which ensures the College remains a safe and comfortable learning environment for everyone. This focuses on the following important themes:

- B** Be Safe
- R** Respectful
- A** Always polite
- V** Visible ID while on our campuses
- O** On time

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We are able to offer a range of advice about bursaries and financial support should this be of benefit to you and your family.

SAVE MONEY

Every student at College can sign up for Unidays and Student Beans to get discounts on lots of High Street brands.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What's the difference between HRC's courses and A Levels or GCSEs?

Vocational courses offer a mix of theoretical and practical learning versus A Levels and GCSEs which focus predominantly on theoretical.

At College, students are often working in practical settings designed to be as much like real workplaces as possible. They are taught by lecturers who have experience of working in industry and in many cases their work is set and assessed by local employers who work in close partnership with us.

To pass A Levels and GCSEs you have to sit final exams. Vocational courses are still largely assessed through continuous assessment, based on coursework and practical assignments although there may be some exam based element.

Can my child still apply to university if they study at HRC?

Yes! Hundreds of our students go on to university every year after successfully completing their studies with us. Our courses provide UCAS points that support university applications.

What if my child isn't sure what to do for a career?

Many students aren't and studying a vocational course doesn't close down their options. Students follow a broad vocational study programme which meets their individual needs, whether their intended destination is employment, an apprenticeship or further study. Our careers advisers can also talk through all their options with them during their time at HRC.

What can I do to support my child at HRC and help them to succeed?

Some young people need more help than others to settle into College life. The following advice may help you to help them.

- Encourage them to attend and to attend on time. There is a direct link between attendance and achievement and so good attendance is crucial to your child's success. College differs from school as the start and finishing times may vary each day so it is helpful to keep a copy of your child's timetable nearby to ensure they are on time for their College lessons.
- Help your child with their time management. The change to a less regimented schedule is sometimes hard to handle. You could ask if they are keeping their notes up to date and getting their assignments in on time.
- Give them space to study. The College has a Learning Resource Centre where students can use the computers and books, but if possible a quiet place at home is a real benefit.
- Curriculum areas organise parents' evenings throughout the year to keep you up to date on your child's progress at College and it is important that you attend these wherever possible.
- Sometimes part-time work interferes with College studies, so encourage your child to find the right balance.
- Encourage them to ask for help if the need arises. We have a range of support services available but asking for help is sometimes difficult.
- If your child feels they are on the wrong course, encourage them to contact us to discuss alternatives.
- Find out when exams are being held and help your child to plan a revision timetable.
- Ensure that your child is attending all parts of their Study Programme, especially English and maths.
- Take an interest in your child's course and encourage them to achieve, especially if they are finding the work a challenge.
- Contact your child's Tutor as soon as possible if you have any concerns that may impact upon their learning.



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