



Welcome to West Notts College

**Information for parents, carers and
guardians**

‘The way we do things at the college’

Welcome to the college. We are so pleased that your young person has chosen us for their next steps after school or has chosen to return to us to continue their studies.

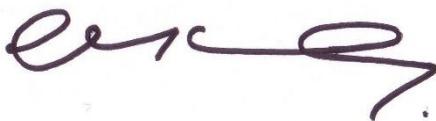
This short pack provides information for you about life at college, what students can expect from us and what you can expect from us too. Often, parents or carers have been really involved with their young person's education at school but are worried that when they come to college this involvement might end.

This is not the case, we want parents and carers to be involved with us and see you as a really important partner in the journey that our students are making.

College is very different to school, we are an adult, professional environment and try to mirror the standards and expectations that young people can expect from a workplace. This means that we will treat them like an adult and young professional. This provides our students with a great amount of freedom but also means that they need to take responsibility for their own behaviour and success at college.

Of course we will support them along the way, and realise that some of our young people may need more support than others to meet our expectations and get themselves ready for work. When it works best for our students is when parents and carers also get involved, help us by supporting our expectations at home and working with us constructively when perhaps things need to be improved.

Being at college is an amazing and exciting experience. All of our staff are passionate about ensuring students succeed, our job is to prepare our students for their next steps, but also give them life and employability skills that will put them in a great place for many years to come. I and the rest of the team at the college really look forward to working with you on this journey.



Louise Knott

Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience.

You can contact me on:

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How is college different to school?

As well as the difference in courses and curriculum there are a few minor differences that, in some cases, can be a big difference for young people:

- We don't have a school bell! Part of being an adult is making sure we can get to our lessons on time without the need for a bell or alarm.
- There may be times in the day when students are not in formal learning. Part of the positive journey our students make is towards becoming a creative, independent learner. We want our students to do study outside of formal learning, to challenge us with new ideas and ways of doing things. That's why you might see independent study on timetables or there may be a couple of hours in the day when students are not in class. This gets more frequent the higher the level of study. For example at level 3 there is a significant expectation that students will do study for themselves.
- Students don't have to wear a school uniform, however in some areas they will be expected to wear dress appropriate for the industry (e.g. overalls, hair and beauty uniform, kitchen whites, restaurant uniform etc) and in others may have the opportunity purchase polo shirts for their curriculum. When they are not in these clothes we ask that they wear clothes that are appropriate and will not cause offense to anyone.
- We don't have restrictions on hair colour, hair style, jewellery and make-up. However, when students are in our industry environments or on work placement they will have to meet the standards of that industry. For example, in childcare students will not be allowed to have long nails when working in a setting, in beauty students will have to have minimal makeup and no painted/long nails, in engineering students will not be able to wear large ear-rings or long chains. Tutors will explain expectations at the start of the year.

What are our expectations in terms of behaviour? (Extract from our code of conduct)

Our code of conduct is based upon respect - **respect yourself, respect others and respect the college**. This means:

1. We all use language that is appropriate for a professional environment - that means we ask everyone not to swear or use offensive language (even as a joke).
2. We are a litter free college, help us keep the college looking clean and tidy by putting litter in bins and clearing up after yourself in canteens and diners.
3. We take your safety very seriously, asking people to wear a lanyard is part of that – help us keep everyone safe by wearing yours.
4. Respect your tutors and your peers by turning up on time to class and letting us know if you can't make it.
5. You will get far more out of college if you come ready to learn - bring a pen and paper, do the background work and remember any special equipment you might need for that day. Another way in which you can show you are ready to learn is to take off your outdoor coat in class – if this causes a personal problem for you please speak to a tutor or member of the support team.
6. Mobile phones are an important part of all our lives but use them appropriately – respect your tutors and other students by only using mobiles in class when your tutor says it's ok.
7. We all don't share the same taste in music – please respect this by listening to yours through in-ear speakers or headphones only and only in break times unless your tutor says it's ok to do it in class.

Everyone in our community will challenge **anyone** who is not following our code of conduct.

At the beginning of the year your curriculum area will also talk to you about other rules that may apply to your area and are generally linked to what it is like in industry.

A copy of our full code of conduct and disciplinary procedure is attached for information. This applies to staff and visitors as much as it does to our students.

What can I expect from you?

We really value the relationship with parents and carers, a positive relationship with the college is so important in ensuring our students are successful. You can expect:

- Reports about progress being sent home.
- An opportunity to meet with tutors at least once per term so that you can hear how your young person is getting on.
- An open door policy for parents to raise concerns or talk to us about any worries that you might have – see below for more information.
- A guarantee that we will work hard to make sure that your young person has all the support that they need, from both tutors and central support teams. This can be extra support with work through to more specialist support for students who may have a learning difficulty or disability.
- A promise that we will try and make your young person's experience positive, rewarding and successful.

How can I help?

The support of parents and carers really helps a young person on their journey, there are a few simple things you can do to help ensure your young person's time at college is as positive as it can be:

- Support our code of conduct
- Provide a gentle reminder to bring equipment for college – e.g. pens, paper, kit, books.
- Check on where they are with assignments and encourage them to get the work done and handed in on time.
- Support us in making sure students arrive on time or let us know if they can't make it into college.
- Encourage your young person to get involved in all aspects of the college including clubs, activities and other opportunities.
- Let us know of any support needs that your young person has – the earlier we know, the more effective support will be and it won't be a barrier to coming to college.
- When we do have to address issues of behaviour, attendance or performance work with us to find a solution.

What if I'm not happy and want to raise a concern.

Sometimes things may go wrong - you may be concerned about the way we are dealing with a situation or the support that your young person is getting.

We want you to raise those concerns with us. In the vast majority of cases issues can be resolved really quickly. Whilst we do have an open door policy for you to raise concerns, we find that the most positive solutions come when we are all constructive.

If you do want to raise a concern please help us by:

- Your voice and your opinions matter very much to us, we will listen and try and act on any concerns that you might have. However if you are angry, aggressive and verbally abusive to staff it rarely leads to a positive solution and, in some cases, if this continues, we may refuse to engage with you any further.
- Whilst staff are more than happy to speak with you, many of them teach, as such if you come to college in person without an appointment you may be frustrated when the member of staff is not available. To avoid this please make an appointment if you want to see a member of staff personally.
- If you want to give us a call, that's fine, if staff aren't available we will come back to you as soon as possible, however please be aware this might not be the same day due to teaching commitments or other meetings.

Who can I talk to outside of the curriculum area?

There are a number of people you can talk to outside of the curriculum area:

1. The head of student support, Paul Rana – email: paul.rana@wnc.ac.uk
2. The director of learning and innovation, Julian Smith – email: Julian.smith@wnc.ac.uk
3. The vice principal, Louise Knott – email louise.knott@wnc.ac.uk

Attached for your information

Student code of conduct and disciplinary procedure – please read this as it will help if we need to address issues of behaviour with you.

Our stance on the use of mobile phones and speakers – **please help us by asking your young person not to bring any speaker that aren't in-ear or headphones into college.**