



Solihull College
& University Centre

A Guide for Parents and Guardians





Introduction from the Principal

We are delighted that your son / daughter / ward has chosen Solihull College & University Centre and hope very much that they are finding their first term at the College a rewarding experience.

Support from parents and guardians is very important and we encourage you to get involved. We welcome regular contact from you and offer a number of opportunities during the year for you to come in and talk to us, with your son / daughter / ward.

This leaflet provides information on how you can help to support us and your son / daughter / ward in gaining the best possible experience during their time here.

We want their college experience to be enjoyable. We want them to make friends, get involved in the clubs, societies and the many events we have throughout the year.

They are studying in a very safe and friendly environment as we do not tolerate any form of poor behaviour, discrimination or bullying.

We set high standards of behaviour and expect all our students to be responsible for their learning. We provide a range of student support, advice and guidance services.

My colleagues and I look forward to working with you.

John Callaghan

John Callaghan

How you can support your son / daughter / ward at the College

The change from school to college is sometimes hard to handle. The College timetable is different from the timetable your son / daughter / ward will have followed at school so please make sure you get a copy so that you can support them in adjusting. The time on the timetable is when we expect the student to be in the classroom and ready to start work, not the time they should arrive in the building. Students should aim to arrive in the building at least 15 minutes before the start of their morning class and earlier if they intend to have breakfast in the refectory.

Attendance is very important if a student is to reach his/her full potential. We believe in working with students first to encourage good attendance. However, if absence continues after two consecutive days we will inform you of this. You will receive a text message which will also give you information on who to contact. This will be the Student Support Officers. Please let us know if your mobile number changes.

You will receive course information for parents / guardians when your son / daughter / ward begins the course in September and you will be invited to the start of year welcome events.

Talk to them about their work and progress; ask if they are up to date with everything. If you are concerned about their progress, don't wait for a parents' evening; call their Personal Tutor to talk about it or contact the Student Support Officer. Contact Ellie Lander, Caring Services Manager and she will put you through to the Student Support Officer looking after your son / daughter or ward.

Try and find some space at home where your son / daughter / ward can study in peace and quiet. The College has a number of areas with computers, where students can study. Encourage your son / daughter / ward to use those spaces as well.

Please attend our parents' evenings. It may not always seem this way but young people do like parents to attend. It shows you care about them and how they are doing.

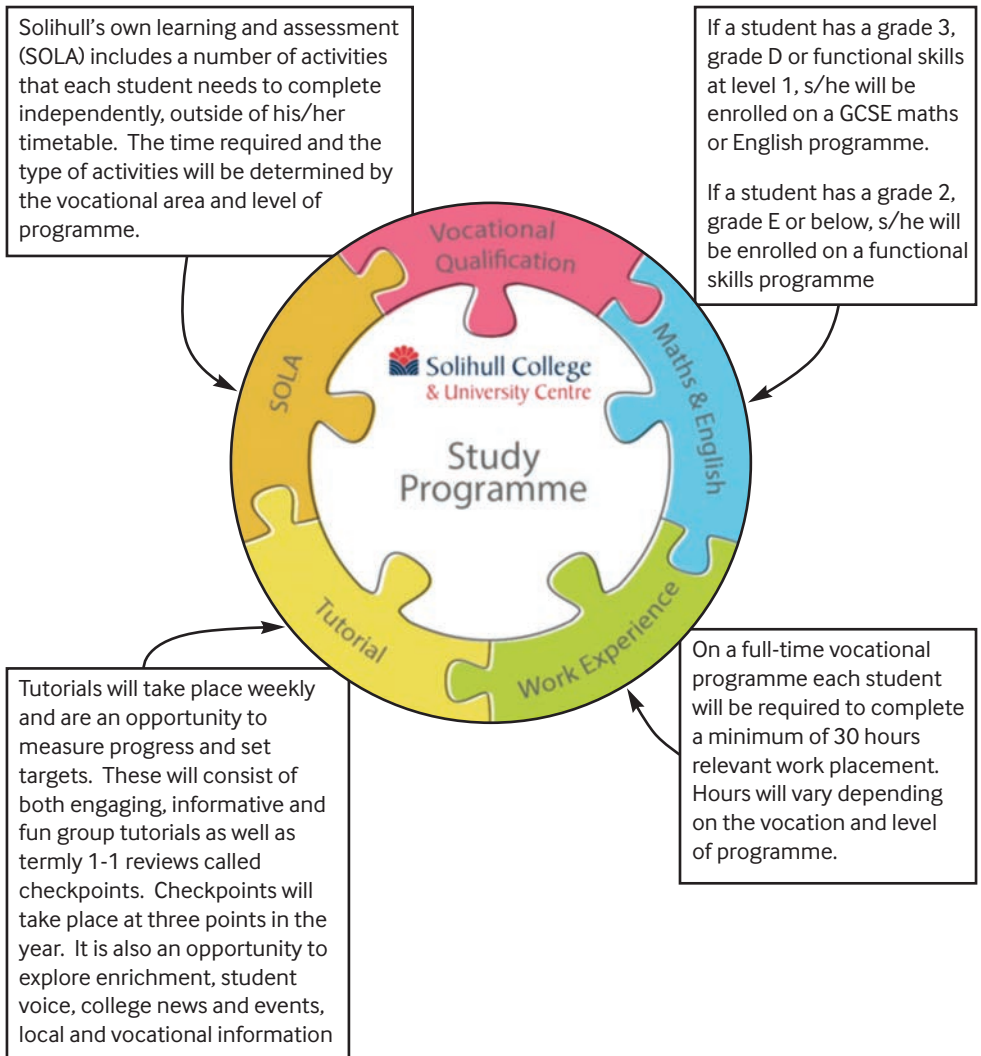
There are two parents' evenings each year, one in November and the second in March. You will be sent a letter notifying you of the exact date for the course your son / daughter / ward is attending.

We understand that your son / daughter / ward may want to take on or already be in part-time work. Please help him or her to make sure that part-time work doesn't get in the way of learning. Balancing the need to earn, learn and have fun is sometimes difficult for young people.

Make sure they realise that asking for help is not a sign of weakness and if they are struggling with anything to contact their Personal Tutor or call the Student Services Team. We have a superb team of Careers Advisers. If your son / daughter / ward feels they are on the wrong course or needs to talk about what to do next then ask them to talk to our Careers Advisers. Talk to them and listen to what they say about their college experience. If you have any concerns at all, talk to someone at the College. A list of contacts appears at the end of this guide.

Programme of study

Not only will your son / daughter / ward need to complete their vocational qualification they will also be required to undertake a number of other studies as part of a holistic study programme. It is important that you support your son / daughter / ward in completing every part of their study programme which is listed below. Study programmes will vary dependent on your son / daughter / ward's vocational course and level of programme. For more specific information please refer to the Course Information Pack.



Responsibilities

The college tries to encourage all its learners to behave in a mature and responsible way; so rules and regulations are minimal. What rules we do have apply to whether the student is in college, on a trip or on a work placement. We will always try and work through any problems with students before applying any sanctions to them and will always look to parents / guardians for their support in doing this.

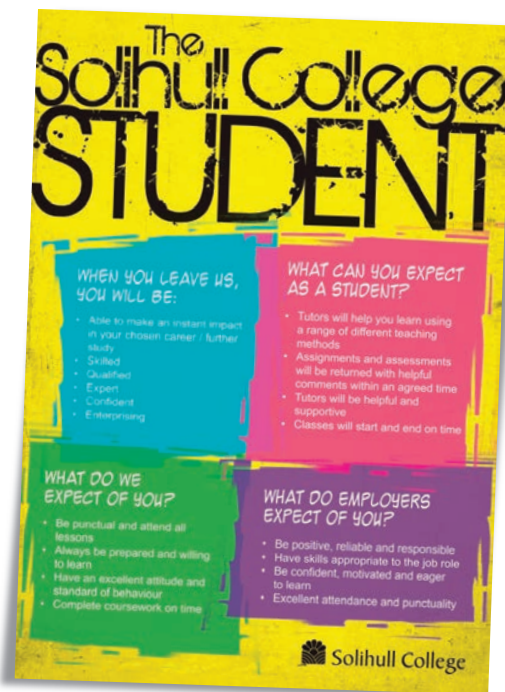
Your son / daughter / ward is asked to commit to the following Student Code of Conduct:

- Be responsible for your learning: prepared and ready to study showing commitment and a positive attitude
- Be polite and respectful and co-operate with members of staff and students, inside and outside of the classroom
- Be on time and attend all timetabled sessions, including any exams – 100% is your target – and inform us if you can't attend
- Complete all coursework and/or assignments on time and meet your tutor regularly to discuss and review your progress
- Observe all of Solihull College & University Centre's policies and procedures as explained in your induction, on the Student Information Hub and on MOODLE
- Wear your College ID at all times
- Switch off and put away mobile devices unless, at the agreement of the tutor, these are in use for learning purposes
- If you smoke cigarettes including e cigarettes, then do so only in designated areas

- Follow our rules and the law; do not bring in, consume or sell alcohol or illegal drugs
- Behave in a way that will help us to keep Solihull College & University Centre a safe place to learn

The College will not tolerate:

- Disregard for health and safety precautions
- Substance misuse of any sort
- Theft, fraud or damage to property or equipment
- Threatening, abusive or offensive language or behaviour
- Any hate crime (e.g. homophobia, racism, sexism, disablism etc).
- Misuse of the internet or college computers



Financial support

We hope that your son / daughter / ward, if eligible, is already benefitting from the financial support available.

Can I get any help with the cost of sending my son / daughter / ward to college?

All learners who are aged 16 or over, but under 18 on the 31st August of the current academic year are entitled to a Centro Card. This allows them to continue to travel at child rates.

Bursaries

The College offers students two bursaries aimed at helping students between the ages of 16 and 19 with the costs of coming to college.

The Enhanced Bursary

This is a minimum payment of £1200 over the year and is aimed at those who are in Care, leaving care, in receipt of income support (independent student on means tested benefit in own right) or students who are disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.

The Discretionary Bursary

There is also a means tested fund to help with the cost of travel, trips and equipment.

Who qualifies?

If a student is over 16 and under 19 years old on 31st August 2017 and living in a household where the annual income is £21,000 or less (before tax is paid) then s/he is eligible to apply for the bursary. We have a priority 2 group for household income under £26,000 and a priority 3 for household income under £30,000.

If your son / daughter / ward hasn't applied and you think she or he is eligible then a guidance booklet and application form are available from the Student Finance Team.

Care To Learn

The aim of Care to Learn is to give financial support to teenage mothers and fathers who want to continue their education or training and need help with childcare and travel expenses. You can claim Care to Learn funding if you are under 20 and:

- Start a course of learning or training in a school, college or as a trainee with a work based learning provider that receives some public funding;

- Are caring for your own child(ren);
- Are living in England; and
- Use a OFSTED registered childcare provider.

Applications can be made now for courses that start at any time. For more information and to apply for Care to Learn funding, you can visit the Care to Learn website at

www.direct.gov.uk/caretolearn

You can also get information and guidance in completing the forms for Care to Learn from the College Welfare Officer.

Free meals

Free meals are available for all eligible students. In the 2017 to 2018 academic year, eligible students will receive an electronic credit of £2.41 per day, credited to the ID card, to purchase a meal in the college refectory. **If you think your son or daughter is eligible and hasn't applied yet please ask them to contact Student Finance.**

Student eligibility

Students must be aged between 16 and 18 on 31st August 2017 to be eligible for a free meal in the 2017 to 2018 academic year. Students who turn 19 during their study programme will remain eligible for a free meal until the end of the academic year in which they turn 19 or to the end of their study programme, whichever is sooner.

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. For the purposes of eligibility for free meals, 'disadvantage' is defined by the students being in receipt of, or having parents/guardians who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit 06
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- during the initial roll out of the benefit, Universal Credit.

We are here to help

In addition to providing high quality teaching and learning opportunities the College is committed to ensuring that your son / daughter / ward is fulfilling their potential and having the best possible outcomes, growing as an individual and member of the college community. We have a range of support services, including a College Nurse, should they be needed and actively promote the welfare and well- being of our students.

We hope that you will encourage your son / daughter / ward to take up support if or when it's required and to become as involved as possible in College life.

Safeguarding

The College has a Safeguarding Policy to help ensure the safety and protection of students from all forms of abuse or maltreatment. You can find this, together with our Prevent Policy, on the College website under Our College/Safeguarding and Prevent; www.solihull.ac.uk/about-us/safeguarding-prevent/

Parents and guardians should note that the college works closely with the local police to ensure a college free of illegal substances and we will from time to time jointly undertake preventative measures such as having the police drugs dogs on site. If you would like any further information on this or our safeguarding policy or if you would like to discuss a safeguarding issue please contact Adam Thomas, Director of Student Services on **0121 678 7138** or via email adam.thomas@solihull.ac.uk.

Student Voice

Every student has a right to have his / her voice heard. Student voice is a way of getting students involved in all aspects of how the college works. Student Representatives are elected from every course in the college and meet with their fellow students and with senior management at the student conferences and in focus groups.

We have a Student Voice Executive Committee and students are encouraged to become involved either by standing for election as a committee member or by supporting events organised by the Student Executive Committee.

Academic Year 2017 - 2018

Autumn Term

04/09/17 – 19/12/17

Half Term - 23/10/17 – 27/10/17

Spring Term

04/01/18 – 29/03/18

Half Term - 19/02/18 – 23/02/18

Summer Term

16/04/18 – 15/06/18

Half Term - 28/05/18 – 01/06/18

(Bank Holiday Monday 07/05/18)

Contacts

Adam Thomas - Tel: 0121 678 7138

Director of Student Services

Ellie Lander - Tel: 0121 678 7011

Caring Services Manager

Anne Maddalena - Tel: 0121 678 7015

Frontline Services and Admissions Manager

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