

MCL service disruptions during COVID-19 crisis

Frequently Asked Questions

To support all learners and clients accessing our services we have compiled the following list of FAQs. Some are general and others are service specific. Please note that apprentice and employer FAQs are on a separate document.

Q. How do I contact my tutor during the lockdown?

A. Your tutor will remain in regular contact by email and phone. If you need to contact any member of staff at MCL, you can do so by calling **01642 811400** or by emailing info@maes.ac.uk

Q. How can I hand in my work to be checked?

A. Your tutor will go through your options when they get in touch, which may include sending your work via email, WhatsApp or Google Classroom.

Q. Where can I find free online courses and how do I enrol?

A. You can browse our online catalogue and enrol at <https://www.mcls.ac.uk/equal.html>

Q. What can I do if the course is not available?

A. Talk to us and tell us what you would like to do and we will try our best to find it or create it. If we can't help, we may be able to source it via one of our partners.

Q. Do I still need to attend appointments with MCL, Routes to Work or Jobcentre Plus?

A. No. All appointments have been cancelled and you will receive your benefit payment as normal. However, you will still need to record all work-related activity in your online / paper journal and keep in regular contact with your Work Coach and your Tutor/Advisor/Key Worker at MCL. Phone appointments are available throughout all of our services.

Q. Will my benefit be sanctioned for not attending my lessons or appointments?

A. No. All lessons and non-essential contact has been cancelled by the Government to protect us all.

Q. When will MCL lessons and courses start again?

A. We will continue to monitor the situation and follow the guidelines set by the Government. Once all of the risks have been reduced or removed, all of our classes will resume. Your tutor will keep in touch and we will also post messages via our Facebook page.

Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) FAQs

Q. Can you still support me with CVs, job applications and other advice?

A. Absolutely. As long as you have the required technology at home (phone, PC, laptop, tablet) we will support you remotely. We are only temporarily changing the way we work, not stopping work completely.

Q. Due to the impact of Coronavirus I have lost my job. What support can I get?

A. Contact your Learning Advisor immediately and they'll run through your options, but this will be non-face to face contact for now. This could include helping you to apply for benefits, job search, updating your CV or helping you to apply for a new job or college course.

Q. How do I access financial support in the event of being offered work?

A. This is assessed on a case by case basis, depending on your needs. Different job starts require different things (clothing, equipment, tools etc.) and different levels of support (benefits, travel costs, debt advice etc.). Rest assured that we will do everything we can to remove any financial barriers to enable you to start work. This may include looking at DWP and Local Authority funding e.g. hardship payments, loans, Flexible Support Fund, benefit advances and COVID-19 hardship fund.

Q. Will I still be able to keep in touch via the Choosing Pathways Facebook page?

A. Yes of course. We are currently monitoring all job and training opportunities in the area, and we will continue to share these as we find them. Our inbox will still be monitored on a regular basis, so feel free to send us a message (not online 24/7).

Routes to Work Middlesbrough FAQs

Q: Will the government increase benefits as I am having to pay more for food because of panic buying?

A: Nobody should be panic buying food or other essential items. However, it has been suggested that Universal Credit may increase over the next 12 months. Find out more on www.gov.uk or speak to your Work Coach at Jobcentre Plus.

Q: I need to apply for benefits because I now have no income / I have been suspended from work / my temporary work has stopped / my zero hour job has no hours / my workplace has closed / I am self-employed and now have no income.

A: Go online and apply for Universal Credit online. You may be eligible for a benefit advance.

Q: I have no internet access, but need to look for work. What should I do?

A: You should still do everything that you can to look for work, but not by leaving the house.

This could include:

- Contacting prospective employers by phone
- Handing in a CV at the supermarket where you do your essential food shop (keeping two metres away from anyone at any one time)
- Asking your Routes to Work Key Worker to find, print and send out jobs and application packs by post (there may be a delay due to reduced postal services)

Q: Do I still have to search and apply for jobs when it appears that no businesses are recruiting?

A: Yes but you may want to reconsider your job goals and preferred sectors. Industries such as retail, warehouse, transport, and manufacturing have all seen a massive surge in demand, so now could be an ideal time to secure work in one of these areas.

Q: Will I still have to job search if I can't attend the job club?

A: If you have access to a computer you should still do what you can to prepare for and find work, as well as using the phone. Your Key Worker can still offer the same level of support as at the job club.

Q: How else can I access and receive support from Routes to Work?

A: You can do this a number of ways, including:

- Routes to Work will be posting resources out to those who do not have internet access.
- Routes to Work will be emailing resources to those who have internet access.
- Key Workers may be able to drop off printed CVs, or post them out to your house.

- Follow Anna K Campus on Facebook - this is a work account for one of our Key Workers. They will post vacancies, and will try to answer messages Tuesday-Thursday 9-5.

Q: I have a job interview lined up, will this still be going ahead?

A: Probably not but you should contact the company to check first as they may conduct the interview via Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom or something similar.

Q: I am currently booked on a training course. Will this still be going ahead?

A: If it's classroom based then probably not as this goes against government guidelines. However, if it's distance learning or online then you should be able to proceed as normal. Contact the training provider to find out more.