Dear Access to HE student,

I hope this email finds you and your family well. The College is working hard to address the concerns about how your course has been affected by COVID-19 and we appreciate your patience during this time.

Following the disruption of studies to Access to Higher Education Diploma students caused by the Covid-19 outbreak, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has been working closely with the Department for Education (DfE), Ofqual and other organisations to produce a clear, fair and consistent approach to assessment for the award of the Access to HE Diploma. It has now been agreed that for those due to complete their Access to HE studies by 31 July 2020, you will now receive calculated grades for all assessments with original submission dates after 20 March 2020.

Once, a fair and robust method of how your grades will be calculated is decided, we will let you know as soon as possible. In broad terms, it will be based on predicted grades from tutors as well as other factors such as prior attainment on the course.

Open Awards has also produced the following guidance for students: [COVID-19 Update for Access to HE Students](https://www.accesstohe.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-information-covid-19/access-to-he-students).

We are aware that, as Access to HE students, many of you are engaged in a tricky balance between work, family commitments and your studies, which will not have been made easier by the current situation. However, we encourage you to continue your learning and engage with your tutors wherever you can. It is important that you are as well prepared as you can be for transition into higher education at University Centre St Helens or other institutions. Continuing with your learning will increase your confidence and develop your readiness to continue along your chosen pathway. In light of that, tutors will continue to deliver their subject areas and support you in the continuity of your learning.

It is recognised that some students may feel disappointed that they have not been able to complete their assessments. If you do not feel your calculated grades reflect the grades you would have achieved, you will have the opportunity to appeal or you may choose to sit your assessments at the next earliest opportunity. If you do this, you should be aware that taking your assessments later may impact on you progressing in September as planned.

May I reiterate that any assessment that had an original submission date, on or before, 20 March 2020, that is still outstanding, will still need to be submitted.

We will continue to provide you with the latest updates, and we will continue to encourage your engagement with the ongoing learning in your subject areas.  If you require any help or further clarification, please contact your tutor in the first instance. Given the circumstances, I also understand that people may wish to contact me directly, which you are welcome to do.

Looking to the future, I look forward to welcoming back those of you who are due to progress to University Centre St Helens degree courses in September and wish those of you moving to other institutions all the best with your future studies.

Take care and stay safe,

Jen Hayes

**Director of Adults & HE**