

Harrogate GCSE English students were asked to write a blog of their experiences of the Coronavirus lockdown. Here are a few examples of how they are feeling:

#### Student T

Lockdown for me started on the 16th of March, a full week before anyone else at College. This was because of my respiratory problems caused by Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. It was vital that my family and I isolated ourselves to be shielded from any chance of catching the virus. I have learnt that life can change very quickly and it can be really scary - especially for me as I could be badly affected if I caught the virus. I have also learnt how important the simple things are like going to the cinema with friends or out for a meal with family or just going out for a drive for a day out.

#### Student W

Since everyone is stuck at home, my workplace (McDonald's) has temporarily shut down. I originally thought that I wouldn't be able to make money for a while but I was wrong. I got an email from work about something called furlough. I would get paid my average wage every two weeks. In other words I would get paid for doing nothing. It's like a dream come true (aside from the whole lockdown thing)

#### Student B

Who would have ever thought that the whole world would be taken over by a deadly virus? The experience is just tough for everyone. I can't cope with just sitting in a bed or staring at a screen every day, this lockdown hits hard. Not being able to go out to a club or even socialise in a pub is upsetting, clubbing was my happy place, having a ridiculously good time out with the girls, coming home with nothing but a headache and damaged heels.

#### Student L

When lockdown is lifted, I will find it weird to not socially distance as I have been doing it the best I can for the past few months. I believe that most people will have become better people; I hope people will be more giving and aware of how other people are feeling.

#### Student K

I think for some who support of reducing carbon emissions, they will be annoyed by the world economies starting up again after the lockdown. It means emissions given off by planes, buses, trains, motorbikes, cars and businesses will grow significantly and eventually get back to original levels.

#### Student L

I have only left the house a couple of times to go to the shop and to just go on a walk, to get myself out of the house. It was music to my ears when we were told we were allowed to meet one friend as long as we were socially distanced. Although I was sad about not being able to see everyone all together, it was better than not being able to see anyone at all.

#### Student O

One thing that I can take away from this is that I now know what I want to do as my future career. I want to be a nurse and help people and do what is right, so if something like this happens again I will be able to help and feel like I have done my role by helping people.

#### Student J

During the lockdown I have learnt many things: doing more activities with my parents, doing more cleaning \*sigh and learning some skills to help my future. I changed the brakes on a car, baked a delicious chocolate cake (the best thing) and built a tiny plot for some strawberries (that I then planted and now take care of; I can't wait to collect the reward).

### Student L

College closing was actually very scary to me, although I can imagine for some it was a relief. I miss all my family and friends. I miss my boss, my colleagues and I miss my tutors and classmates. I know when this is over and we can return to some form of normality, I will be so much more appreciative of the people around me and the opportunities I get however often take for granted.

### Student T

I hate not being able to go outside, even though I never used to go outside that much. I used to hide away in my room playing games like a hermit. I think this just goes to show how much we have taken freedom for granted. Before lockdown we could go outside whenever we wanted. Now we are in lockdown, we can only go out for essentials. I am realising it's harder to cope without the freedom of going outside than I thought it would be.

### Student J

Ok so exams are cancelled, a good thing yes? Not especially. Like me, most people and students will be wondering what happens with the next year of their education or apprenticeship or even going onto work. So yes, it may be all good that you are stuck indoors and don't have to go to college but your education and future may take a massive hit as well.

### Student H

I can call my family which is nice but it's not as good as seeing them face to face. Not being able to see my friends or go out with them is hard, the only time I talk to them is by PS4 chat but it isn't the same. With not being in college and not being able to sit my exams I'm nervous about what my grades are going to be in GCSE and BTEC.

### Student J

Human interaction is very important for people's mental health... mine was not good before the whole virus and lockdown. I think being stuck in your house and not seeing other people that you don't live with does take a toll on you. Personally going on facetime and talking to your mates and other members of your family is very important to help with your mental health.

### Student F

Lockdown started a week after I made my first team appearance for Harrogate town in a cup match where I played the full game and gave a good impression of myself to the coaches. ...I felt as if everything was going for me and I was really improving and looking forward to the future. Then we went into lockdown and everything changed.

### Student M

I can see that after lockdown people will be happy to be reunited with family members who do not live in the same house. I found things hard when meeting up and social distancing with my grandma on her birthday. When she asked me to make her some artwork in a frame, she gave me. I gave it to her, and tears drew to my eyes because I knew I could not go near her for a hug.

### Student C

Whilst we have been in lockdown and everything has been closed I have really missed things that I took for granted before all this started like being able to eat out in restaurants or going to see a film at the cinema or just nipping out to a coffee shop. Although this time at home has given me more time to think about my future, the situation has made it very difficult to decide on what to do next for the best, given that the hospitality industry will look very different in the future.