

Thursday, 25 February 2021

Supporting Students

Following the First Minister's announcement earlier this week, colleges are now able to bring 5% of students back onto campus for face-to-face teaching where it's essential. Online and remote learning will, however, continue to be the norm for the vast majority of students because of the ongoing restrictions.

The Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, Richard Lochhead MSP, has written to every student in Scotland today and sent them a [video message](#).

The pandemic is undoubtedly having an impact on students across Scotland given that there has been ongoing disruption to learning throughout the last year. Practical courses where students need access to workshops, labs and salons, and courses which require work-based placements in settings like nurseries and care homes, have been the most affected by pandemic restrictions. Colleges for many months have been working creatively and flexibly to support students who are learning at home.

The [Ministerial Task Force](#), recently established by Scottish Government, is working at pace to support students achieve their qualification in this academic year. There are only a few months before the academic year ends in July, and Colleges Scotland is working to reduce the impact on learning posed by ongoing restrictions. The Scottish Government has given the assurance that in the event that courses can't be completed by the time originally planned, that they will do everything possible to support students and their colleges, and that they are exploring what financial assistance may be required for both learners and their institutions.

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said today:

"As a sector, our sole ambition is to support learners gain the qualifications they have already worked so hard towards. We want to reassure students that locally colleges are doing everything they can to ensure as many students as possible complete their courses, and nationally Colleges Scotland is working with Scottish Government to enable those solutions to flow to colleges.

"There has been an incredible effort from college staff to help their students, right across the country. The ongoing national lockdown has been very challenging, but we are determined that everything possible is done to help students achieve in this academic year.

"In the event that courses can't be completed by the time originally planned, we are pleased the Scottish Government has confirmed it will do everything possible to support students and institutions."

ENDS

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