

Date 25 May 2020

Your ref

Our ref S4-S6 LS/AH

Dear Parent/Carer

Support for young people planning to leave school in Summer 2020 – Covid19 update

We hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. The current COVID19 pandemic has changed all our lives. The City of Edinburgh's families and communities have been amazingly committed to following national health advice and we are proud of our community response under such challenging times.

The transition from High School to the next stage of learning and/or work is a milestone for every young person. This year COVID19 has made this even more challenging. It is likely that for young people leaving school this Summer that the number of job and training opportunities available will be fewer than would have been anticipated a few months ago when plans were being made. Many of the industries that employ and develop our young people have been affected (hospitality, retail, tourism, construction and creative industries are a few examples). As a result, if your child planned to move into employment, training, further or higher education, they may now be concerned about what their future will look like.

We want to reassure you that, under these circumstances, the Council, our schools and partner services (Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh College, universities, training providers and employer organisations) are working together to develop and offer additional choices for those planning to leave school. The accompanying leaflet provides career information and advice for S4-S6 pupils who may be planning to leave school. It also outlines support for staying connected and emotionally healthy in these uncertain times.

If you or your child has any questions or concerns, it is always helpful to chat with someone who can support you and discuss what options are available. Therefore, in the first instance please contact your child's Pupil Support Leader. All young people are encouraged to register with My World of Work: www.myworldofwork.co.uk. This *Skills Development Scotland* resource will provide a "one-stop shop" for career information, advice and guidance. There are helpful "To-do lists" available for leavers at different age and stages.

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Pathway – continuing education

School: staying-on is still an option for those young people in S4 and S5 who had planned to leave in the summer. Please contact your child's school as soon as possible to discuss coursing arrangements. Remote learning to support new qualifications is being provided by schools through our EdinburghLearns@home offer.

Edinburgh College: if your child has applied for and been offered a place at Edinburgh College, then this offer remains unchanged and your child's place has been secured. Applications for full and part-time courses at Edinburgh College are still open and all school leavers are guaranteed the offer of a college place (though this may not be in the course of your first-choice) www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk/Courses/

Higher education: Universities are working very closely with the Scottish Qualifications Authority, schools, and others to ensure students can demonstrate their abilities and progress to higher education. Further advice is available directly from each University or through UCAS www.ucas.com/coronavirus

Pathway – training and employment

Skills Development Scotland can help your child understand their options whether it's getting a job or apprenticeship, going to college or university. SDS career services are free and impartial. Support is available if employment or other pathways have been impacted recently. Call the SDS Helpline to speak to an expert adviser on 0800 917 8000.

Some employers are still recruiting and advertising vacancies using a range of sites. The leaflet **Advice and Information for School Leavers Summer 2020** provides useful links.

We would encourage you to contact the most appropriate person or service to gain the support you need. If your contact details have changed please update your child's school, a contact number and email address for all school leavers is most helpful. Our schools and partners are committed to working with our young people who may need a little extra support in these uncertain times.

We trust that by working together we will be able to provide the best opportunities for our young people and develop a dynamic workforce.

Yours sincerely



Lorna Sweeney
Service Manager (Schools & Lifelong Learning)

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