

E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

9 July 2020

Dear colleagues,

COVID-19 - FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKING: SCOTLAND'S ROUTE MAP THROUGH AND OUT OF THE CRISIS: PHASE 3

Following my letters of 21 May and 18 June 2020, in which I set out the four phases of the route map by which the Scottish Government aims to ease the current lockdown restrictions, I write to update you on plans for [entering into Phase 3](#).

As the First Minister has set out in Parliament today, the substantial progress that we have collectively made in Scotland, by following the relevant rules and guidance, has enabled us to meet the conditions to progress to Phase 3.

It is important to recognise, however, that the virus has not gone away. As we have seen in other parts of the world, when given the chance, it can re-establish itself quickly.

As in Phase 2, we are introducing the changes over Phase 3 in stages. What that means for colleges, universities and community learning and development is summarised below.

These activities are subject to adherence to public health measures as set out in the relevant guidance, including physical distancing for which 2 metres remains the default. Institutions should continue to plan for the resumption of activities on that basis.

As we enter Phase 3 of the route map, exemptions will be considered for specific sectors and settings where agreed additional mitigations must be put in place. This would allow organisations in relevant sectors, if they choose, to operate with a 1 metre distance on condition that agreed mitigations, fully recorded in risk assessments, are implemented.

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We are now looking at whether such an exemption may be applied to colleges and universities, and community learning environments such as for small tutorials or specific practical subjects but until that consideration has been made, 2 metre distancing remains the default and will remain so if it is decided that an exemption cannot be made.

I know that my officials have been liaising with Scottish Funding Council, Universities Scotland, Colleges Scotland, CLD stakeholders, trade union and student representatives about this and we will provide an update on this work in the coming weeks.

From 13 July:

- Time-sensitive mandatory or regulated skills assessments that are essential to the completion of Modern Apprenticeship qualifications or to comply with a legal obligation can resume in colleges
- Face-to-face youth work can resume outdoors

From 22 July:

- Universities and colleges can have a phased return with a blended model of remote learning and limited on campus learning where this is a priority
- Safe restart of university and college halls of residence and Purpose Built Student Accommodation in line with guidance to be published shortly
- Community Learning and Development activity including adult learning in line with published guidance

The various changes that are due to come into effect in Phase 3 will result in larger numbers of people moving around and coming together, giving the virus more opportunities to spread. There is a risk of outbreaks and while we should strive to avoid them, we must also prepare for them and our Test & Protect system will help us to contain them. Staying safe and keeping others safe is as important as ever which is why, for example, we have made face coverings mandatory on public transport and in shops.

The measures announced today are, of course, dependent on us keeping the virus under control. As the First Minister has made clear, we will not hesitate to re-impose restrictions if we consider it necessary to halt the spread of the virus and save lives.

Eliminating the virus as far as possible now - ahead of the almost inevitable challenges we will face come winter - remains our objective. The Deputy First Minister and I will continue to work in partnership with our college, university and community learning sectors as we collectively strive towards this goal and emerge from the crisis as strongly as possible.



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