



Colleagues
N.C.Pratt@warwick.ac.uk

Our Reference: 202000052575
Your Reference: A New Deal for UK Higher Education

10 July 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your letter of 17th June 2020 highlighting the challenges facing the higher education sector across the UK in these unprecedented times.

We know that Covid-19 has hit our universities extremely hard and work around how we mitigate the impact of this crisis is being progressed as a priority. We are therefore working closely with Universities Scotland, individual universities and the Scottish Funding Council to find solutions that will work for Scotland.

Education in Scotland remains one of the fundamental priorities of this government which is why we have invested over £1 billion per year since 2012/13 in our universities. Scotland has a world-class higher education system which contributes significantly to our inclusive growth ambitions and the diversity of our society.

I agree the package of support announced by the UK Government was disappointing for Scotland's higher education sector and falls short of recognising the full scale of the challenge facing our universities in Scotland.

Therefore, in direct response to the crisis, we are putting together a support package based on what we have responsibility for in Scotland including the one-off £75 million increase in capital funding already announced for Scotland's universities to ensure they can protect their world-leading research programmes against the financial impact of COVID-19. This significant intervention will help secure

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the jobs and training needed to support ongoing and future research work, on a sector so vital to the Scottish economy and public health challenges.

You may be aware the UK Government announced (27th June) a package of support for university research which was a welcome announcement as it will build further on our funding commitment previously mentioned. However we are concerned about the emphasis on loans in the UK Government's stabilisation package, as not all universities will be in a position to take advantage of those.

We will, therefore continue to work with the UK Government not only to agree how this package will be implemented in Scotland, but also to address the long term sustainability of our sector to ensure it plays a key role in Scotland's economic and social recovery. I have included the link to both announcements for your interests. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-protect-uk-research-jobs-with-major-support-package> , <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications-statistics/announcements/2020/SFCAN082020.aspx>.

Please be assured, the Scottish Government is committed to do everything possible to ensure Scotland's institutions remain world leaders and key drivers of the economy in the wake of the disruption around Covid-19.

Yours sincerely



Richard Lochhead

M: Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science

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