



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

Gordon Lindhurst MSP
Convener
Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Email: economyenergyandfairwork@parliament.scot

1 October 2020

Dear Convener

ScotGrad Programme

Thank you for your letter of 23 September regarding the ScotGrad Programme.

The ScotGrad Programme was previously a joint initiative between Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise and AGCAS (Association of Careers Advisory Service) until the end of 2019 when both Scottish Enterprise and AGCAS withdrew from the programme.

ScotGrad continued to offer placements in the Highlands and Islands region to HIE account managed clients up until March this year. At that point the decision was made to temporarily pause the programme. This was to enable HIE as an organisation to re-assess priorities for the coming year.

However, the ScotGrad Programme has recently re-started in the Highlands and Islands area, in response to increased interest from businesses who feel they are now able to support a graduate. A limited number of graduate placements will be available to SMEs and social enterprises across the region, to be part-funded by HIE and ERDF. These placements will be project specific and focused around Covid-19 recovery, increasing the resilience and sustainability of organisations and providing much needed employment and experience for recent graduates.

In Carroll Buxton's letter to the you of 15 September, she set out the numerous ways in which HIE continues to provide opportunities to young people, including through the ScotGrad programme. From April 2019 to date, a total of 20 graduate placements and 15 student placements participated in the programme.

Through the ScotGrad Programme HIE continues to support young people into employment throughout the Highlands and Islands.

I trust this update is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Wright
Chief Executive