

Hibernian Community Foundation and Edinburgh College set 'The Apprentice' challenges to fight youth unemployment.



Young people will take on 'The Apprentice'-style job challenges at Hibernian FC's Easter Road Stadium as part of a new community education scheme to tackle youth unemployment in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Hibernian Community Foundation and Edinburgh College have teamed up with local businesses to run new education programmes over the next three years to give young people the skills, experience and confidence to get on the jobs ladder or prepare for college. The aim is to ensure local youngsters have more opportunity to gain access to education and employment opportunities.

The courses will be hosted at Easter Road's Hibernian Learning Centre, and delivered in partnership with Edinburgh-based firms TCM0 and Xpress Recruitment.

The courses on offer this year include: My Club – Delivered in partnership with The Prince's Trust, a seven-week course offering a Level 1 football coaching badge and Employability Skills qualification alongside health and fitness activity, work placement and volunteering experience; The Recruit – A 12-week course based on the popular television series 'The Apprentice' (without the threat of being fired and ejected from the course), including individual and team challenges in the area of sport, events management and hospitality alongside

employability and enterprise skills and the opportunity to 'win' a paid work placement and Hibernian Events Management and Hospitality Academy – An 18-week course with a focus on hospitality and events management qualifications and an extended work placement. The courses engage with local employers and Hibernian sponsors and supporters to help set the individual and team challenges and provide young people with meaningful work experience and access to different workplaces. Participants will be provided mentors and job coaching to learn what employers are looking for, how to handle new situations and how to present themselves with confidence to potential employers as they gain skill working with others. Each course stands on its own, but participants may be able to progress through all three.

Executive Director of Hibernian Community Foundation, Kris Von Wald, said: "Our partnership with Edinburgh College and these new courses demonstrate our commitment to the community for the long haul. The Hibernian brand and Easter Road have a strong appeal in the community and daily activity in and around football is a natural fit with hospitality and events management. The full-year offer is a unique and joined up way to introduce young people to the world of work and help them engage with education, employment or training – working with delivery partners we can achieve so much more."



Ray McCowan, Vice Principal at Edinburgh College, said: "Edinburgh College is really excited to be working with Hibernian Community Foundation on this innovative education programme. Helping young people get a good start in life once they have left school is so important. Education and employment play a huge part in that. Football is also hugely influential in young people's lives and we are hoping that pairing up education with the Hibernian brand will be the catalyst for many young people who may never have previously thought about going to college. We are also really grateful to

the local employers and Hibernian supporters who are key partners for this project by making work placement and internship opportunities available. Hibernian FC is very much a family club, and we are pleased to be working together to do what we can to provide a positive start for the younger members of the Hibernian family.”

Raymond Currie, Director of TCMO, said: “Supporting individuals, especially young people, to overcome the barriers to employment has been an integral part of the TCMO / XPRESS vision. In giving back to the community, we help young people achieve their potential and prepare them for the journey to career success. Overcoming barriers requires perseverance and a positive attitude, and working with our partners in the innovative setting of Easter Road Stadium provides the perfect setting for all participants to achieve their career goals”.

The unique and innovative partnership between the Foundation and the college saw the opening of Hibernian Learning Centre in January of 2010. These new courses build on the success of matching up learning opportunities with the appeal of Scottish Premiership football and Hibernian FC. More than 500 learners have accessed the Hibernian Learning Centre since its opening, and the Learning Centre continues to offer core IT skills and European Computer Driving License (ECDL) independent learning courses.

The Hibernian Community Foundation aims to harness the power and passion of football to improve health, promote learning and enhance opportunity to make a real difference to people’s lives and in the local community. In the past year the Foundation’s activities created more than 10,000 opportunities for engaging with people in the community. These activities range from courses to improve literacy and IT skills to projects to help fans with fitness and weight loss.