

Coronavirus – business takes second place to sport

EDINBURGH BUSINESS SUFFERS FROM COVID RULES INCONSISTENCY

Rich Dyson who runs Edinburgh Photography Workshop has contacted The Scottish Government to complain that his business is unfairly impacted by the Covid-19 rules put in place at the start of March. Dyson says the rules prioritise sport over creative businesses such as his.

The Switch to Manual Workshop, which is currently the #1 ranked course on TripAdvisor in Edinburgh, cannot open up, even though all the face-to-face elements are conducted outdoors with social distancing measures in place. The Covid rules allow any outdoor non contact sport with up to 15 people outdoors. But the same rules do not apply for other outdoor activities, which must work within the four people from two households rule.

Rich Dyson said: "It's ridiculous that 15 people can meet outdoors with a personal trainer, often not social distancing, yet I can't run a socially distanced workshop outdoors with my maximum group size of four people if they don't all live in the same household."

Dyson has been trying to get clarification from the Scottish Government since 9 March when the ruling was announced by First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. However, all he has received is standard responses advising that e-mails will be passed to the relevant person. He has also contacted candidates in the Scottish Parliamentary elections and has received support from the Scottish Labour and Conservative Candidates.



Scottish Labour candidate in the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary Election, Katrina Faccenda, has promised to pursue the apparent anomaly as she faces similar issues as a tour guide in the city. Conservative candidate and Edinburgh Councillor, Callum Laidlaw who is also standing in the election, agrees that there is an apparent bias to sports rather than cultural activities.

He said: "The council faces the same issue with regard to extracurricular school activities, with sports falling under separate guidance to outdoor classes for other pursuits (like art and photography, for example) and these are not restarting until the return to Level 3 on 26 April."

Rich added: "It is frustrating that photography workshops can help people as they come out of lockdown both from a mental as well as physical health perspective. I have taken every care to ensure that my workshops are as safe and welcoming as they can be. I call on the First Minister to consider extending the rule to incorporate cultural activities as well as sporting ones."