Graduate Endowment Abolition (Scotland) Bill

As you will be aware, Scottish Government officials gave evidence to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee on Wednesday 7 November, at the start of the Committee’s Stage 1 scrutiny of the above Bill.

Members were concerned that the officials were not able to cite evidence to support the claim in the Policy Memorandum that the Graduate Endowment (GE) had acted as a deterrent on those wishing to enter higher education. Officials were also unable to support the claim that the GE’s failure to contribute to widening access was ‘clear,’ and could not explain why, contrary to the claims in the Policy Memorandum, student numbers rose in some years during the period of the GE. For some members, concerns over these issues raised some questions about the policy intent of the bill and the extent to which this had been thought through by ministers.

I appreciate you are due to attend the Committee’s meeting on 28 November, but I wanted to give you an opportunity, before the Committee goes on to take further evidence on the Bill, to clarify any matters which you might feel need further explanation in the light of the evidence given by officials this week. Should you wish to take this opportunity, it would be most helpful if your reply could be received before the Committee’s next meeting on Wednesday 14 November. I understand The Official Report of this week’s meeting is due for publication on Monday.

Yours sincerely

Karen Whitefield MSP
Convener