

Fol 17/03004 – Email correspondence between officials

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 23 November 2017 12:53

To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science

Cc: Macdonald R (Roddy); [Redacted]

Subject: Commissioner for Fair Access - Draft Annual Report

Hi Aileen

Re the Commissioner for Fair Access's Annual report (copy attached – this is the most recent version provided by Peter), the team have been liaising with Peter on this on an on-going basis.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] and [Redacted] are working on it right now and we aim to get 2 versions of the report back to Peter next week for him to respond to. The first will be the report as it stands with comments and tracked changes for Peter to consider. The second will be a restructured/formatted version, which includes the comments and tracks in the first. The aim of this is to make the report more easily digestible and to signpost the reader through it better. Whilst the content is all in place, we feel the report would benefit from this formatting and restructuring. We aim to introduce clearer chapters and headings in the second version and to more explicitly link the discussion and recommendations. The versions of the Annual Report will be accompanied by a spread sheet which sets out all of the recommendations within the report alongside our interpretation of what we think they mean and we will ask Peter to agree this with the aim of ensuring we have a shared understanding of the recommendations and to flush out where there is anything that needs further consideration/clarification.

[Redacted]

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Higher Education and Science Division
6th Floor, Atlantic Quay,
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow, G2 8LU

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 10 November 2017 15:30

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: CFA Annual report - SG Comments - 2017-11-10

[Redacted]

Can you pass this background information on to Peter please. Just in case he does want to make a recommendation in this area.

Thanks

[Redacted]

Higher Education & Science Division | Directorate for Advanced Learning & Science | Scottish Government

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 10 November 2017 15:13

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: CFA Annual report - SG Comments - 2017-11-10

[Redacted]

I spoke to [Redacted] about the HESA Data Futures project this afternoon. HESA are aiming to bring the collection of parts of the student dataset forward to December in the 2019/20 academic year, with a pilot next year. They are also trying to rationalise all of the data requests that go to universities e.g. HESA, SFC, NHS, professional bodies. The plan is for HESA to collect data from institutions and disseminate to others.

If Peter wants to make a recommendation on this area, it might be better to frame this as an ask for SG and SFC to work with HESA to ensure the data we need to report earlier on access is prioritised as part of their Data Futures project, rather than a new data collection.

Thanks

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 30 November 2017 15:20

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Commissioner's rec on HESA data

Hi [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Regarding the HESA Data Futures, a bit anxious about the word 'comparative' as the data may not be directly comparably historically when it first comes out. This is due to the different start dates of students etc. However, in time, this should settle down and HESA are running a parallel run, so we will see what the impact is and run analysis on this.

Also like the friendly term of 'work with', rather than 'encourage', which you highlighted.

Thanks

[Redacted]

Advanced Learning and Skills Analysis | Education Analytical Services

The Scottish Government

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 30 November 2017 11:44

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: Commissioner's rec on HESA data

Importance: High

[Redacted]

I think we spoke a while back about the Commissioner's intention to make a recommendation on getting more timely data on widening access. Please see draft recommendation below.

Confusion, and potential, controversy can be created by the lack of up-to-date figures about the proportion of SIMD20 entrants to individual institutions, which can make progress difficult to measure. A recent example is the different figures given by the former First Minister (4.5 per cent) and by his alma mater, St Andrews (7.2. per cent).

10. The SFC and Scottish Government should encourage the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to prioritise the data required to report on the proportion of SIMD20 entrants within the HESA 'Data Futures' project, so that more timely comparative data is available to measure progress towards meeting fair access targets.

Based on your knowledge of the HESA Data Futures project, does the wording look okay?

Thanks

[Redacted]

Advanced Learning and Skills Analysis

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 05 December 2017 15:36
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Changes to notify Peter of

If we're emailing a version to Peter when we send it off to the printer then there are a couple of changes we might want to let him know about as they aren't related to typos etc.

- Removed reference to lack of comparable NI and Wales HEIPR data and statement that Scotland has a higher participation rate. Felt this was contradictory and point is illustrated well enough with the English comparison.
- Changed text on gender/SIMD20 trends: "these subjects have been more open and flexible in their admission policies" is now "these subjects have generally been more accessible". It might be that these subjects generally have lower entry requirements in the first place (or are studied at institutions which have lower entry requirements overall) and are not doing anything different for access students in terms of admissions.

Thanks

[Redacted]

Advanced Learning and Skills Analysis

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 November 2017 14:02
To: [Redacted]
Subject: CFA annual report

Hi both,

[Redacted]

In terms of the layout, I thought it might be worth splitting into chapters and renaming some sections. I've outlined my suggestion below:

- Forward
- Introduction
- Key messages

- Chapter 1: Setting the scene
 - Higher education in Scotland
 - Funding higher education
 - A distinctive approach to fair access
 - Policy milestones
 - Progress to date

- Chapter 2: Stimulating demand for higher education
 - Outreach and bridging programmes

- A new social contract
- Chapter 3: The role of colleges and vocational pathways
 - Higher education in colleges
 - Articulation with Higher National qualifications
 - New models of articulation
- Chapter 4: Contextual admissions
 - Implementing contextual admissions
 - Defining success
- Chapter 5: Targeting disadvantage and under-representation
 - SIMD
 - Other forms of disadvantage
 - Adult learners
- Chapter 6: Building practitioner and research communities
- Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations

This would be an extremely long chapter in comparison to others but if the recommendations have already been weaved through this perhaps won't matter as it is mainly repetition
- References

[Redacted]

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Access to Higher Education | Higher Education & Science Division | Directorate for Advanced Learning & Science | Scottish Government

[Redacted]