

Vikki Howells MS

Minister for Further and Higher Education

10 February 2025

Dear Vikki,

The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2025

At its meeting on 3 February 2025, the Committee considered the Welsh Government response to its report on The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2025 (the 2025 Regulations).

You will be aware that these Regulations make technical corrections identified during our scrutiny of The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 3) (Wales) Regulations 2023 (the 2023 Regulations). In our report on the 2025 Regulations, you will be aware that we noted the following paragraph in the Explanatory Memorandum:

"The 2025 Regulations make technical corrections to the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2017 and the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018, in connection with amendments made to each of those Regulations by the Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 3) (Wales) Regulations 2023 which the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee reported upon (SL(6)431 refers)."

You will also be aware that the Committee's report on The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024 (the 2024 Regulations) raised similar issues arising from the historical error first identified in the Committee's scrutiny of the 2023 Regulations.

As such, we asked in our report on the 2025 Regulations if the Welsh Government could confirm whether the issues from the 2024 Regulations are being addressed in the 2025 Regulations and, if corrections are being made, why are they not referenced in the Explanatory Memorandum. We

asked, if no corrections are being made as a result of our consideration of the 2024 Regulations, that the reasons are provided.

In response, the Committee has been told:

"We note the Committee's report on the Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024. The issues arising from the 2024 Regulations have not been addressed in these Regulations as, at the point of receiving the Committee's report on the 2024 Regulations, there was insufficient time in which to include the necessary corrections without missing the coming into force date of these Regulations. The necessary corrections relating to the 2024 Regulations will be included in the next appropriate instrument, which is scheduled to be made in February 2025."

The Welsh Government responded to the Committee's report on the 2024 Regulations on 9 September 2024, in which it was confirmed that amendments would be made to address the issues caused by the historical error. The current 2025 Regulations were laid on 8 January this year, with coming into force dates of 3 February 2025 and 6 April 2025. As such, the Committee is unclear why the Welsh Government considers that it had insufficient time to make the corrections. The Committee agreed that we should seek clarity on what barriers there may have been during the four month period between last September and this January which prevented the 2025 Regulations from also rectifying the similar errors the Committee identified in the 2024 Regulations.

We would welcome a response by 24 February 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mike Hedges
Chair