

Ann Jones AM
Chair of the Children and Young People Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Date: 21.06.13

Dear Ms Jones,

National Assembly for Wales - Children and Young People Committee

I write further to the questions raised at the above committee hearing meeting of the 23rd May and now respond formally as requested. SLC understand the needs of, and design much of their communications activity around, young people from all socio-economic groups who are seeking to enter HE from school/college. However we are also aware of the need to ensure that those who do not come via this route can also access the information, advice and guidance (IAG) they need to make informed choices about finance for further or higher education. The SLC and the Welsh Government will work together to ensure that all customer groups are engaged and signposted to further information about student finance services.

As part of the modernised student finance service in Wales all IAG resources and materials are being overhauled. A new campaign, 'Sound Advice' will be launched with a range of engaging and accessible online tools and resources, including a new website, a new social media strategy and presence on channels such as Facebook, Twitter and The Student Room. Activity of these channels enables SLC to target messages at specific groups, including mature students (some of whom will also be parent/guardians themselves), part time students and vulnerable students as well as the mainstream school leaver. All campaign materials reflect the diversity of the Welsh population, including age.

While the role of the Welsh Local Authorities in the delivery of student finance services, particularly information, advice and guidance will change as they will no longer obligated to provide the face to face support to students they previously offered, SLC will work with the Welsh LAs to identify teams/people whose activity would bring them into contact with any potential students - for example,

housing departments, library services etc and, through the work of the Student Finance Information Team, would provide LA staff with a route to information and clear signposting to the SFW website for any potential students and their parents.

In addition SLC will ensure that our work with partners includes any other group who have an interest in and involvement with this audience - Careers Wales for example, or other relevant local organisations within Communities First Areas - in order that student finance training is offered to these partners and that they also have access to the same high quality, consistent and audience appropriate IAG. The approach is also taken with organisations working with vulnerable groups.

All of the above is, of course, subject to funding I am very aware of the financial pressures and very recent exercise to target spending in all areas including IAG.

I hope this response is helpful and adequately answers the question raised. If you or the Committee response members require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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