

P-05-848 Let Welsh students have the opportunity to choose the best study option for them – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 9.1.19

Hi Kayleigh/Kathryn

After digesting The Minister's response I would be very grateful if my comments below can be considered by the Committee.

As per previous conversations I confirm I have received many letters from Ms Williams but unfortunately they have been very repetitive and have never clarified any of my queries. I have been offered many links to grants and scholarships as part of these letters unfortunately, very few are of an option to Georgia due to their restrictions.

My husband and I were born and bred in Wales as well as our children. We have worked full time throughout our adult life as has our son, so we would certainly not want to place the economy of the country at risk but would like to understand why access to student loans equivalent to those that are available for study in the UK and Ireland cannot be granted. The same agreement to repay the debt would be signed. The only difference I am able to see is that the funds would not be re-invested in educational institutions in the UK but I believe the numbers of student who would still be able to take this route would be very low and therefore unlikely to be detrimental to the country.

The package which is being offered from the Diamond review as Ms Williams states is aimed at those most in need which is similar to that of Sutton Trust on a much smaller scale of course, and again many of the other grants/Scholarships the Minister has directed us to. In addition to this, as the programme on offer is for a maximum of 2 months it is unlikely to provide the study abroad options identified under the Diamond Review.

This is the reason I have raised the petition as I feel access to student loans is the only way the average student will be in a financial position to have the opportunity to be able to study outside of the EU, an experience Ms Williams has supported repeatedly in previous correspondence.

Again I would be very grateful if you would be able to consider my comments at the meeting on Tuesday 15th January.

Kindest regards

Sharon Ellis