



# UNIVERSITY OF LONDON INSTITUTE IN PARIS

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Janet Finch-Saunders  
Assembly Member  
Chair of the Petitions Committee.  
National Assembly for Wales  
[SeneddPetitions@Assembly.Wales](mailto:SeneddPetitions@Assembly.Wales)

30<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

The University of London Institute in Paris is a Central Academic Body of the University of London. Its legal headquarters is the University of London based in London.

For a number of years, we have registered our students through a Member Institution of the University of London, with this sister institution acting as the validating partner. This is currently Queen Mary University of London, with students receiving a University of London award. As the registering institution, Queen Mary University of London's registration with the Office for Students includes ULIP students, who benefit from the same provision as if they were studying at the main campus, including for access and participation, quality and standards and student policies.

ULIP has a long history in Paris playing a Franco-British academic bridging role since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was formally incorporated into the University of London in 1969 and began offering University of London degree programmes in the mid 1990s. We have evidence of ULIP students beginning to be eligible for UK student financial support in the early 2000s but we were unable to trace back the exact terms of the special arrangement in place with the Student Loans Company. The current form of this agreement as expressed by the SLC in liaison with DfE is:

Eligible students attending designated undergraduate courses at ULIP are treated as if they are attending a designated UK course at London University. Therefore, eligible students will qualify for home fee status (i.e. subject to maximum £9,250 fee limits for a full-time course), fee loans to meet the full costs of their tuition and partially means-tested loans for living costs at the overseas rate.

ULIP is a very small institute with around 180 students, the main student body being British. It offers a wide-ranging university experience with undergraduate, postgraduate and research students on the premises, a full time bilingual and bicultural faculty and an active research programme including a busy public research seminar series which allows students to interact beyond the institute with experts and academic guests. Students benefit from support and resources both on site in Paris as well as from the central University of London and Queen Mary University of London.

ULIP gives students the opportunity for a longer-term immersion in a different cultural and linguistic environment, while studying for a UK degree. This immersion is particularly important for our French Studies students who normally become bilingual as well as achieving a first degree, but also for the International Politics students who benefit from exposure to a range of international political actors during their degree. Currently students of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are able to benefit

from the experience thanks to the financial support received from the Student Loans Company, whereas Welsh students are not.

We first became aware that there had been a change in the Welsh regulations in Autumn 2018 when four ULIP students from Wales were told their funding was being suspended. The issue was eventually resolved for the students who were already registered at ULIP and the Student Loans Company confirmed that they would remain eligible for funding until the end of their programme but confirmed that future students would not be eligible due to a change in Welsh regulations stipulating that at least 50% of the teaching should take place in the UK. The SLC recommended that we contact the Welsh government for further information on course designation. When we contacted the course designation service, the initial response we received indicated that the matter was being looked into and that we would be contacted as soon as it was resolved but after a couple of months the Deputy Director of the Higher Education Division informed us that programmes at ULIP did not meet course designation criteria because of our geographical location.

The petition submitted by one of students received strong support from current students, alumni and applicants who could not understand why the geographical location of the teaching would mean Welsh students would be ineligible for funding when in fact ULIP's location was offering a clear advantage to their learning, with the high standards, quality and support of a UK education.

The letter from the Minister for Education sent to the Petitions Committee in May and copied to the student petitioner raises the point that the regulatory framework is designed to provide the required protections for students, which is difficult when provision moves abroad. This response does not acknowledge the fact that ULIP provision is in fact covered by our partner institution's registration with the OfS, thus offering the required safeguards. There was also a comment in the letter about not wanting to increase the amount of fee income remitted overseas but the unique nature of the ULIP offering and size mean that historically we have only had a handful of Welsh students at any given time. It is also worth noting that fees are collected in the UK and ULIP does not generate a surplus, it is financially supported by the University of London.

I hope the information above has given you the required information on ULIP's particular situation and I would be happy to answer any outstanding questions.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tim Gore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Tim Gore OBE  
Chief Executive Officer