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Medical tuition fees: request for views by 31 October

I am writing, as requested, to give you my views on the proposals that Scottish Ministers may set a separate level of tuition fees for medical students as part of the measures announced at the end of June to protect Scottish students from the consequences of the UK Government's plans to introduce variable tuition fees in England.

The principle of introducing a separate flat-rate fee for Scottish medical schools

The evidence for cross-border pressure on Scottish medical schools is well documented, as is the related problem of recruiting sufficient doctors for NHS Scotland. The principle of introducing a higher flat-fee for Scottish medical schools to seek to ensure that this problem does not become any worse seems reasonable in this context.

We note that SAAS would continue to pay the fees direct to the university or college for all eligible students.

The practicalities of introducing a separate flat rate fee for Scottish medical schools

The main practical issue for the Council is the impact on the funding methodology for teaching. We currently have one funding subject group for pre-clinical medicine and one funding group for clinical medicine, dentistry and veterinary science. Introducing a different

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The Scottish Funding Councils for Further and Higher Education is the Joint Executive which carries out certain functions of the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and the Scottish Further Education Funding Council under agreement between the Councils.

'S e Comhairlean Mhaoineachaidh Foghlam Adhartach is Àrd-ìre na h-Alba an Co-stiùireachas a tha a' coilladh cuid de ghnìomhan Comhairle Mhaoineachaidh Foghlam Àrd-ìre na h-Alba agus Comhairle Mhaoineachaidh Foghlam Adhartach na h-Alba fo aonta eadar na Comhairlean.

tuition fee for medicine would require a different ratio of SHEFC funding to tuition fees for medicine compared to dentistry and veterinary science. This could be tackled by re-introducing a separate funding subject group for medicine, both at the pre-clinical and clinical level. This would present no insurmountable practical difficulties. We would work to ensure a smooth transition.

From a student's point of view it will be important to publicise the fact that a higher fee does not mean a higher cost to the student, so that this does not act as a disincentive to the recruitment of eligible Scottish-domiciled students.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger McClure', written in a cursive style.

Roger McClure
Chief Executive