

Belles Roches Cottage
Vallee des Vaux
St. Helier
JE2 3GB

January 16th 2006

Senator Terry Le Sueur
La Porte
Rue de la Porte
St. John.
JE3 4DE

Dear Senator Le Sueur,

I am writing on behalf of the Jersey Federation of Women's Institutes which, as I am sure you know, educational, social, non-party political and non-sectarian organisation, committed to improving quality wherever possible.

One area that has benefited thousands of people in general, and women in particular, is the opportunity available for lifelong learning, particularly through adult education. The government in the UK currently does not apply VAT to these courses thanks, among other things, to pressure brought by the WI and others.

We would very much hope that this will be the path followed by Jersey with the onset of GST in the future. Already it seems likely that increased fees will affect Open University students in the island and we hope very much that adult education courses will not be affected similarly by the addition of GST.

The availability of an accessible, high quality range of opportunities for study which promotes the wider purposes of life-long learning has been part of the tradition of Jersey education for years, is becoming increasingly successful every year and should be safe guarded by proper funding. We are extremely worried that the addition of GST, albeit at only 3%, will price many areas beyond the reach of many students and many people from enrolling on courses from which they would greatly benefit.

As I am sure you are aware there is evidence that, apart from the intellectual stimulation provided, participation in life-long learning helps to preserve good health, independence and reduce pressure on health and social services.

We do recognise the financial problems the Island is experiencing but feel that this is a very important area and would hope that you would seriously reflect on the implications of introducing GST in these areas.

Yours sincerely

Joy Thomson. Chairman Jersey Federation of WIs.
cc David Greenwood, Ian Black, Media