

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY DEPUTY R.G. LE HERISSIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 28th MARCH 2006

Question

Would the Minister inform members –

- (a) in the light of his recent investigations into higher education places in Australasia, what other countries and areas, if any, are being investigated for similar possibilities? and,
- (b) given the inability to access the services of the Student Loans Company in the U.K., will the Minister confirm the mechanisms the department will be putting in place, if any, for Jersey higher education students who require student loans?

Answer

- (a) At present students from Jersey may apply for admission to any university they choose although there are restrictions on the financial support offered by the States. With a clearer understanding of the relative values of qualifications within the European Union and with U.K. higher education provision becoming increasingly costly, I am considering the possibility of partially removing current financial constraints on student choice. The criteria most likely to be applied in determining whether grant aid would be available for a student to attend a university outside the U.K. would be:
 - (i) equivalence of qualification;
 - (ii) the level of care and support which would be afforded the student by the institution;
 - (iii) the use of English as the language in which the subject is taught; and,
 - (iv) cost.

I can confirm that the initial discussions I have had with universities in Australasia have been encouraging and the offer of study in this part of the world may prove attractive to some students. I can also confirm that I have been approached by the Icelandic Government to consider higher education provision made there.

- (b) If my proposals for changes to student finance for 2006 are implemented, I intend to open discussions with local high street banks to ascertain what support they can offer to students and their families. Indeed, officers of the Department have already made initial contact with local clearing banks. With regard to the longer term, I have commissioned a full review of higher education support and will consider the recommendations of that report when the work has been completed.