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Scrutiny
Morier House
Halket Place
St Helier
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6th January 2017

Dear Mick,

I trust this letter finds you well & Happy New Year. (This letter has also been sent by email to scrutiny@gov.je and to m.robbsins@gov.je)

I've been handed the letter sent to us in November and have some responses below.

Sorry for the delayed response which is due to illness and Christmas.

I have summarised my response below and trust it is in order. Should you wish to discuss any element of this please let me know and I can call you.

Response to questions in letter dated 17th November 2016

1. The current funding regime is broadly supportive and fit for purpose. We believe that students who stay in Jersey to study "(On-Island students)" should have the same level of access to loans and grants as those who choose to study in the UK and elsewhere. There should be no arbitrage and certainly no less support for those who decide to stay in Jersey to study. We believe that the States should encourage and incentivise on-Island study and therefore we would suggest an optional top up loan scheme for local students which could be paid back over the first 5 years of their working life. Jersey International Business School has a 100% graduate employment rate currently and this high propensity to employment leads to such a scheme perhaps being appropriate.
2. We believe it is a responsibility that falls across various stakeholders. Jersey as a society benefits, and therefore we as a society should contribute to the cost of education as we do currently through our tax system. Students and parents also benefit and therefore it is appropriate they contribute. Finally, local employers benefit hugely and we believe that the time has come for a discussion about 'apprenticeship' degrees similar to those on offer in the UK. We have an on-going discussion with Angela Charles at States of Jersey Trackers programme through our external consultant, Mark Woodcock. Our current model is set around employability and our students have the benefit of two days a week paid work experience at some of the world's leading financial services businesses here in Jersey.
3. The key is communication. There is a fixed mental model with some people who are committed to the fallacy that students must 'go away' to university. Whilst off-Island study is of course appropriate for many,

we must be more realistic about the costs of this. The debate should be broadened to include all on-Island providers. Teachers must be encouraged and educated as to the options, and communication to parents and students must be more effective and come earlier. Jersey needs a mind-set shift and this will take time, but local higher education options must be given more profile by all stakeholders. The recent additional States funding is welcome, but as a society we need to be more strategic in the way we address this issue; increasing the depth and breadth of on-Island provision is critical.

4. Cost is often but not always the key driver. There is quality provision from a range of providers and Jersey must not sell itself short in terms of the quality of what it can deliver. We have world class lecturers and professionals on the Island who are superb at educating our students, and studying in Jersey should not be seen as a pure cost saving and the debate should focus also on the quality of provision. Jersey International Business School, Institute of Law, Highlands University College and The College of Nursing all provide high quality solutions locally.

5. University of Buckingham are our partners for both the BSc (Hons) International Financial Services and the MSc (by research) International Financial Services. They are a top 30 UK university and we believe partnerships with leading universities are key to developing the Jersey proposition.

6. We attend school assemblies, host open evenings, run counselling sessions and generally engage with students and parents. We have had excellent support from the schools and Careers Jersey in getting our message to stakeholders, but there can be some resistance from those who believe that 'going away' to university is the only sensible option. Personal opinions should not drive educational choice. We must provide on-Island study options impartially and let the student make the best decision to suit their needs.

Additional comment

We have carried out research that suggests students can save over £50,000 by studying our two year full time degree, compared with going to the UK to study a traditional three year degree programme.

I hope the above is useful and wish you all the best for 2017.

Kind regards,


Chris

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