31 January 2013

Mr Stewart Maxwell MSP  
Convener Education and Culture Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Dear Sirs,

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012

Following on from the Evidence Session of the Education and Culture Committee last week I thought that you may find it useful to note the definition of the SIMD 2012 index identified by the Scottish Government.

Taken from the key findings of the SIMD 2012 publication from December 2012 and available at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/12/2370/;

“There were 742,200 people living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland. However, it is important to remember that the SIMD identifies deprived areas not individuals, so not everyone living in a deprived area is deprived, and not all deprived people live in deprived areas. Of the 742,200 people living in deprived areas, just under a third (31.3%) were income deprived.”

This is exactly why the University of Edinburgh advocates the use of data such as the level of family income to assess real deprivation rather than a measure that relies on identifying a location. We have found that using family income in addition to care leaver status, disability, single parent and first in family to attend University in our admissions process and also in awarding scholarships and bursaries to be particularly effective in identifying need.

I feel this point was made during the excellent and informative debate earlier in the week but wanted to follow up that we remain committed to widening access at Edinburgh but are also committed to identifying the individuals who are most in need.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]