This submission from Glasgow City Council Education Services (GCC Ed) covers three specific areas of the Post-16 Education Bill; namely:

- Section 3: Widening Access to Higher Education;
- Section 11: Regional Boards – Constitution; and
- Section 15: Duty to Provide Information to Skills Development Scotland

Section 3: Widening Access to Higher Education
GCC Ed Services considers that the proposed legislation represents both a pragmatic and principled means to widen access and increase opportunities for disadvantaged groups to access higher education in Scotland.

We welcome and are fully supportive of this element of the proposed legislation.

Section 11: Regional Boards – Constitution
GCC Education Services considers it vital that Regional Board membership requirements are extended to include Education Authorities.

Local Authorities have the lead responsibility for the implementation and consolidation of both Opportunities for All and 16+ Learning Choices initiatives. A key element of this role is in aligning the needs and aspirations of our young people as they leave school and post school learning provision. Colleges provide, by some distance, the most popular progression post-school progression route for young Glaswegians (around 50% of Glasgow school leavers progress directly into College for either FE or HE courses) and as such an effective interface between school and college is one of the key success factors for the Local Authority meeting its Opps for All requirements. A requirement for local education authorities to have a seat on RSBs would ensure that all aspects of college planning and policy development are aligned with Local Authority priorities and school delivery. This would bring added rigour to college planning processes.

It is considered that the proposed legislation in its current form is insufficiently directive around Board membership and presents significant risk to the long terms coherence of school and college curricular planning and transitional support arrangements.

Section 15: Duty to Provide Information to Skills Development Scotland
We broadly welcome the introduction of the information duty set out in Section 15 and consider that this reflects and underpins the good practice already in place as part of 16+ Learning Choices implementation in Glasgow.
It is crucial that any secondary legislation following on from the initial bill is widely circulated in draft form for consultation at Local Authority level – and with a long enough lead in time to allow a comprehensive response.

Martin Collins – 16+ Learning Choices Development Manager
On behalf of Maureen McKenna – Executive Director; Education Services, Glasgow City Council