



International
School of Aberdeen

DAH/ato/15-012

27 April 2015

Clerk to the Education and Culture Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Dear Sir

Please accept the following as a written submission on the Scottish Government's Education (Scotland) Bill on behalf of the International School of Aberdeen Educational Trust Limited (ISA). This written submission refers specifically to Question 21 "Registering teaching staff" and the impact of mandatory registration on ISA.

1. By way of introduction, The International School of Aberdeen (ISA) is a private, university-preparatory day school for students three years of age through twelfth grade. Founded in 1972 as The American School of Aberdeen to provide schooling for dependants of the North Sea Oil and Gas Industry, as the school grew and adopted the international Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, the name was changed to The International School of Aberdeen. ISA is the only international school in Scotland.
2. The school is organized into three sections: Elementary (Pre-school-Grade 5), Middle School (Grades 6-8), and High School (Grades 9-12). With a total population of over 500, ISA's student body represents 44 nationalities. The programme of studies has been developed to meet the needs of our student body by utilising the best practices from around the world. ISA graduates earn a US-accredited High School Diploma. Students may also earn the International Baccalaureate Diploma.
3. The School currently employs a teaching staff of 68, comprising 10 nationalities; of these, 12 are registered members of the General Teaching Council Scotland. However, the School's hiring needs go well beyond teachers who are GTCS registered.
4. The impact of mandatory GTCS registration of our teachers would be devastating to the excellent international programme the School has established. As stated above, ISA was primarily established to serve the needs of the North Sea Oil and Gas Industry in Aberdeen. The School's type of education is generally desired by expatriate families who will then move back to their home country or move on to another overseas assignment. The School hires teachers to deliver its international curriculum, which leads to the International Baccalaureate Diploma

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Programme in the final two years of schooling. ISA teachers have teaching certification, but come from many different countries with many different backgrounds. The School sometimes hires from a teacher's home country, and other times our teachers come from another international school. The School hires approximately 60% of its teachers locally, the balance are hired from overseas. However, the majority of the locally hired teachers are not from Aberdeen; they are often in Aberdeen with a spouse who works in the Oil and Gas Industry, but wish to continue working as a teacher; they have often worked in another international school or in a similar curriculum to that of ISA. Regardless of whether they are hired locally or are recruited overseas, ISA's teachers must fit the School's requirements to deliver its unique curriculum. ISA teachers' backgrounds and training is specific to the School's educational programme. If ISA were confined to only hiring teachers who are GTCS registered, it would not be possible to fill all the positions needed to deliver the School's curriculum. Recruiting for excellent international school teachers is extremely competitive. Having to recruit internationally with a future need of an overseas teacher being obliged to meet the requirements of GTCS registration would seriously impact on ISA's competitiveness against other international schools worldwide.

5. If the School were unable to deliver its unique "international" programme, the financial impact would be devastating, and could even possibly eliminate the School in the future. In turn, this would adversely affect the Oil and Gas companies by whom the majority of our students are enrolled.
6. It should be noted that ISA is obliged to go through a strict accreditation process with both the Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. This process involves site visits by accreditation teams comprised of international educators, and also requires the School to write self-study reports in advance of the accreditation visit. ISA teachers are very involved in professional development for the School's educational programme: they take advantage of professional development opportunities locally, in the UK, in-house, at various international schools, at relevant international conferences and workshops, as well as online. This professional development is generally to concentrate on areas of school focus, but can also be for meeting re-certification needs in their home country, to earn an advanced degree, specific IB learning, etc. It is difficult to envisage that mandatory registration would result in different or new skills for ISA teachers, as they are so geared towards the School's unique curriculum and client base.
7. The impact of mandatory registration of ISA teachers will not be reduced by a staged introduction, as the School requires teachers with various backgrounds, from a variety of countries, who are familiar with an "international" curriculum.

Yours faithfully



DANIEL A HOVDE PhD
Director