I acknowledge that this submission is late, but would be grateful if the Committee would record my concern.

As a former and current student of the University of St Andrews, I have concern about the implications of this Bill. Academic freedom and financial independence seem to me to be utterly vital to the character of the university. No one, surely, wants direct political influence in such institutions. I cannot imagine what honest motive the Government might have for pursuing this.

As you will know, the University believes that the proposed changes will seriously hamper its ability to attract academic staff and funding. These serious concerns and others are echoed by the RSE. The real damage caused is likely to emerge in the medium to longer term.

I encourage the Government to withdraw this Bill.

Scott McKenna
September 2015