Dear Dr Maxwell

Thank you for attending the Committee’s meeting on 15 September to discuss Education Scotland’s priorities and on-going work.

During the meeting, you undertook to provide us with some further information. In addition, the Committee would welcome further information from you on a number of issues. I set out these points below and include references to the relevant column of the Official Report of the meeting.

- There was discussion of the specific contribution that Education Scotland makes in achieving improvement in education. Alastair Delaney referred to the work being carried out by contribution analysis, which he said was at an early stage (Cols 6-7). This is a key area of interest to the Committee and we would welcome further details of your contribution analysis work and any findings.

- You referred to the in-year transfer of £1.6m (in 2014/15) for supporting education around respecting rights, and offered to provide further information on what this funding relates to (Col 15).

- It was mentioned that negotiations are on-going that would see further transfer of grant responsibilities to Education Scotland, which would increase the total figure to about £9m from April 2016 (Cols 17-18). While recognising that negotiations are on-going, can you provide further information on the specific nature of the new responsibilities to be transferred, and say how the transfer of these responsibilities will benefit learners?
The Committee is interested in the work to pilot a senior phase review examining the educational provision across schools and colleges in particular areas (Cols 31-32). We would welcome further information on this work and, in due course, an update on the findings of the pilot.

At the end of the evidence session, you responded to a question by saying there was "plenty of evidence" that outcomes have improved for learners since Education Scotland had been created (Col 35). Can you provide further details of the key pieces of evidence to which you were referring?

The Committee may wish to consider your responses to the points outlined above as part of its scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s Budget later this year. To allow this to happen, I would be grateful to receive a response from you by 24 November.

Yours sincerely

STEWART MAXWELL MSP
CONVENER