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Convenor
Education and Skills Committee

Convenor
Equalities and Human Rights Committee

16 December 2016

I am pleased to inform the Committee that the Scottish Government has today announced the appointment of Professor Peter Scott to the role of Commissioner for Fair Access, with effect from January 2017. To assist the Committee, I have enclosed a brief summary of his professional background. Professor Scott brings an exceptional range of skills and expertise and has a strong personal commitment to widening access.

The role of the Commissioner is central to this Government's commitment to deliver the recommendations in the Blueprint for Fairness and in particular, achieve the targets set for our education system so that by 2030, 20% of students entering university are from Scotland's 20% most deprived communities. Professor Scott's role will be to lead work to drive fair access in Scotland, acting as an advocate for access for disadvantaged learners, working across the education system to provide strategic leadership and hold to account those with a role to play in achieving equal access.

I hope that you will join me in welcoming this key appointment and I am sure that Professor Scott would be happy to meet with you to discuss his plans for the role at an appropriate juncture.

I can also confirm that the position of Commissioner for Fair Access will be remunerated and subject to travel and subsistence expenses in line with Public Sector Pay policy. Further details on the terms of the appointment, including remuneration, will be made available on commencement of the contract.

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Professor Peter Scott – Biography

Peter Scott is Professor of Higher Education studies at University College London.

Before that he was Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University and Pro Vice-Chancellor for external affairs at the University of Leeds. He was also a member of the board of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, where he chaired its strategic committee on widening participation.

Professor Scott's earlier career was spent in journalism, during which he was a leader writer for the Times and later the Editor of the Times Higher Education (TES).

Professor Scott was knighted in 2007 for services to education and is the recipient of a number of honorary degrees. He has published widely on education, including widening access issues.