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Terry Shevlin  
Education and Culture Committee  
Scottish Parliament



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Dear Terry,

I am writing to inform the Education and Culture Committee of proposed Government amendments to the Education (Scotland) Bill.

There is currently one proposed Government amendment:

- the introduction of a requirement for head teachers to hold Standard for Headship qualification

Detail of this amendment is attached at **Annex A**.

Further to this, the Scottish Government is aware that the reporting provisions under Part 1 of the Bill (which require local authorities and Scottish Ministers to report on progress made in reducing the attainment gap) may have an impact on current local reporting arrangements. The Scottish Government are conscious of the need to align these reporting duties with the existing arrangements, including the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and the Improvement Framework. Policy officials are currently in discussion with partners in order to establish how best to achieve this. This is likely to require an amendment to the Bill and we will inform the Committee of this as soon as we have a position. We will also look to inform the Committee on an ongoing basis about any proposed amendments as we move forward.

Regards,

**KIT WYETH**

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## Education (Scotland) Bill 2015 – Proposed Government Amendments

### **Requirement for head teachers to hold Standard for Headship before appointment**

#### *Policy*

1. The amendment proposes to introduce a requirement for prospective head teachers to hold the Standard for Headship before appointment.
2. On 23 February 2015 the First Minister announced that a masters qualification will be introduced this year, an element of which will become mandatory for all new head teachers under the Education Bill. The Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) are currently designing the new qualification. This will replace the current Scottish Qualification for Headship and the Flexible Route to Headship. The new qualification will be split into 3 parts which will lead to the award of 180 credits at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework level 11. The mandatory 60 credit element of the new qualification will be known as 'Into Headship'. The new qualification will be accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and will result in the award of the Standard for Headship.

#### *Benefits*

3. Currently, local authorities may appoint any registered teacher as a head teacher. The introduction of the mandatory requirement for all head teachers to hold the Standard for Headship will ensure that all local authority schools have properly qualified head teachers.
4. There have been leadership issues within both the grant-aided and independent school sector. The requirement for head teachers to hold the Standard for Headship at these types of schools will strengthen development opportunities and support aspiring leaders in these sectors.
5. The Education Bill currently includes provisions to ensure that both grant aided and independent schools are only able to employ teachers who are GTCS registered, bringing them under the same requirements as local authority schools. Ensuring that the requirement for teachers to hold the Standard for Headship before appointed to their first head teacher post covers all sectors, including the grant aided and independent sector will bring alignment to the whole area of teacher registration.

#### *Stakeholder response*

6. There was strong support, from the main education bodies, to the announcement by the First Minister that all new head teachers would be required to hold the Standard for Headship before appointment. While agreeing with the principle, some local authorities may be concerned as they encounter problems recruiting head teachers to posts in some parts of the

## Annex A

country and a mandatory requirement to meet the Standard for Headship may be perceived as a further disincentive.

7. Local authorities may want some flexibility to appoint teachers as head teachers on an acting basis, therefore consideration will have to be given as to whether this requirement would have to apply in this sort of scenario.
8. The Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) may raise objections to the Standard for Headship requirement on the grounds that they have Chief Executives who will not have a teaching background or remit. Where this is the case the school will have a head teacher with responsibility for the curriculum within their management structure and the requirement would relate to that post.