

**Education and Culture Committee**  
**Scotland's Educational and Cultural Future**  
**Call for Written Evidence**

**Background**

The Education and Culture Committee has agreed to carry out an inquiry with the following remit—

- An inquiry into Scotland's potential educational and cultural future – whether there is a yes or no vote – following the independence referendum on 18 September 2014.

The Committee has identified three broad themes for its inquiry, which are set out in more detail below. The Committee would welcome your written views on some or all of these topics – the deadline for responses is **5 March 2014**.

*Scotland's Future*

The themes outlined below are informed by the Scottish Government's White Paper [Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland](#), which sets out its proposals for an independent Scotland.

**THEME 1: FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Scotland's Future states that international students face restricted access to Scottish colleges and universities, and contains proposals to reintroduce post-study work visas. It also notes that Scottish universities received £337m from non-EU student course fees in 2011/12 (pages 184 and 188).

Scotland's Future contains proposals to continue to charge fees to rest of the UK (RUK) students who study at Scottish universities (page 199). It also contains proposals to negotiate a 'fair funding formula' for Scotland's contribution to the Research Councils (page 203). It notes that universities also receive funding from the EU, business and charities.

**The Committee is interested to hear your views** on some or all of the following issues—

- How current immigration policies impact on Scottish universities' and colleges' ability to attract and retain international students;
- The social, cultural and financial contribution made by international students;
- How changing policy on visas for international students could affect: universities' and colleges' tuition fee income; the places available to Scottish, RUK and EU students; and public funding requirements for colleges and universities.
- The legal basis on which RUK students are currently charged tuition fees by Scottish institutions;
- Whether, and if so how, that legal basis would change in the event of Scotland becoming an independent country.
- Scottish universities' access to UK research funding;
- How a new funding formula for Scotland's contribution to the Research Councils could work in practice;
- Whether, in the event of Scotland becoming an independent country, research funding from other sources would be likely to alter significantly.

## **THEME 2: EARLY YEARS, CHILDCARE AND EMPLOYABILITY**

Scotland's Future sets out plans to 'develop a universal system of high quality early learning and childcare for children from the age of one to when they enter school'. It also says this 'transformational change' will 'allow parents, in particular women, to choose to work without worrying about the cost of looking after their children'. It adds that the benefits of their work will stay in Scotland (page 194). Scotland's Future also discusses the investment required in training and states that the expansion of childcare will provide around 35,000 new jobs (page 196).

Scotland's Future suggests that the financial benefits of successful employment initiatives in Scotland could be retained and reinvested in Scotland's people, allowing more funding for employment programmes (page 189). It also proposes a 'Youth Guarantee' to establish the opportunity of education, training or employment to young people as a constitutional right. It also proposes to bring together job matching, employability training and career guidance (page 108).

**The Committee is interested to hear your views** on some or all of the following issues—

- The benefits to children, families and the wider economy of investing in childcare;
- The planning, training and investment that would be required to bring about a transformation in childcare provision;
- Whether the interaction between current UK and Scottish youth employability initiatives could be improved;
- The extent to which youth employment could be boosted by: (a) a constitutional right to the opportunity of education, training or employment; and (b) the bringing together of job matching, employability training and career guidance.

## **THEME 3: BROADCASTING AND CULTURE**

Scotland's Future contains proposals to create a new public service broadcaster, the 'Scottish Broadcasting Service' (SBS). It states that the SBS "will start broadcasting when the current BBC charter comes to an end on 31 December 2016".

Scotland's Future also says that "there should be an increase in production opportunities for Scottish producers".

Scotland's Future states that an independent Scotland would have new powers over the economy to encourage Scottish culture and creative sectors. It also states that developing a Scottish overseas diplomatic and trade network would provide an opportunity to promote and share Scottish culture across the world.

**The Committee is interested to hear your views** on some or all of the following issues—

- The practical, legislative, technical and financial arrangements that would be required to establish an SBS;
- The impact on other broadcasters of establishing an SBS;
- How broadcasting would be regulated in the event of Scotland becoming an independent country;

- The current capacity of Scottish producers, and whether any planning and investment would be required to increase opportunities for this sector.
- The benefits that could derive to Scotland if its cultural and creative output were promoted more widely;
- How new powers over the economy and an overseas diplomatic and trade network could encourage the Scottish cultural and creative sectors;
- How Scottish cultural bodies currently work together with their counterpart bodies in the rest of the UK, and whether this relationship may change;
- The likely future role for UK bodies that have some cultural or creative function in Scotland.

**The Education and Culture Committee would welcome your views on any or all of these themes.**

**The Committee is scheduled to take oral evidence on 18 March, 25 March and 1 April. Further details of the issues to be discussed at each meeting will be provided in due course.**

### **How to submit written evidence**

Written evidence must be submitted by no later than **5 March 2014**.

Before making a submission, please read the [Parliament's policy on treatment of written evidence by subject and mandatory committees](#).

Where possible, written submissions should be submitted electronically to: [ec.committee@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:ec.committee@scottish.parliament.uk)

Where the submission refers to existing published material, it is preferable to provide hyperlinks or full citations (rather than including extensive extracts).

The Committee welcomes written evidence in English, Gaelic or any other language.

Hard copy written submissions should be sent to:

Education and Culture Committee  
Room T3.40  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Telephone: 0131 348 5222