

Peter Hall
Clerk
Committee for the Economy
NI Assembly
Room 344, Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

09 November 2016

Dear Mr Hall

Thank you for inviting comments on the The Higher Education and Research Bill, specifically in relation to the following sets of clauses:

1. Joint working;
2. The facilitation of applications by eligible NI institutions to assessment under the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF); and
3. Powers to fund research in the arts and humanities

In respect of 1: joint working; I agree with the Department's view that this is not controversial and reflects ongoing arrangements with HEFCE, albeit through the new agency of the Office for Students.

In respect of 2: potential participation in the TEF by NI institutions; an arrangement that allows for our participation in TEF is welcome and the University notes that the Minister for the Economy has already expressed approval for NI institutions to participate in the assessment process should they wish.

In respect of 3: powers to fund research in the arts and humanities; this clarification is welcome.

Although there are challenges for higher education institutions as a consequence of the broader Bill, these specific clauses provide additional and welcome confirmation of processes that underpin certain areas of our activity.

Yours sincerely



Professor Paddy Nixon