

Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary for Skills and Education
The Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

10 November 2017

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

You will recall that we had a productive meeting in January at which we discussed the attainment challenge in Scotland and challenges around teacher recruitment. Since then we have maintained a helpful dialogue with your department, and welcomed the issuing of a tender to establish an innovative new route into the teaching profession. In particular, we strongly support the clear emphasis on classroom leadership set out in the tender.


Whilst we support the objectives of the tender, and the Scottish Government's ambitions, we have reluctantly taken the decision not to submit a bid in this instance. We want to explain our reasons for not progressing and make clear that we remain committed to contributing to your plans if we can be of use to Scotland, and make a difference for children here.

We feel the timescales set out in the tender document would prevent us from creating a genuinely innovative and high-quality solution for you. We are uncomfortable with commencing recruitment in February to a programme that would not have been fully designed or accredited by then. Our experience shows that starting recruitment so late in the academic year will significantly reduce the chance of attracting the best candidates. You will recall that we expressed concern about this timeline in our earlier letter in May this year.

In addition, the proposed funding set out in the tender was not sufficiently clear to reassure our trustees that we could commit to delivery, as funds would be channeled through the Higher Education Funding Council, so that we as a charity could not receive funding directly.

Whilst we are disappointed not to be able to bid for this tender, we are still confident that we can offer a programme in the future that is genuinely innovative, and bespoke to the Scottish education system to impact upon the attainment gap which you have committed to tackling. We have had some positive conversations with leading Scottish Higher education institutions and with your support would hope to continue this momentum. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the potential to take this forward.

Yours sincerely,



James Westhead
Executive Director