



Fiona Hyslop MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Education and  
Lifelong Learning  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

17 May 2007

Dear Fiona

### **Crichton Campus**

As you know Glasgow University has suspended undergraduate admissions to Crichton Campus. The SFC has stated that funding for Glasgow would be reduced when its student numbers dropped below their allocation but in the meantime extra places would be awarded to the other partners to allow them to build up their places.

In debates in the Parliament you supported the campus and said 'The University of Glasgow should maintain access and take responsibility, and we should co-operate with it. We should look at the university's access and retention role as it relates to Scotland more widely.'

Further during the election campaign, the First Minister stated: 'If people place their trust in the SNP, then as First Minister I will bring together the various existing stakeholders in the future of Crichton and a high-skill south-west - including Glasgow University - and ask them to provide me with a deliverable action plan within 6 months to boost and expand higher and further education here.'

Clearly the SNP has a commitment to Crichton going beyond the concerns of the previous Executive. We call on the Executive to meet with all the partners in Crichton to take forward a plan that maintains the breadth of provision at the campus. We hope you can find a way to persuade Glasgow University to stay fully involved, including a means to meet the funding gap to allow Glasgow University Court to reverse the decision to halt undergraduate recruitment. The funding council has stated it will offer additional funding to the other partners to allow the build up of additional places, so surely it can instead offer such places to keep the present provision.

The amount of funding required to ensure Glasgow's presence at Crichton is relatively small, £900 000, but the previous Executive refused to intervene because of procedural concerns. We do understand that institutional autonomy is paramount and

we have campaigned to ensure such autonomy is maintained. However, keeping the University of Glasgow at Crichton is not about dictating provision, as it will still be for the university to decide on the course and subjects offered. We are therefore sure that a new executive can find a way round this procedural matter that does not impinge on the provisions in the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.

This is one area in the last Parliament where there was cross party support, so we believe a solution can be found with the consensus of the whole parliament. The latest motion from the Liberal Democrats shows that this is still a live issue.

If undergraduate recruitment to Crichton is to be resumed for this year, it is urgent that this matter is resolved. We seek an early meeting with you to discuss the matter and to find a way to resolve the impasse.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alastair Hunter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alastair Hunter

President UCU Scotland

**fh2205**