

Response ID ANON-635U-PWNH-G

Submitted to Education (Scotland) Bill - Detailed call for views
Submitted on 2024-08-30 09:24:41

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2 How would you like your response to be published?

I would like to request my response be anonymous

3 What is your name?

Name:
Douglas Hutchison

4 What is your email address?

Email:
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5 Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation

Organisation details

1 Name of organisation

Name of organisation:
Glasgow City Council

2 Information about your organisation

Please add information about your organisation in the box below:

3 How would you like your response to be published?

I would like to request my response be anonymous

Part 1 of the Bill

1 Several reports, including the OECD Review of the Curriculum for Excellence and Professor Ken Muir's report "Putting Learners at the Centre. Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education", have recommended reforming the current Scottish Qualifications Authority. How well do you think the Bill addresses the concerns raised in those reports?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The legislative changes will have limited impact unless there is a genuine change to the culture within the current organisation. The issues identified in the Stobart report, Mark Priestley's review and more recently in the Hayward report are not fully taken account of or addressed in the proposed legislation.

2 The Bill sets out measures designed to better involve learners, teachers and others in the new body's decision-making. What do you think about these measures?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The current body has various mechanisms through which stakeholders are supposed to influence decision making. However, these have not been effective and it is difficult to see how the proposals will significantly improve the current position whereby the senior leadership team benefit from narrative privilege. Once again, the core issue is the culture of the organisation and proposals which mean various bodies may come together on an occasional basis to scrutinise the work of that organisation while well intentioned are likely to have limited impact.

3 The Bill also creates several Charters, designed to let people know what they can expect when interacting with Qualifications Scotland. What is your view of these Charters?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

Charters will not address the fundamental issues in our current high stakes exam system which results in the poorest young people in Scotland being disadvantaged. Unless there is a concerted effort to ensure no young person is disadvantaged on the basis of socioeconomic circumstances then charters will only advantage those with the social capital to be able to enforce their entitlement. The risk is that the organisation continues in its current form under new branding and the poorest continue to miss out.

Part 2 of the Bill

1 Part 2 of the Bill establishes the role of HM Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland, setting out what they will do and how they will operate. What are your views of these proposals? E.g. Do they allow for sufficient independence?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The role of HMCI is unlikely ever to be entirely independent as it is reasonable that they deliver on the will of the democratically elected Government of the day. However, the proposals go some way to ensuring greater independence and a distinction between policy development and inspection.

2 What are your views on the reporting requirements set out in the Bill, including the requirement to report on the performance of the Scottish education system?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The reporting requirements appear reasonable, however an annual report will become onerous and may not show progress. A return to bi-annual reporting is more proportionate.

3 Are there any powers HM Chief Inspector should have that are not set out in the Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The current powers as set out in law are sufficient. The real power of HMCI is rooted in their credibility as an organisation and their effectiveness in working with all stakeholders to support improvement as an education system and ultimately improve outcomes for our children and young people.

Further comments

1 In your view, what should the outcomes of the Bill be?

Please provide your response in the box provided.:

The outcomes of the Bill should be evaluated by the extent to which they support better outcomes for our most deprived learners. If the Bill simply leads to re-branding or re-structuring without seriously challenging our national institutions to deliver for the most deprived then the Bill will not have made a difference.

2 Do you have any other comments on the Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.: