



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

By Email

Ms Seonag MacKinnon
Glasgow Caledonian University
Director of Communications and
Public Affairs

Monday, 24 April 2017

Our reference: JM/AM/GCU

Dear Ms MacKinnon

Glasgow Caledonian University – Investment in New York

Many thanks for your email of Friday, 21 April which arrived as I was planning to write to you following the university unions representatives' visit to the Scottish Parliament on Thursday, 20 April.

I think your email highlights the kind of issues which have been raised with us and which I certainly would be grateful to have a meeting about and seek further information on. If it can be arranged that there is a joint meeting with myself and colleagues, that is fine or I am happy to meet you on my own.

I think, as you are aware, some of the specific concerns raised include:

1. Whether the particular project in New York has been subject to a specific audit or report or whether it is only audited as part of the overall GCU accounts. While I take your point that Audit Scotland and the Scottish Government have been supportive of investment in general, I think there is a question as to whether they are supportive of the specific expenditure that has been incurred in this instance.
2. While I do accept that it can take several years to gain a licence to award degrees, I am interested to know how the actual timescale in your own case has compared to both other universities and to the original business plan.
3. Clearly you have to have a building before students but I suppose the question is how long a time gap there might normally be expected to be.
4. Again, I understand that there is a very small number of staff although it has been claimed that they are extremely well paid.

John Mason MSP

SNP Member of the Scottish Parliament for Glasgow Shettleston

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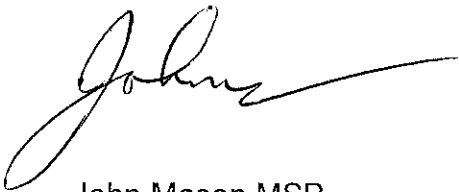
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5. Concerning the public money, I think it is very difficult in the case of universities to distinguish clearly what is public money and what is not. However, this would be an interesting point to discuss. Universities are recipients of quite large amounts of public money and, although £10 million may not be huge in the scheme of things, there certainly is a wider interest in society as to where this money has come from and how it has been spent.

Once again, I do appreciate your contacting me and Anne McGlinchey, who works for me, can fix an appropriate slot for a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

John Mason MSP

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