



Dr Joe Carson  
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Our Reference: 202000039091

10 July 2020

Dear Dr Joe Carson,

Thank you for your email correspondence of 19 May 2020, to the First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, regarding your concern for the British Council and their role in the provision of Modern Languages in Scotland.

Firstly, I must apologise for the delay in response, which was due to a recent technical issue with some items of correspondence.

As I am sure you know, the Scottish Government values the importance of learning languages in school, from the early years onwards, and our ambition is to expand and improve language learning in order to equip our young people with the skills and competencies they need in an increasingly interconnected and globalised world. Through our 1+2 languages policy, we are committed to that every school in Scotland will offer children the opportunity to learn two additional languages by the time they reach their third year of secondary education. To enrich this entitlement, we are committed to supporting the British Council's educational work and in particular their language assistants programme in Scotland, managing both outgoing and incoming language assistants. We also help shape their "connecting classrooms through global learning" programme in Scotland.

More broadly, the Scottish Government has a long standing relationship with the British Council and values the Council's contribution to promoting Scotland's international connections. We are keen to continue working closely together on Scottish interests and priorities, to mitigate against the uncertain times that lie ahead.

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We also recognise the British Council's desire to stay relevant and competitive in an increasingly difficult international, financial and political landscape. We will continue to advocate, including to the UK Government, the importance of delivering international educational and cultural activities for an open and engaged society which is, of course, particularly challenging in the current Covid-19 and Brexit context.

Thank you for contacting us on this issue, and I hope this reply has been helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Kerr

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**HES : International**

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