

From the Office of the Minister
Diane Dodds MLA



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Dear Nicola,

A NEW DEAL FOR UK HIGHER EDUCATION – BRISMES

I refer to your correspondence 17 June 2020 to the Minister for Education in Northern Ireland. As the Minister with responsibility for Higher Education in Northern Ireland, your correspondence has been passed to me for a reply.

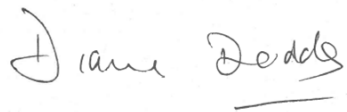
I fully recognise the importance of higher education to the local economy here in Northern Ireland and I am acutely aware of the ongoing financial pressures being faced by the higher education sector here, especially those recently created as a result of Covid-19.

I have taken steps to secure additional funding for the local sector to address the short-term pressures it currently faces. I am also working closely with Ministerial colleagues across the UK in securing a package of support for the UK higher education sector, and I am committed to ensuring that the needs of the local institutions are protected in any measures being brought forward by the UK Government.

In addition, I also recognise the wider funding landscape within which higher education sits, and the impact that different higher education policies and funding structures across the UK have created. For Northern Ireland, I believe that an holistic approach as to how higher education is funded needs to be considered; one that looks not only at the funding provided to the institutions but also to the student.

I trust that you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Dodds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

DIANE DODDS MLA
Minister for the Economy