

FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION (GOVERNANCE AND INFORMATION) (WALES) ACT 2014

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS AND SCHEDULES

Section 9 – Supply of information in connection with student loans and grants

20. Part 2 of THEA 1998 makes provision about financial support to students in further and higher education. Section 24 of that Act enables HMRC to provide information in relation to the operation of the student loan scheme to the Secretary of State and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (and to those to whom they have transferred or delegated certain functions), but not to the Welsh Ministers.
21. The Welsh Ministers carry out functions in relation to student support in Wales and can delegate those functions under section 23 of THEA 1998 (e.g. to the Student Loans Company).
22. In the absence of a legal basis for HMRC to supply such information to the Welsh Ministers, applicants for student support must submit documentary evidence of household income when applying for student support. The existing arrangement does not allow for the evidence of household income to be verified with HMRC.
23. This section amends section 24 of THEA 1998 so as to add the Welsh Ministers and those persons or bodies acting on behalf of the Welsh Ministers or exercising student support functions on their behalf, as persons to whom HMRC can supply information. HMRC will supply information under this provision on household income so that those receiving the information will be able to verify figures supplied in applications for means tested financial support without the need for applicants to provide documentary evidence.
24. This section also extends section 24 of THEA 1998 so that HMRC's power to share information relates to grants made by the Welsh Ministers as well as loans.