Dear Mr Halfon

Thank you once again for the opportunity for SLC’s Chair, Christian Brodie, and me to appear before the Education Committee in October last year.

I thought that you and the Committee may be interested in the Department for Education’s Tailored Review of the Student Loans Company, which was published yesterday and is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tailored-review-of-the-student-loans-company

As you are aware, the principal aims of Tailored Reviews are to ensure that public bodies remain fit for purpose, well governed and properly accountable for what they do. In accordance with Cabinet Office guidance, all Non-Departmental Public Bodies should undergo a Tailored Review once in the lifetime of each Parliament.

The review has found that the SLC is performing well, having met the majority of targets set for us by our four government shareholders over recent years despite delivering in an environment of rapidly increasing scale, scope and complexity.

The review also highlights a number of challenges faced by the SLC, which we must address in order to continue our current good performance and to ensure the SLC is in the best possible position to deliver change going forward. The SLC has already taken steps to address many of these challenges, including through our recently launched, refreshed transformation programme. This transformation programme, along with the ongoing improvements we continue to make to our service, will begin to resolve many of the issues highlighted in the review, enabling us to deliver student finance on behalf of our four shareholder governments much more quickly, safely and cost effectively – so protecting the funding for the transformation programme will be vital.

As you know, the recent report of the independent panel led by Dr Philip Augar makes a series of recommendations that aim to drive up quality, increase choice and ensure value for money across the further and higher education systems. If these recommendations are accepted by Government, the SLC will be required to play a leading role in their implementation. It is therefore essential that
we take forward our transformation now to enable SLC to efficiently and effectively deliver these significant reforms.

Ultimately, the Tailored Review has recognised SLC’s integral role in enabling people to invest in their futures through further and higher education, and we are committed to continually improving that experience for students.

Should you or your fellow Committee members require any further information about either the Tailored Review or SLC’s transformation programme, I would be delighted to meet – or indeed to attend a further Committee hearing – to discuss.

Yours sincerely

Paula Sussex
Chief Executive