



cc/BST

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The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw PC CH MC
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON SW1

Prime Minister 2

DLW
24/11

24 November 1986

Dear Lord President

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ABOLITION OF DOMESTIC RATES ETC (SCOTLAND) BILL
REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS

At its meeting on 2 October E(LF) invited me to consider further at which address students should be registered, the definition of full time students and the consequences for local government finance of increasing student grants.

Of these matters, only the first affects the drafting of the Scottish Bill. Detailed consultation between the relevant departments will be required in due course to work out the details of a satisfactory definition and to settle the financial arrangements which are to be made.

When it discussed the question of where students should be registered, E(LF) was concerned that the choice of the term time address might influence students' voting patterns. We need to be clear at the outset that there could be no question of the Abolition of Domestic Rates Etc (Scotland) Bill doing anything to change the present position under electoral registration law which entitles students to dual registration. That would be quite outwith the scope of the Bill.

It is clear that there are strong arguments of practicality for registering students in a single area throughout the year: otherwise we could be faced with up to 6 changes, at the beginning and end of each term. Also, it is clear that for most students their main residence will be their term time address: most of them spend more than half the year at their university town, and taking account of travel, vacation employment and so on, very few actually spend an appreciable time at their 'home' address. It would therefore be extremely hard to justify the arbitrary imposition of the 'home' address as the registration address for a full year's liability for the community charge.

In the circumstances I have included in the Bill (in Clause 10) provisions designed to give effect to the original proposal in the Green Paper that students should be registered for a full year at their term time address.

I am copying this letter to members of E(LF) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely
Andy Riffkind

MALCOLM RIFKIND

Approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence

