

# Quarterly Policy Briefing

July 2020

This document outlines the main policy changes seen in the last quarter that will affect EAUC-Scotland and Scottish institutions.

## Scottish Policy Updates

- The Scottish Government published its environmental governance legislative measures, contained within the Scottish Continuity Bill. If passed, the bill would allow the government to 'keep pace' with EU regulations, enshrine the EU environmental principles, and seek to establish a new watchdog, Environmental Standards Scotland. This whole process is delayed as the UK wide Environment Bill has been delayed due to coronavirus and may not be passed by the Commons until next year. Ultimately though it is good that the Scottish government is putting legislation in place to keep EU regulations.
- In November 2019 it was announced that, in response to their review of the Climate Challenge Fund, the Scottish Government planned to establish 'Regional Community Climate Action Hubs'. The Scottish Government has now started a procurement process, requesting information from stakeholders with an interest in community climate action. The deadline for this is the 17<sup>th</sup> of July. This will affect the sector as at least 4 Scottish universities have received funding from the Climate Challenge Fund.
- The Scottish Government has announced a [Guidance Map](#) for the return of Colleges and Universities
- The Scottish Government has put out a [Call for Views regarding the Green Recovery](#). From Scottish Government: "Recently, the ECCLR Committee discussed the parameters of a green recovery with the Cabinet Secretary on 15 June 2020. On 16 June 2020, the Cabinet Secretary announced before Parliament that she hoped to lay a revised Climate Change Plan 'in December to align with the Scottish budget, if possible. The recast plan will set out a credible pathway, as part of a green recovery, to meeting Scotland's world-leading climate targets over the period to 2032."

- The Scottish Government has also released a report entitled "[Towards a robust, resilient wellbeing economy for Scotland](#)" which outlines aspects of the green recovery. One important point is that they have stressed the importance of the education sector in leading the economic recovery.
- [EU Students will have to pay full fees from 2021/2022](#). The impact of this is not yet clear without knowing student numbers. Provisional figures for this year do show a 16% increase in student applications outside the EU which would help financially if they are given places. It is promising that applications are, at this point, remaining high for Scottish universities and colleges despite Covid-19.
- The Scottish Government voted in favour of a [deposit return scheme](#) coming into effect from July 2022. The cost will be 20p and this will cover glass, plastic, aluminum and steel containers.

## UK Policy Updates

- The UK Government (BEIS) is looking into a UK version on the EU emission trading scheme. Due to Brexit the UK can no longer be part of the EU version and the government is looking into its own version. It is not in effect yet but pricing structures are being discussed. [More info here](#).
- The UK Government announced a £3 billion recovery package but Scotland is expected to get only £21 million, not clear how this will be spent but unlikely the education sector will see much of it
- UK Government Environment Secretary George Eustice outlined aspects of his [Green Recovery Plan](#) which include piloting a £4 million green prescribing programme and a £5 million pilot of a Natural Capital and Ecosystem assessment. It has been expected that natural capital and green solutions would feature so this is not unexpected though the finances are relatively low and environmental groups are skeptical. Unclear what bearing this will have on Scotland.