

# Reaching out across the sector

The Student Loans Company (SLC) has an important role to play in the delivery of the UK's higher and further education services. We want to be recognised as an enabler of student opportunity, helping customers invest in their futures and developing services that work for our universities and colleges.

To help us achieve this, it is crucial that we engage in regular discussion with higher and further education institutions and students to understand how our services are working for them. As part of this process SLC's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) have been out and about visiting universities across the country.

On Tuesday (14 January 2020), I was part of a team of SLC colleagues who visited the University of Derby. This was an opportunity to meet with the students and management team and find out first hand about their experience of SLC.

During the visit, we met with Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kathryn Mitchell, and other members of the management team and discussed general student finance issues. We also considered specific issues, such as how we can all work together to ensure the processing of students' change of circumstances and payment scheduling is as seamless as possible.

This was followed by a focus group with students, during which our team of student finance experts were able to answer specific questions the group asked about their own student finance situations. This session gave us the chance to hear from them about their experiences of using our services including the application process and the online platform. We also got their feedback on some of the enhancements we have planned, such as digital evidence upload. It was a very constructive discussion that generated some good ideas on how we might make future improvements.

The visit to the University of Derby was a success. Being able to get face-to-face feedback from those who use our services is critical to helping us achieve our goal of providing an outstanding customer experience and I appreciate the valuable input from everyone we met. I know my ELT colleagues have found their visits equally useful and I look forward to further visits in the future.

David Wallace, Deputy CEO