

**Subject:**

FW: Response to Consultation Paper on the Proposed Exchequer - Employer Investment Mechanism for Higher Education and FET

**From:** Raymond Jordan [mailto:Raymond.Jordan@ncse.ie]

**Sent:** 24 April 2017 10:41

**To:** ConsultationNTF <ConsultationNTF@education.gov.ie>

**Subject:** Response to Consultation Paper on the Proposed Exchequer - Employer Investment Mechanism for Higher Education and FET

**NCSE Response to Consultation Paper on the Proposed Exchequer - Employer Investment Mechanism for Higher Education and FET**

I refer to your request for views on the proposal in the [DES/DPER consultation paper](#) on an exchequer-employer investment mechanism for Higher Education and FET through an increase in the National Training Fund Levy.

The NCSE welcomes this opportunity to comment on the proposals set out in this paper. Data shows that people with disabilities and special educational needs are significantly more likely than others to experience unemployment. Given this reality, it is important that particular consideration needs to be given to how best to meaningfully include people with disabilities in post-school HE/FET settings and programmes so that they can progress to employment.

Government has invested significantly in appropriate funding models and supports to enable students with special educational needs to be included and progress in primary and post-primary education. An important aim of this investment is to assist all students to develop the skills and talents to participate in society and in post school options leading to employment and independent living. The NCSE is concerned that Government policy builds on its investment in inclusion in schools by ensuring that HE/FET courses are required to be relevant and accessible for people with disabilities. This would require funding the availability of appropriate supports in HE/FET educational programmes and training courses as well as requiring that courses are capable of being differentiated to ensure that the educational needs of the participants are met. It also would require ensuring that all buildings are accessible – this can be a particular difficulty for many FE providers.

However, this of itself might not be enough unless due consideration is given to appropriately supported, as necessary, work experience programmes to allow people with disabilities gain good work experience and demonstrate that they have obtained the skills required by employers.

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