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**Chair**  
Public Accounts Committee  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

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*Dear Chair*

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) carried out an inquiry into the National Citizen Service (NCS) and produced a report in March 2017.

One of the findings of the report was that DCMS needs to consider a long-term evaluation of the impact of the NCS programme. The corresponding recommendation was for the Department: *'to establish a clear plan, and secure agreement with other government departments where necessary, by September 2017 for how it is going to evaluate the long-term impact of NCS.'* DCMS provided an update in March 2018, and you have now requested a further update on progress.

In a memorandum to the PAC issued by DCMS in March 2018 (attached), the Department agreed to commission an independent feasibility study to explore the best approaches to evaluating the long term impact of the NCS programme. DCMS then proceeded with a recommendation from the study to use evidence on higher education outcomes to evaluate the long-term impact of the NCS programme.

DCMS approached the Department for Education to access the Longitudinal Educational Outcome (LEO) data held by DfE. In March 2018 DfE informed DCMS officials of a moratorium on all data-sharing, imposed because of a data breach.

In summer 2019, DCMS Ministers agreed to a holistic review of the NCS programme evaluation process. As part of this, DCMS will re-investigate longitudinal evaluation options to usefully measure the long-term impact of the programme. The LEO data-sharing moratorium was lifted by DfE in August 2019 and use of this data set will therefore be examined as part of the evaluation review.

The review will conclude in Autumn 2020 and DCMS will offer a full response to the PAC, including any plans for longitudinal evaluation of the programme by the end of 2020.

*Yours faithfully*

Sarah Healey  
Permanent Secretary

