

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing to you on behalf of Edinburgh Skeptics, a non-profit organisation which promotes science, reason & critical thinking. Through Sense About Science in Scotland we were alerted to the upcoming closing date regarding the above consultation, and wish to add our comments to the record.

After reading the draft bill as it stands right now we think it is positive and a step in the right direction, but there are some areas in which it falls rather short when it comes to protecting the individuals, especially from corporations and other large organisations.

This is something that was very prominent in the Skeptical community a few years ago when Simon Singh was sued by the British Chiropractic Association. As you may be aware if you saw reports regarding the case at the time this placed Simon under incredible personal and financial pressure, and were it not for the support of the Guardian newspaper and the worldwide skeptical community we are certain that he would have lost the case, and the subsequent welcome passing of the Defamation Act 2013 would never have happened.

The Defamation Act should be seen as the absolute bare minimum standard that we should be meeting here in Scotland, and we're led to understand that this is simply not the case.

As such, we would urge you in the strongest possible terms to review and strengthen the draft bill in order to ensure the appropriate protection for those who need it most.

Thanks,
Mark Pentler
Chair, Edinburgh Skeptics