

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-538
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00997/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

20 May 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April on the petition you received regarding the involvement of lecturers in ensuring a further education inspection framework that is fit for purpose.

The UCU wrote to the Chief Inspector in December 2013, expressing disappointment that UCU was not directly informed of the decision to suspend FE inspections, and concern that lecturers were not directly involved in developing the new inspection model. The Chief Inspector responded and reassured UCU that lecturers would have their say in subsequent consultation on the framework.

Subsequently, the UCU then contacted me in January, in my capacity as the Minister for Education and Skills, to express concern over what they see as the 'exclusion' of lecturers from the Estyn Advisory Group on FE inspection. The Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology responded in February to advise that Estyn is an independent body and the membership of the advisory group is a matter for the Chief Inspector.

In his letter the Deputy Minister acknowledged that the Chief Inspector's 2012/13 Annual Report identified teaching and learning as a key area for improvement in post-16 learning, and that lecturers and practitioners must be at the heart of all our endeavours to address this.

I am confident that the structures Estyn are establishing to develop the inspection framework for further education will ensure proper engagement with all key stakeholders, including lecturers, and this will address points 1 - 3 in your letter.

I will also write to the Chief Inspector to seek her assurance on these matters and seek clarification on the parallel process for the wider education framework you raise in the penultimate paragraph.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis'.

Huw Lewis AC / AM
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Minister for Education and Skills