

P-04-538 Involving lecturers to ensure a Further Education Inspection Framework that is fit for purpose – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking Team, 06.06.14.

Dear Kayleigh

My initial response is that I am pleased that Huw Lewis expressed disappointment and concern that UCU have not been involved. I am also pleased that Ken Skates acknowledges that lecturers and practitioners must be at the heart of all endeavours to improve teaching and learning. Unfortunately I don't have a copy of the letter from William Powell to Huw Lewis, so I don't know what points 1 – 3 are, but with regard to proper engagement with all stakeholders, the date for the stakeholder forum keeps being moved (March then May, but this has now also been cancelled) Therefore the opportunity to consult on the development of the new framework has not yet arisen. It is noted that a consultation day is planned in July, but this is for Curriculum Leaders.

I think it should be noted that we applaud Estyn's decision to suspend FE inspections in order to develop a new system that is fit for purpose, in the light of the variety of new arrangements within the FE sector and we would welcome the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue to help develop a system that promotes and supports the delivery of high quality teaching and learning. However our concern is still that, as stated in paragraph 2 of Ann Keane's letter, work has already begun and is at an early stage of development, but as yet we have had no opportunity to engage in this. From our point of view, involvement in the early planning stages would be beneficial in the development of the new framework, to help cover the range of perspectives from both data management and delivery points of view, to ensure that differing quality strands are not overlooked as the process develops. Again, it is stated in paragraph 9 in Ann Keane's letter to William Powell, that there will be wider consultation over the next few months to discuss outline proposals. This highlights exactly our concern that initial planning and development of the new FE inspection framework is taking place without practitioner input.

The point that advisory groups are not normally part of the process, is exactly why UCU has concerns as it does not follow the usual stakeholder engagement pattern. None of the correspondence UCU have received so far from Estyn attribute the impact that policy changes will have on 'strategic planning' as a reason as to why it is not considered relevant to include UCU in the group. If this were the only reason for the advisory group's existence, then it would seem reasonable that Estyn

only required the advice of college managers; however the Terms of Reference for the advisory group indicate that there is a much wider remit (see attached).

UCU welcomed the opportunity to engage in discussion at the Stakeholder event in February and are glad the comments were regarded as helpful, which would hopefully provide some reassurance that our intention is to engage constructively on behalf of our members. Please note that this event was after UCU's initial request for involvement in the advisory group and that it was the response to this initial request, which stated that UCU would have the opportunity to comment on proposals *after* the initial drafting work had taken place that prompted our concerns.

We welcomed the fact that staff from Estyn met with our Officials at the UCU office in Bridgend. This was to discuss our request to be part of the advisory group. The first meeting was constructive and it was thought that a way forward had been reached, with the suggestion that there could be a parallel practitioner advisory group; this suggestion was confirmed in an email but later appeared to be retracted. The second meeting was to discuss again the idea of a parallel group, where it became clear that this was not considered an option. We welcome the offer to present our views to the advisory group, but are concerned that this does not provide the opportunity for ongoing discussion of the initial development of the new FE framework. We have however acknowledged this offer and have requested that we may be able to take this opportunity at a later date if advised to do so by our members. The membership have accepted the invitation to meet with Liam Kealy of Estyn, on the 21st of June to discuss their concerns and we hope that this will help to pave the way forward. Unfortunately we have not been aware of other meetings and information sessions that have been held, but would like to invite Estyn to hold an open discussion with our members and to give the PowerPoint presentation that was delivered at the Colegau Cymru conference, if they so wish.

On a point of clarification, the petition does not raise concerns that the voice of the lecturer will not be heard in the consultation process; it raises the concern that lecturers are being excluded from the advisory group and therefore are not being included in the early decision making process in the development of a new inspection framework. A framework that will place more emphasis on teaching, learning and the curriculum; areas that have a direct impact on the day to day teaching and learning experience of both students and lecturers and areas in which lecturers have a great deal of expertise that they wish to share, in order to develop an improved and 'fit for purpose' inspection framework.

In summary, UCU still have concerns that practitioners are not represented in the advisory group, but that they should be, for the following reasons:

1. Advisory groups are not normally part of the Stakeholder Engagement process.
2. Work on the new inspection arrangements has already begun and is at an early stage of development.
3. There will be wider consultation over the next few months to discuss outline proposals, indicating that proposals are already being drawn up.
4. The date for the Stakeholder Forum has already been moved twice with no further date set, therefore removing the opportunity for wider stakeholder engagement at this time.
5. Some of the objectives of the advisory group will be to:
 - Help develop an inspection framework for the inspection of further education institution.
 - Identify a model for inspecting learning area programmes and the Welsh Baccalaureate.
 - Consider how best to use data including learner outcomes and destination data as evidence to support inspection judgements.
 - Develop options for identifying, training and using specialist peer inspectors.
 - Issues that directly affect the working practices of lecturers.

Therefore the issues raised by the petition have not yet been addressed and are still valid. We hope the Chief Inspector will adopt a commonsense approach in the best interests of raising standards.

Regards

Ian Whitehead-Ross

Estyn Advisory Group 2014

Inspection of Further Education Institutions

Terms of reference

1. Purpose: to help Estyn develop an inspection framework for the inspection of further education institutions (FEI), using a joint advisory forum consisting of relevant stakeholders.
2. The objectives of the Advisory group will be to:
 - help develop an inspection framework for the inspection of further education institutions;
 - respond flexibly as the structures and arrangements for further education develop in response to the Welsh Government policy and guidance on learning area programmes, mergers, governance and funding of FEI;
 - identify a model for inspecting learning area programmes and the WBQ and how that will inform a model for the inspection of institutional leadership and governance;
 - consider how best to use data including learner outcomes and destination data as evidence to support inspection judgments;
 - consider the logistical challenge of inspecting across multiple sites;
 - develop options for identifying, training and using leadership peer inspectors and specialist peer inspectors; and
 - consider the potential synergies between Colegau Cymru's self-regulation processes and Estyn's inspection framework.
3. Membership

The Estyn Advisory Group will comprise the following:

- Ian Dickson (Deputy Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Learner Experience)
- Rob Evans (Principal Bridgend College, Chair ColegauCymru Quality Network)
- Judith Evans (Principal, Coleg y Cymoedd)
- Dafydd Evans (Principal, Coleg Menai, Grwp Llandrillo Menai)
- Jim Bennett (Principal, Coleg Gwent, Chair of ColegauCymru Improving Quality Group)
- Mark Roberts (Vice Principal, Cardiff and the Vale College, Resources, Efficiency and Financial Planning)
- DfES representative

The following will attend from Estyn:

- Simon Brown (Strategic Director. Estyn): Chair
- Lin Howells (Assistant Director. Estyn)
- Liam Kealy (Project Lead. Estyn)
- Gill Sims (Group Manager. Estyn)

Observer: Katy Burns/Fran Hopwood.

The advisory group will meet with the project group manager and sub-group managers in March, May, July and October 2014.

A proposed forward work programme is:

Date	Activity	Outcome
Tuesday 4 March 2014	Initial advisory group meeting. Discussion of initial options for the new inspection model.	Clear strengths and weaknesses of various outline models.
May 2014	Update from the data sub-group.	
July 2013		
October 2014	Advisory group makes recommendations	Approval of training schedule for new LAPI and LaMPI roles
Spring 2015	Pilot inspection	

All relevant paperwork, including an agenda and a list of discussion points, will be sent to members of the advisory group in advance of the meetings.

Meetings will be held at Estyn's office in Cardiff or at a suitable location in mid-Wales. Video-conferencing will be used when appropriate.