



WALES

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RESPONSE TO:

**The consultation on the proposed
arrangements for the appointment of
members of the Education Workforce
Council**

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The University and College Union (UCU Wales) represents more than 7,000 academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians, and postgraduates in universities, colleges, adult education and training organisations across Wales.

UCU Wales is a politically autonomous but integral part of UCU, the largest post-school union in the world: a force for educators and education that employers and government cannot ignore.

UCU was formed on the 1st June 2006 by the amalgamation of two strong partners – the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) – who shared a long history of defending and advancing educators’ employment and professional interests.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the proposed arrangements for the appointment of members of the Education Workforce Council

Question 1 – Do you agree with our proposed schedule, attached in the annex?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	x	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We have concerns that there is very little representation of the Further Education sector across both lists in the proposed schedule, which could result in there being no FE representation on the Council under the proposed arrangements. This would therefore not provide the skills, knowledge and expertise required of the Council to support this section of the Education Workforce, which would not be the most effective way to drive up standards. We note that the schedule is meant to capture all those who represent and/or are relevant to the four categories listed in schedule 2 of the Act, but are unclear as to how equitable representation will be ensured, as it is not plainly obvious, as it is in section 3 of the GTCW regs (1999) which explicitly states the number of council members that will represent each category of the workforce.

The diversity of interested parties listed in the schedule may also have a variety of definitions as to what constitutes ‘quality’ in education, depending on their perspective; therefore this is an important issue that needs to be addressed. Likewise there needs to be a clear definition of what it is that constitutes educational ‘professionalism’.

Above all, our major concern is that the democratic election of peers, which is part of the membership selection process of the current GCTW, seems to have been completely removed.

We suggest that this could be addressed through the election of members from nominations provided by the organisation listed in part one of the proposed schedule; however there need to be regulations in place to ensure that each category of registration is given equal representation on the Council.

It is not clear from the proposed arrangements how it will be ensured that the majority of Council members are or recently have been registered persons and we would like to know if the definition of 'recent' is the same as that in the current GTCW Regs (1999).

We would like to see more detailed proposals of the selection process, as it is currently unclear how nominations will be made and how equity of representation will be achieved.

Question 2 – Are there any other organisations that represent the categories set out in paragraph 7.1 that you feel should be included in the list?

Supporting comments

No.

Question 3 – Are there any further comments you would like to bring to the Welsh Government's attention in relation to appointments to the Education Workforce Council?

Supporting comments

We have grave concerns that the proposed Council may not equitably or accurately represent the interests of FE lecturers in Wales and would like further guidance as to how this will be addressed.

Question 4 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

We note that the consultation states in section 2, that one of the aims of the Council is to maintain public trust, confidence and to safeguard the interests of the learners, parents and general public. We note with despair that it is not one of the aims of the council to maintain the trust and confidence of the workforce or to safeguard their interests as professionals. We fail to see how the government can truly expect to drive up standards of teaching and learning, if they do not engage with practitioners in a more meaningful and supportive way. We strongly object to the notion that practitioners will be compelled to pay to belong to a regulatory body, imposed by government, paid for, but not own by the profession, which does not represent their interests as education professionals and will do little to enhance the quality of educational provision in Wales. This being the case, the costs of registration should be met by the employers not the individuals.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: