



Better inspection for all

FOIE consultation
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Consultation response from the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges, EAUC

About us

The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges is the sustainability body for tertiary education in the UK. The EAUC seeks to work with Members and partners to drive sustainability to the heart of further and higher education.

The EAUC Vision is a university, college and learning and skills sector where the principles and values of environmental, economic and social sustainability are embedded.

Our Mission is that we will lead, inspire and equip Members and stakeholders with a shared vision, knowledge and the tools they need to embed sustainability within curriculum and operations.

Our membership is made up of 240 member institutions comprising some 3100 professionals.

Our Response

In principle the EAUC agrees that greater coherence in the inspection of different providers is desirable, and that a common inspection framework can be instrumental in achieving this. It will be critical to consider and be explicit about the different needs of varied age-groups and contexts, and we therefore emphasise the importance of developing individual remit handbooks with careful consultation and trialling.

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Caution against 'British Values'

We caution against narrowing inspection perspectives to what might be referred to as 'British values'. These are very poorly defined and can lead to an insularity and parochial perspective when a more global and enterprising perspective may serve us better in a competitive and connected world. In addition we have a concern that by using such language Ofsted is in danger of fostering the kind of prejudice which can undermine prospects for equality of opportunity, diversity and related goals they you say you are seeking to promote.

Failure to prepare learners for rapid social, economic and environmental change

Our main consultation contribution is one of disappointment. We are disappointed that there is no evidence from Inspection reports of the implementation of Ofsted's sustainable development action plan as referenced in the April 2012 Ofsted publication 'Inspecting Sustainable Development'. Successive UN reports show that sustainable development and climate change are the biggest challenges facing the planet. Only last month the UNESCO Global Action Plan for ESD was launched in Japan. So surely it is appropriate to ensure that education provision reflects this global development. However the document makes no reference to a role for the sector. The consultation document does call for a greater emphasis on : 'the suitability of the curriculum and the type and range of courses and opportunities offered by providers' (Para 12 Page 8) 'preparation for life and work in Britain today, including in relation to personal development, behaviour and welfare.' (Para 12 Page 8). We agree with these 2 points and that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a vital component that should be included in the new framework.

Our view is that ESD cannot be assumed to be present in the curriculum so suggest that in paragraph 19 an additional bullet point should be inserted if schools and colleges are to respond to the UNESCO GAP and take sustainability seriously,

- actively promote the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future.



Iain Patton
EAUC CEO