

P-04-458 Keep Further Education in the Public Sector

Supporting Information

1. The 2011 Welsh Labour National Assembly for Wales election **manifesto declared “FE colleges as public assets which belong to their local communities and its community of staff and learners”**. **One commitment in the manifesto was to “ensure the parity of esteem for teachers and lecturers by maintaining the current link between their pay and conditions” as well as “introduce an all-Wales contract for FE lecturers”**.
2. However, in July 2012, the Welsh Government tabled the long awaited White paper on its proposed bill for Further Education (FE) in Wales. The Welsh Government wants to introduce changes, through legislation, that will remove a number of restrictions and controls on colleges, giving greater autonomy to college Principals.
3. The Welsh Government currently places a duty on colleges to maintain the pay parity for FE lecturers with school teachers through the annual conditions of funding letter it send to FE colleges in Wales. Many college Principals opposed the introduction of an all-Wales pay-scale.
4. If the Welsh Government does not continue to exercise some level of control over the FE sector, colleges could disregard national agreements in FE which could include the national pay scales. Should colleges disregard the existing national pay scales and contracts, teaching pay scales could vary significantly across each college. The quality of teaching could therefore be affected since teachers would not want to work for those colleges offering lower pay scales.
5. **The Welsh Government’s White paper notes that the power of Welsh Ministers’ to dissolve colleges** will be replaced with the ability of a college to dissolve itself and transfer the property, rights and liabilities to another body. If colleges were allowed to transfer their properties, **rights and liabilities (as outlined in the Welsh Government’s proposals)**, then colleges could dissolve themselves and transfer the assets to a private company limited by guarantee.