

A bill of rights for professional educators in FE and skills

We print here the Bill of Rights circulated by the Tutor Voices organisation during their recent conference (26-27th September) at Northern College near Barnsley. Please send comments to: TutorsVoices@mail.com

1. Professional educators should have a statutory right for their representatives to participate in policy decision-making at national, regional, local and institutional levels.
2. They should have control over methods of teaching, learning and assessment.
3. Professional educators means trained teachers. No unqualified staff should teach in any educational institution supported by state funds.
4. Professional educators have the responsibility and the right to engage in continuous professional learning of the highest quality and it is for them to determine what professional learning is appropriate to their needs.
5. They need dedicated time, space, support, and state finance in order to engage in continuous professional learning. They need strong, stable and well-resourced institutions which provide both continuity and change.
6. They should be able to create communities of learning based on mutual trust, dialogue and collaboration; and networks of such communities in each locality should be established to work collaboratively together.
7. Professional educators should be recognised as belonging to a research-informed profession, where evidence is used to sharpen decisions about not just what works in pedagogy, but about what is educationally desirable.
8. They have the right to be inspected only by fellow experts who are knowledgeable and experienced in the subject, discipline or vocational area being inspected and whose prime aim is to support and enhance the work in hand.
9. Professional educators are entitled to a private life apart from teaching and workloads need to respect this, allowing them to concentrate more on teaching than on administration.
10. They have the right to work in supportive, enabling and democratic institutions, which actively support equality and diversity, and in which all staff are dedicated to learning.