

Ms Jill Ward
Staffordshire University
Beaconside
STAFFORD
ST18 0AD

2010/0007755PODL

8 February 2010

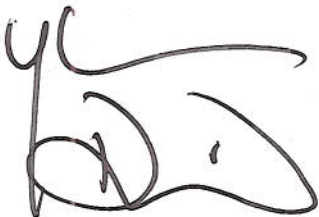
Dear Ms Ward,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December 2009 to Peter Mandelson about Widening Participation. I am replying as the Minister responsible for Higher Education.

I am sorry you felt we had overlooked the role of the Lifelong Learning Networks. On the contrary we value the work of the LLNs highly, and recognise the progress that they have made in developing clearer progression routes and information, advice and guidance for vocational learners to enter HE. We also value the responsiveness of the LLNs in assisting their partner institutions to respond to new priority areas. This has included assisting partner institutions to engage with employers, 14-19 diplomas and more recently working with partners to explore and establish progression routes for Apprentices into Higher Education.

From the outset LLNs were given the ambitious objective of affecting long-term cultural change within their partner institutions. We recognised that this would be a challenging task, but we were confident of the value and impact that the LLNs could potentially make and were keen that the sustainability of activity, despite a limited funding period, was prioritised. In the recent monitoring reports submitted by the LLNs, HEFCE were pleased to see the high level of activity being undertaken to facilitate the sustainability of the work of the networks. HEFCE were able to see a clear commitment from a number of LLN partners to sustaining the work that the networks have developed as well as, in some cases, the core network teams themselves being sustained.

I look forward to meeting representatives of the Lifelong Learning Networks on 3 March.



DAVID LAMMY

1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET
www.bis.gov.uk