



E m.turner@wellcome.ac.uk

T +44 (0)20 7611 8888

12 July 2016

Adam Gray  
Higher Education  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
1 Victoria Street  
London, SW1H 0ET

Dear Mr Gray,

### **Teaching Excellence Framework: Technical Consultation for Year Two**

The Wellcome Trust is the UK's largest charitable foundation. Last year, we invested almost £500 million in UK universities, funded the salaries of around 9,000 academics, and supported 200 postgraduate students taking their first steps into a research career. We are deeply committed to skills development, training and education.

We support the Government's ambition to use a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to reward high-quality and inspiring teaching in UK academic institutions. However, TEF must be carefully implemented, and it is important to consider its potential impact on research activities. It would be damaging to force teaching and research into competition as institutions chase different pots of money through TEF and Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Teaching and research are intrinsically linked: quality, inspiration, and relevance will be lost from higher education if the bond between them is broken. Researchers have a vital role to play in the teaching process — sparking the interest of the next generation, giving cutting-edge insight, contextualising learning, and building student critique into research. Anecdotally, we also know that students seek out research projects led by lecturers they have found particularly engaging, allowing them to explore a diversity of research opportunities.

We are encouraged by the positive steps taken to support the synergistic relationship between teaching and research in initial plans for the TEF. This includes considering evidence of how research enriches the learning environment and the suggested 'excellence in research-led teaching' commendation.

However, more needs to be done to ensure that teaching and research are mutually reinforcing, including careful consideration of how the TEF will interact with other forms of assessment and ranking. We have also responded to BIS' ongoing REF Review led by Lord Stern, noting that future REF exercises should consider the impact of research on education. This includes efforts to develop the next cadre of research leaders through teaching, mentoring, talent development and training.

We are keen to work with BIS as your thinking around the TEF and REF develops to ensure that UK universities continue to lead the way in teaching and research, and the country's science base continues to thrive.

Yours sincerely

**Professor Mike Turner**  
Acting Director of Science