

Revisions to the framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges

A consultation document

This is a consultation document that sets out Ofsted's proposals for revising the *Framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges*

We seek the views of these colleges and others who have an interest in them.

The closing date for the consultation is 30 June 2014.

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Introduction

1. Ofsted's *Framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges* came into effect in September 2012¹ in order to:
 - check whether a college meets the national minimum standards (NMS)²
 - make qualitative judgements about the quality of the college's residential provision and its impact on the residential learners' experience and outcomes.
2. Colleges are expected to meet all the national minimum standards, and have regard to any associated government guidelines.
3. Feedback from residential colleges suggests that the current framework is more evaluative and rigorous and more likely to lead to improvement than the previous one.
4. Ofsted is determined to continue to promote improvement in all the provision it inspects and regulates. In September 2012, Ofsted introduced the grade of 'requires improvement' to inspections of further education and skills providers, including colleges, as part of the revisions to *The Common Inspection Framework for further education and skills* (CIF).³ This replaced the 'satisfactory' grade. The revised CIF also introduced earlier, full reinspection of providers judged as requires improvement (early reinspection of inadequate providers has been in place for some years).⁴ From 2013, all colleges and providers graded as requires improvement and satisfactory have undergone support and challenge from Ofsted, including improvement visits, to help them improve to good.⁵ It seems appropriate to consider whether the inspection of residential accommodation in further education colleges would benefit from the same revisions as inspections of the education and training provision in colleges.

¹ *Framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges* (120091), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspecting-residential-provision-further-education-colleges.

² *Accommodation of students under eighteen by further education colleges, national minimum standards*, Department of Health, 2002; http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20071001175105/dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4005629.

³ *The Common Inspection Framework for the inspection of further education and skills* (120062), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/common-inspection-framework-for-further-education-and-skills-2012.

⁴ *A good education for all - key changes for further education and skills providers* (120147), Ofsted 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-education-for-all-key-changes-for-further-education-and-skills-providers.

⁵ *Support and challenge for further education and skills providers that require improvement to become good or outstanding* (130012), Ofsted 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/support-and-challenge-for-further-education-and-skills-providers-require-improvement-become-good-or.

5. Ofsted evaluates its inspection frameworks after the first year of operation. Evaluation of the *Framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges* took into account views from residential college staff, inspectors and others. The following are among the issues arising from that evaluation:
 - There needs to be a clearer distinction between good colleges and outstanding ones, to identify what is truly outstanding so that colleges can learn from it.
 - There is not enough correlation between the inspection of the residential provision in colleges and the inspection of the education and skills provision, which makes read-across difficult.
 - The inspection of residential provision is not suitably linked to the overall purpose of such provision, which is to assist the learner to ensure that they achieve their education and training aims and intended employment destinations.

Legislative background

6. Inspections of residential provision in colleges are carried out under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000. They are based on the national minimum standards (NMS) set by the government for residential provision of students under 18 that should be met by further education colleges. The NMS apply to further education colleges as defined by section 91 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. Any amendments or changes to the standards are the responsibility of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

How we inspect now

7. Ofsted inspects residential provision in colleges, but does not regulate it. This means that, unlike some other types of social care or welfare provision, we do not inspect residential provision in colleges against a set of regulations or raise actions where such regulations are not met.
8. Ofsted currently inspects colleges against the NMS and makes graded judgements against the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness
 - outcomes for young people
 - quality of service
 - safeguarding
 - leadership and management.

9. Inspectors' judgements are guided by the grade descriptors set out in the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of residential provision in further education colleges*.⁶ Ofsted does not propose to change this set of judgements. It does, however, propose to refine the grade descriptors.
10. Colleges that provide residential provision for those under 18 will normally undergo an inspection once in a three-year period. The timing will normally be based on risk and therefore related to the timing and outcome of the previous inspection of the college's residential provision.
11. An inspection may take place at any time that a college is open. There will normally be two working days' notice of the inspection.
12. There are currently 42 colleges where the residential accommodation is subject to inspection.
13. The inspection of the education and training provision at further education colleges is carried out under separate statutory arrangements from the inspection of the residential provision. These inspections are undertaken in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework for the inspection of further education and skills* (CIF) under part 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.⁷

What we plan to change

14. The information in this section explains the changes we propose to make to the framework for inspecting residential accommodation in further education colleges. It should be read in conjunction with the survey questions.

Inspection frameworks

- That the descriptor for grade 3 be changed from 'adequate' to 'requires improvement' with effect from January 2015.
- That the grade descriptors, and the application of them, be refined so that 'outstanding' is truly outstanding, that only good is good enough and that any failure to meet any of the NMS will mean the college 'requires improvement'.
- That the safeguarding judgement criteria and guidance be reviewed and updated as necessary.
- That the education, training and employment outcomes for the young people in residential accommodation should be considered under the

⁶ *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of residential provision in further education colleges* (120092), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120092.

⁷ *Common Inspection Framework for the inspection of further education and skills* (CIF) (120062), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/common-inspection-framework-for-further-education-and-skills-2012.

framework judgement 'outcomes for young people', as well as their personal and social development so far as that is possible.

- That residential provision at further education colleges judged as requires improvement or inadequate be inspected sooner, given the greater risk. This would be within two years following inspection from January 2015.
- That residential provision at further education colleges judged as requires improvement or inadequate should receive improvement visits from Ofsted following inspection from January 2015.
- That inspections are carried out with no, or very limited, notice.

15. We are aware that residential colleges are diverse in size and nature, and we want to hear the views of all interested parties about our proposals.

16. This is a public consultation that runs for eight weeks. We intend to implement the revised framework from 1 January 2015.

Changing inspection grades

17. Currently, we make judgements about a residential college using the following grades:

| | | |
|---------|-------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | A college that provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A college that provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Grade 3 | Adequate | A college that meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | A college where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of the care has serious weaknesses. |

18. We propose to replace the grade 3 'adequate' with 'requires improvement'. This grade will signify that, even though a college may be meeting all the NMS; this is the minimum requirement. A college graded with this judgement requires improvement to become 'good'. This change of grade description and the purpose behind it will bring the inspection of residential accommodation in colleges in line with that for the inspection of the education and training provision in colleges and other further education and skills providers in this respect. We also believe it will encourage colleges to improve their residential accommodation quicker where they are awarded this grade. This change to the description of grade 3 would apply to judgements of overall effectiveness, outcomes for young people, quality of service, safeguarding, and leadership and management.

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the grade 'adequate' should be replaced by 'requires improvement'?

Revising the grade descriptors

19. The grade descriptors provide guidance for inspectors and colleges for consistency in judging all types of colleges with residential provision.⁸
20. We propose to refine the grade descriptors, and their application, so that 'outstanding' residential provision is truly outstanding, that only 'good' is good enough and that any failure to meet any of the NMS will mean the college 'requires improvement'.
21. We also intend to review and update the guidance and judgement criteria, especially those relating to the safeguarding judgement, to ensure that they take into account recent policy developments and the latest statutory guidance.

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the grade descriptors and other guidance should be refined?

Linking the residential provision with the education, training and employment outcomes of young people

22. Inspection and evaluation of the residential provision in colleges is undertaken independently and separately from the inspection of the education and training of the same young people in colleges.
23. There is currently no assessment of how the residential provision impacts on the education, training and employment outcomes for young people.
24. One of the shortcomings identified by both college staff and inspectors is the lack of read-across between the two types of inspection and their different but related coverage. Educational achievement is an important aspect of the welfare of young people in accommodation and the prime reason for their using the accommodation. We therefore propose to include, as part of the evaluation of the residential provision, a consideration of how this provision contributes to the education, training and employment aims of young people in accommodation as part of the 'outcomes for young people' judgement.

⁸ Evaluation schedule for the inspection of residential provision in further education colleges (120092), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120092.

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the education, training and employment outcomes of young people in accommodation should be taken into account as part of the outcomes for young people when inspecting their residential provision?

Proposals for college improvement

Improvement proposals for residential colleges judged as requires improvement or inadequate

25. Ofsted proposes to introduce improvement visits to college residential accommodation judged as requires improvement or inadequate where they are judged as such from January 2015 onwards. Inspectors will support and challenge colleges to improve in the areas identified as requires improvement or inadequate at the last inspection to help them become good. This will bring improvement arrangements in line with those in place for education and training provision in further education colleges and other further education and skills providers.⁹

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that residential colleges judged as requires improvement or inadequate should be challenged to improve through improvement visits by inspectors as described above?

Proposals for college reinspection

Reinspection proposals for residential colleges with provision judged as requires improvement or inadequate

26. Ofsted will normally conduct a routine inspection of residential provision in a college once in a three-year period. The timing will normally be based on risk and therefore related to the timing and outcome of the previous inspection of the college's residential provision.

27. We propose to inspect all colleges that are judged as requires improvement or inadequate within two years of their last inspection.

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a residential college judged as requires improvement or inadequate should be inspected again within two years of

⁹ *Support and challenge for further education and skills providers that require improvement to become good or outstanding* (130012), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/support-and-challenge-for-further-education-and-skills-providers-require-improvement-become-good-or-outstanding.

its previous inspection?

Changing the period of notification

28. Inspections of residential provision are currently normally undertaken following two working days' notice. That is the same period of notice as for the inspection of the education and training provision of a college under the CIF.

29. Ofsted proposes to inspect residential colleges with no, or very limited, notice of inspection from January 2015 in order that inspectors can see provision as it really is – and as young people experience it. This will bring it into line with other Ofsted inspections of welfare in residential settings, such as for welfare-only inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools and children's homes. For instance, the very limited notice given for welfare-only inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools would be around two to three hours.

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that residential colleges should receive no, or very limited, notice of inspection?

Consultation arrangements

As well as this online consultation, we will consult others who have an interest in inspection of residential colleges in the following ways.

- residential students: we intend to hold discussion groups with residential students from some colleges
- colleges: proprietors, principals, trustees, governors and staff in colleges will have the opportunity to take part in the online consultation.

This online public consultation will run for eight weeks and close on 30 June 2014.

It is proposed that the revisions to the *Framework for inspecting residential provision in further education colleges* will come into effect from 1 January 2015.

We will publicise this consultation by writing to all the residential colleges that we inspect. We will encourage as wide a range of users and stakeholders as possible to respond to this consultation through articles on the Ofsted website and other publicity.

What happens next?

The information from the online consultation will be collated and the key findings will be published by September 2014. These findings will be taken into consideration in further developing the framework, evaluation schedule and guidance.

We will alert residential colleges to the publication of the revised framework and guidance through an announcement on our website.

Sending back your questionnaire

There are three ways to complete and submit the questionnaire in the next section and/or send us your comments.

Online electronic questionnaire

Visit our website to complete and submit an electronic version of the questionnaire:

Download and email

This document can be downloaded and completed on your own computer. When you have completed the questionnaire, email it to enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. Please put 'Residential colleges framework consultation' in the subject line.

Print and post

This document can be printed and completed by hand. When you have completed the questionnaire, please post it to:

Residential colleges framework consultation
Ofsted
Application, Regulatory and Contact Team
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2DW.

Questionnaire for the consultation on the inspection of residential provision in colleges

Confidentiality

The information you provide will be held by us. It will only be used for the purposes of consultation and research to help us to become more effective, shape policies and inform inspection practice.

We will treat your identity in confidence, if you disclose it to us. However, we may publish an organisation's views.

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

- Yes please complete Section 1 and the following questions
 No please complete Section 2 and the following questions

Section 1

If you are completing the consultation on behalf of an organisation and would like us to consider publishing the views of your organisation, please indicate this below.

Organisation: _____

Section 2

Which of the below best describes you? Please choose one option.

I am:

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| a carer | <input type="checkbox"/> | a principal of a college | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a parent | <input type="checkbox"/> | a representative of a college based national association | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a student at a residential college | <input type="checkbox"/> | an inspector | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a representative of a student association | <input type="checkbox"/> | prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a teacher, trainer or lecturer | <input type="checkbox"/> | other (please tell us) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Questions

Changing inspection grades

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the grade 'adequate' should be replaced by 'requires improvement' (see paragraphs 17–18)?

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

Revising the grade descriptors

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the grade descriptors and other guidance should be refined (see paragraphs 19–21)?

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

Linking the residential provision with the education, training and employment outcomes of young people

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the education, training and employment outcomes of young people in accommodation should be taken into account as part of the outcomes for young people when inspecting their residential provision (see paragraphs 22–24)?

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

Proposals for college improvement

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that residential colleges judged as requires improvement or inadequate should be challenged to improve through improvement visits by inspectors (see paragraph 25)?

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

Proposals for college reinspection

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a residential college judged as requires improvement or inadequate should be inspected again within two years of its previous inspection (see paragraphs 26-27)?

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

Changing the period of notification

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that residential colleges should receive no, or very limited, notice of inspection (see paragraphs 28-29)?

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|

Please add any comments on our proposal:

What did you think of this consultation?

One of the commitments in our strategic plan is to monitor whether our consultations are accessible to those wishing to take part.

Please tell us what you thought of this consultation by answering the questions below.

| | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Don't know |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I found the consultation information clear and easy to understand. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I found the consultation easy to find on the Ofsted website. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I had enough information about the consultation topic. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would take part in a future Ofsted consultation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

How did you hear about this consultation?

- Ofsted website
- Ofsted News
- Ofsted conference
- Another organisation (please specify, if known)
- Other (please specify)

Is there anything you would like us to improve on or do differently for future consultations? If so, please tell us below.

Thank you for taking part in our consultation.

Additional questions about you

Your answers to the following questions will help us to evaluate how successfully we are communicating messages from inspection to all sections of society. We would like to assure you that all responses are confidential and you do not have to answer every question.

Please tick the appropriate box.

1. Gender

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Female <input type="checkbox"/> | Male <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|

2. Age

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Under 14 <input type="checkbox"/> | 14–18 <input type="checkbox"/> | 19–24 <input type="checkbox"/> | 25–34 <input type="checkbox"/> | 35–44 <input type="checkbox"/> | 45–54 <input type="checkbox"/> | 55–64 <input type="checkbox"/> | 65+ <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

3. Ethnic origin

(a) How would you describe your national group?

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| British or mixed British | <input type="checkbox"/> | Northern Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| English | <input type="checkbox"/> | Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> | Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

(b) How would you describe your ethnic group?

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Asian | | Mixed ethnic origin | |
| Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asian and White | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black African and White | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black Caribbean and White | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other Asian background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other mixed ethnic background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black | | White | |
| African | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any White background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other ethnic background | |
| Any other Black background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese | | | |
| Any Chinese background (specify if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

4. Sexual orientation

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Heterosexual <input type="checkbox"/> | Lesbian <input type="checkbox"/> | Gay <input type="checkbox"/> | Bisexual <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

5. Religion/belief

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> | Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> | None | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other, please state: | |

6. Disability

| | | | | |
|--|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Do you consider yourself to be disabled? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|