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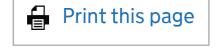
Policy paper

Accreditation for online education providers

Published 24 June 2021

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years. This type of provision is currently unregulated.

The online education services sector for children in England has grown rapidly in recent

Many providers now offer a full curriculum and may represent a child's main or only source of formal education.

The Department for Education (DfE) is introducing an accreditation scheme to reassure children, parents and local authorities of the quality of education and safeguarding arrangements offered by these providers.

New accreditation scheme

DfE is establishing the Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) to incentivise online education providers to meet high standards of education and care for their students and, through public reporting, to share best practice across the sector.

We consulted on this scheme in September 2019, with our <u>response to the consultation</u> published on 10 June 2020.

The scheme will consist of 2 essential elements:

- the establishment of non-statutory standards for online education provision
- assurance body appointed by the department

inspection of providers against those standards by Ofsted, acting as the quality

Quality assurance

In June 2021, we appointed <u>Ofsted</u> to act as quality assurance body and we are working with them to commence the scheme.

'Trial visits', undertaken by Ofsted during June and July 2021 on a small number of providers, will inform any refinements necessary to the scheme before it commences.

How the scheme will work

The scheme will work in a way which is broadly similar to that outlined in the consultation response:

- Providers will apply for the scheme by submitting relevant information online to DfE.
 Note: the application process will be made clear in due course.
- 2. DfE will pass application details to Ofsted to carry out due diligence checks.
- 3. Subject to the outcome of due diligence checks, Ofsted will carry out an accreditation visit to assess compliance with the standards.
- 4. Following an accreditation visit, DfE will decide whether to accredit the provider. The provider may then use the term 'DfE accredited provider'.

on the <u>Get information about schools (GIAS) register of schools and colleges in England</u>.

All inspection reports will be published by Ofsted and accredited providers will appear

Providers will pay a fee for the due diligence and accreditation visits. The fee structure for the scheme will be outlined in due course.

Qualifying providers The scheme will be open to providers that

The scheme will be open to providers that:

- teach online only on a permanent basis
 provide a full curriculum or represent a
- provide a full curriculum or represent a child's main or only source of education
 have at least one full-time pupil of compulsory school age on roll based in England

(irrespective of the number of learners based overseas)

 have a physical presence in England, registered with <u>Companies House</u> or the <u>Charity</u> <u>Commission</u>

All qualifying providers are invited to apply for the scheme once it is operational.



will be made clear in due course.

It is not yet possible to apply for the scheme - the application process

Next steps We plan to launch applications for the accreditation scheme in 2022.

Any provider wishing to be kept up to date about the scheme should contact us on OEAS.enquiries@education.gov.uk to be placed on our notification list.

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No

Yes

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