

Responses to Ofsted's consultation on further education and skills inspections from September 2012

An evaluation report

Beginning in September 2011, Ofsted consulted widely on proposals for new inspection arrangements for the further education and skills system.

This included a published consultation document and a formal three-month consultation process. This evaluation report summarises the responses we received on our proposals for further education and skills inspections from September 2012.

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Introduction

1. Between September and November 2011, we consulted widely on our proposals for new arrangements for further education and skills inspections from September 2012.
2. The consultation included a published document explaining the proposals and a formal 12-week online consultation process.¹
3. We also conducted pilot inspections and had formal meetings, conferences, seminars and discussions with: the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS); the Department for Education (DfE); further education and skills providers; and sector representative associations.
4. This evaluation report summarises the responses to the online consultation, and reflects the results of the pilot inspections and other feedback we received.

Background

5. When we developed our proposals, we took changing government policy into account, including the 2011 Education Bill and the schools White Paper *The importance of teaching*.² This includes:
 - differences between pre- and post-19 learning
 - greater further education reforms and freedoms
 - the potential exemption of outstanding providers from routine inspection unless their performance drops
 - increased self-regulation
 - the empowerment of learners, employers and parents
 - the rising importance for many providers in the further education and skills system of meeting local community needs as they are key players in delivering local priorities
 - the critical importance of employability skills and progression towards sustainable employment and further learning as outcomes from many government-funded programmes, and the need to judge this alongside the achievement of learners
 - the introduction of new, more flexible qualifications where it may not be possible to measure outcomes in the traditional ways over easily defined timescales

¹ *Common Inspection Framework 2012: consultation document* (110070), Ofsted, 2011; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110070.

² *The importance of teaching – the schools White Paper 2010*, DfE, 2010; <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/CM%207980>.

- the Comprehensive Spending Review and the need to reduce the costs of inspection and focus more proportionately on those providers whose performance is inadequate or failing to improve quickly enough.
6. We developed our proposals for revised inspection arrangements in response to these changes, and to help inspection have a stronger impact on driving improvement and raising standards. We are determined that the new inspection arrangements will raise expectations for providers.
 7. We designed our proposed revisions to the inspection framework for further education and skills to result in a more streamlined approach to inspection, which focuses sharply on the core purpose of the provider: teaching, learning and assessment. Inspections would result in fewer judgements and grades, leading to reports on the most important aspects of learning and skills provision.
 8. We have moved to be more proportionate and to target inspection where it will make the most difference. Our proposals introduced new arrangements for providers exempt from inspection and an increased emphasis on promoting improvement in weaker providers.

A good education for all

9. Ofsted published a separate public consultation – *A good education for all*³ – on 9 February 2012. This is open until 3 May and relates to a further set of changes we would like to make to the inspection of further education and skills providers from September 2012.
10. These further proposed changes are designed to challenge the further education and skills sector to achieve the highest standards possible. The proposals are that:
 - outstanding providers must have outstanding teaching, learning and assessment
 - a judgement of 'requires improvement' replaces the current satisfactory judgement
 - providers judged as 'requires improvement' will be re-inspected earlier than they currently are
 - the number of times a provider can be judged as 'requires improvement' will be limited to two consecutive inspections before that provider is judged as inadequate
 - we will give no notice to the provider of inspections

³ *A good education for all* (120008), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120008.

- we will request from the provider an anonymised summary of the outcomes of their most recent performance management of all teachers, trainers and assessors.

The consultation document and online process

11. On 1 September 2011, we published our formal proposals for the revised inspection arrangements for further education and skills providers from September 2012. This launched a three-month consultation as part of our ongoing engagement with stakeholders and the general public.
12. When the consultation closed on 24 November 2011, we had received 328 responses, including from professional associations and organisations from the education and inspection sectors, who responded on behalf of their members or constituents. Annex A is a summary of the responses.
13. The consultation document set out the proposals for the new arrangements in some detail and linked with nine questions. For each question, we asked respondents whether they strongly agreed; agreed; neither agreed nor disagreed; disagreed; or strongly disagreed with the proposal. They could also add free text comments if they wished.
14. As well as the direct responses to the consultation, we also took 750 responses to a National Learner Panel survey and 209 responses to an Ofsted parents' panel survey into account.
15. Annex A outlines the main findings from the consultation, the key issues raised and Ofsted's proposed way forward. It also includes details of who responded to the consultation.
16. Annex B notes the key findings from the pilot inspections and the next steps.

Main findings from the online consultation

17. The responses to the consultation were broadly in favour of Ofsted's proposals.
 - Responses showed strong support (90%) for having an overall effectiveness grade and the following three other key grades:
 - outcomes for learners
 - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - the effectiveness of leadership and management.
 - A very large majority of respondents agreed with our proposed approaches to judging outcomes for learners (86%), the quality of teaching, learning and assessment (89%), and the effectiveness of leadership and management (90%).

- The proposals not to grade equality and diversity or capacity to improve received strong support, although a very small minority of respondents had some concerns about these.
 - Support was strong for a proportionate approach to inspection based on risk; a large majority of respondents agreed with this proposal.
 - Respondents had mixed views on the proposed approach for sector subject areas, and on the government's proposal that providers should be able to request and pay for an inspection. However, the majority of respondents agreed with these proposals.
18. The following seven questions received the highest levels of support (where respondents agreed or strongly agreed with a proposal).
- Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed overarching grade and three key headline grades? (90%)
 - Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging outcomes for learners? (86%)
 - Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging the quality of teaching, learning and assessment? (89%)
 - Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging the effectiveness of leadership and management? (90%)
 - Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that capacity to improve is adequately represented by a judgement on the quality of leadership and management? (80%)
 - Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging equality and diversity? (80%)
 - Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should move to devoting a greater proportion of inspection effort to satisfactory and inadequate providers? (74%)
19. The lowest levels of support were recorded in relation to the following two questions.
- Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposals to inspect and report on subject areas? (54%)
 - Question 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Ofsted should respond positively to most requests for inspection and charge for such inspections? (54%)

Plans for the way forward

20. Following our 2011 consultation and pilot inspections, we will:

- continue to judge the quality of a provider in terms of its overall effectiveness, but based particularly on judgements relating to:
 - outcomes for learners
 - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - the effectiveness of leadership and management
- provide a small number of criteria for each key headline grade
- provide clear and challenging illustrative grade characteristics for the overall effectiveness of a provider, and set these out in the evaluation schedule for further education and skills
- award a single grade for outcomes for learners that focuses closely on learners' achievement and progression to higher level qualifications and into sustainable jobs
- consider the main purpose of each type of provision when we prioritise the principal outcomes criteria and their impact on the overall grade
- continue to work with the Data Service and other bodies from the further education and skills sector to develop effective measures of progression to higher-level qualifications and into employment
- award a headline grade for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, dispensing with contributory grades (This one grade will take into account the impact of care, guidance and support for learning.)
- place greater emphasis on direct observation of teaching, learning, skills development and assessment
- evaluate how equality and diversity is promoted through teaching, learning and assessment, and the behaviour and attitudes of learners and staff
- award a headline grade for leadership and management that focuses sharply on how well a provider improves the quality of teaching and learning, and raises learners' aspirations and achievements
- take into account the performance management and professional development of staff to improve their teaching
- place greater emphasis on the impact for learners and reduce the focus on policies and procedures
- judge and report on whether a provider is meeting their statutory safeguarding responsibilities
- continue to judge the provider's ability to self-assess accurately and self-critically, and to use self-assessment to constantly drive improvement

- consider a provider's capacity to improve as part of our inspection of leadership and management
- continue to consider equality of opportunity in each of the three key headline grades (outcomes for learners; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; and leadership and management)
- focus even more closely on the impact of equality and diversity on learners and whether providers are effectively narrowing the gap in achievement between groups of learners
- continue to inspect and report on a sample of subject areas on inspection (Subject specialist inspectors will continue to be deployed and will focus on teaching, learning and assessment with reference to outcomes for learners in each subject area.)
- continue to inspect providers judged to be good at their last inspection around every, unless we have concerns about their performance
- continue to explore the possibility of establishing a secure, web-based system for gathering the views of learners, employers and parents/carers between inspections
- devote a higher proportion of our resources to inspecting weaker provision
- inspect providers judged as inadequate at their last inspection with a monitoring visit within 6–8 months of the inspection, and then re-inspect in 12–15 months.
- develop our policy on requested inspections in line with the provisions in the Education Act 2011, including how we will prioritise requests and charge for inspections.

What will happen next?

21. In May 2012, we will publish the following key documents setting out the arrangements for inspection from September 2012:
- a revised Common Inspection Framework for further education and skills
 - a revised handbook for the inspection of further education and skills, including:
 - an evaluation schedule
 - guidance on how the Common Inspection Framework will be used by inspectors
 - guidance for inspectors on conducting inspections
 - guidance for providers on preparing for inspections.

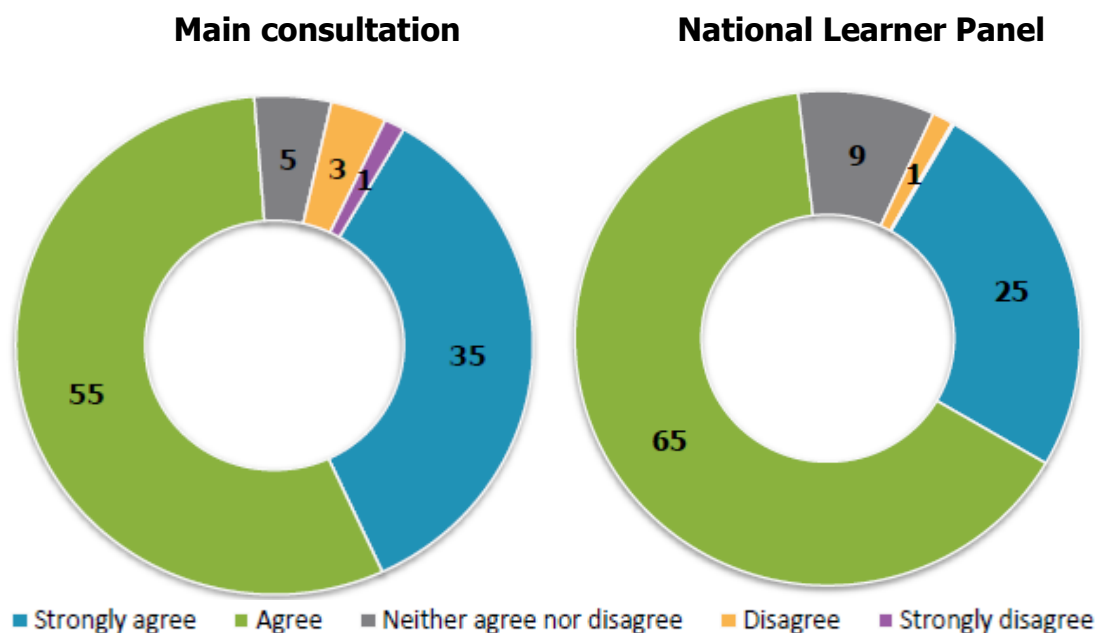
22. During summer 2012, we will disseminate the main changes with a programme of training for all inspectors who are involved in learning and skills inspections. Inspectors will then be familiar with the new inspection arrangements before they begin in September 2012.
23. Although this evaluation report relates only to the results of the September 2011 consultation, Ofsted published a separate consultation called *A good education for all* in February 2012. We will publish the results of that consultation in summer 2012.

Annex A. Analysis of consultation responses

The charts below provide a breakdown of responses to the consultation by question. The first chart for each question gives the responses to the main online public consultation and is based on 328 responses. The second chart for each question is based on the 750 responses from the National Learner Panel.

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed overarching grade and three key headline grades?

A very large majority of respondents to the main consultation either agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. A very small minority disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Most respondents supported the simplified grading structure and agreed that the proposed key headline grades should contribute to the overall effectiveness grade. The increased focus on teaching, learning and assessment was generally welcomed. A number of respondents felt that the revised grade structure will be clearer to learners, employers and other stakeholders. They felt that clear guidance sets out how the overall effectiveness judgement is reached and the relative weight of each aspect.

A representative organisation stated that:

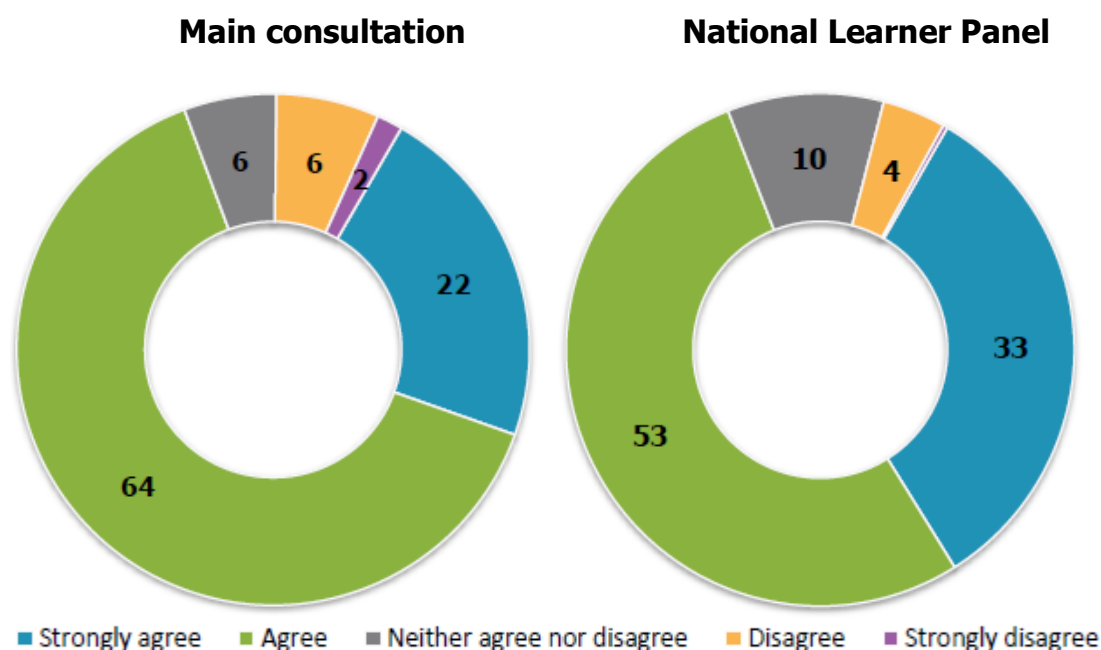
‘In summary, the majority of our members are pleased by the reduction in the areas that are judged and agree that the three grades...are the right ones to contribute to the overall effectiveness grade’.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will continue to judge the quality of a provider in terms of its overall effectiveness, based on judgements relating to: outcomes for learners; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; and the effectiveness of leadership and management (incorporating capacity to improve).
- We will set out clear and challenging illustrative grade characteristics for the overall effectiveness of a provider in the evaluation schedule for further education and skills.
- The evaluation schedule will be interpreted in the context of each provider being inspected. (Further proposals relating to the criteria for a provider being judged to be outstanding overall are being consulted on through *A good education for all*.)
- Inspectors will consider a number of criteria when considering each of the key headline grades.

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging outcomes for learners?

A very large majority of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. Six per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, and 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Respondents generally welcomed the move to a single grade and the proposal to judge outcomes for learners with particular attention to how well: all learners achieve; gaps are narrowing between different groups of learners; learners develop personal, social and employability skills; and learners progress to higher level qualifications and into jobs that meet local and national needs.

Several respondents welcomed the continued focus on the development of personal, social and employability skills and emphasised that successful outcomes does not necessarily mean achieving qualifications. Some respondents felt that this was particularly true of adult and community learning, where learning is developmental as well as leading to further learning or job outcomes.

A number of respondents questioned the availability of accurate progression information and felt that this could affect Ofsted's ability to judge this. Some respondents called for a clear definition of what we mean by 'achievement' and asked that this be interpreted flexibly to recognise differences between groups of learners and learning in different settings.

Some respondents thought it was important to take account of value added measures when considering the outcomes for learners judgement.

Proposals on the way forward

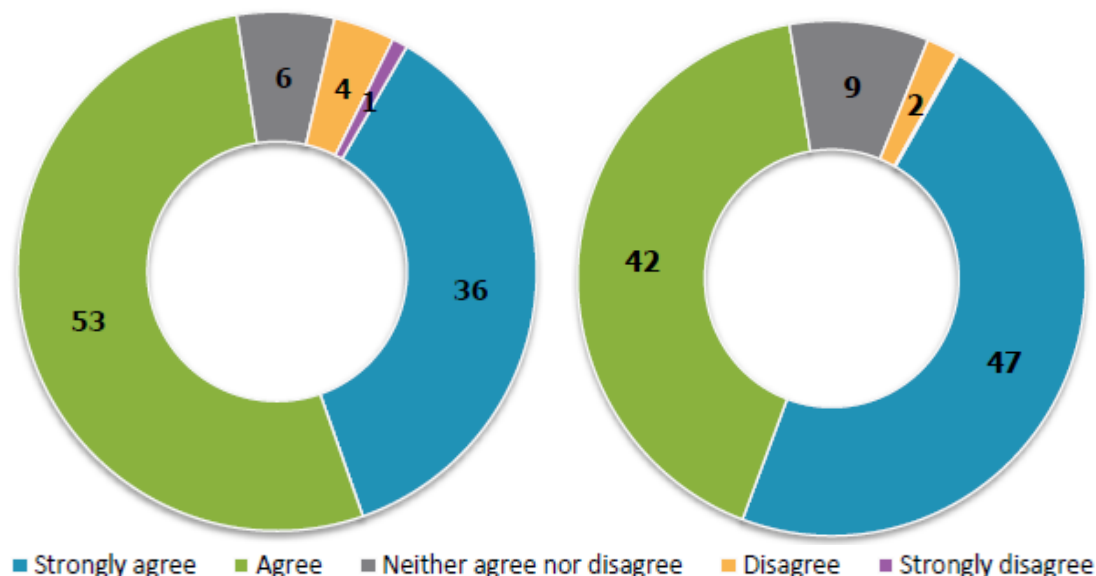
- We will focus even more closely on learners' achievement and their progression to higher level qualifications and into sustainable jobs.
- We will award a single grade for outcomes for learners.
- Inspectors will focus even more on providers' success in closing the achievement gap for particular groups of learners.
- The evaluation schedule will make clear that 'achievement' takes account of learners' attainment and rate of progress relative to their starting points and learning goals, as well as progress by different groups of learners and the quality of learning outcomes.
- Inspectors will consider the main purpose of each type of provision when prioritising the principal outcomes criteria and their impact on the overall grade.
- Ofsted will continue to work with the Data Service and other bodies from the further education and skills sector to develop effective measures of progression to higher-level qualifications and into employment.

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging the quality of teaching, learning and assessment?

A very large majority of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. Six per cent of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Main consultation

National Learner Panel



There was strong support for the increased focus on teaching, learning and assessment. However, there were some concerns that there would be less emphasis on the effectiveness of care, guidance and support as there was no longer a separate judgement on this. Some respondents requested that Ofsted clarify what it considers to be outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.

A number of respondents noted the differences between delivery methods of work-based and classroom-based learning; they felt that this judgement must be made with regard to the context in which training is delivered.

Some respondents thought that, when arriving at the overall judgement, inspectors should consider how effectively technology is used to support learning.

Comments included:

'We welcome an increased focus on the quality of teaching and learning. This is our core business and if this is not of the very highest quality then we are failing our learners.'

'The re-focusing of this aspect to promote higher standards of teaching, learning and assessment is welcomed.'

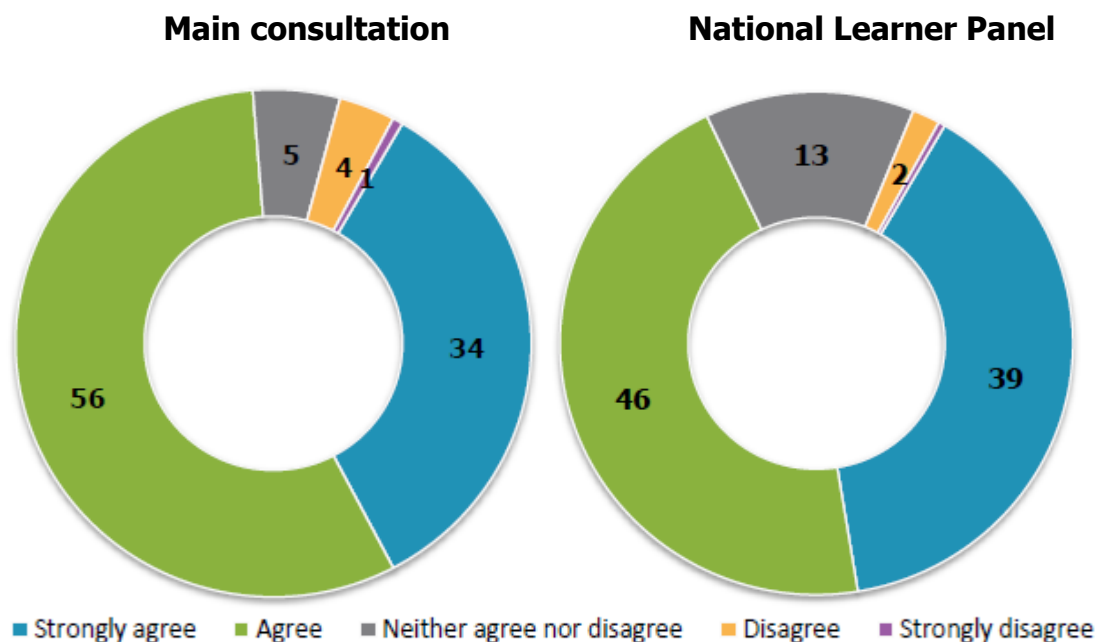
Proposals on the way forward

- The revised framework, criteria and inspection methodology will place greater emphasis on direct observation of teaching, learning, skills development and assessment. This will help inspectors to form more incisive judgements on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and progress.

- We will award a headline grade for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This one grade will take into account the impact of care, guidance and support for learning.
- We will continue to deploy subject specialist inspectors.
- We will evaluate how equality and diversity is promoted through teaching, learning and assessment, and the behaviour and attitudes of learners and staff.

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging the effectiveness of leadership and management?

A very large majority of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed. Five per cent of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 5% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



There was strong support for the proposals for judging leadership and management, particularly for the focus on leadership and management’s responsibility for improving teaching and learning.

Most respondents were in favour of removing the limiting grade for safeguarding.

Some respondents felt that reference to value for money should be removed from the framework.

Comments included:

‘We strongly support the explicit focus on leadership and management responsibility for improving teaching and learning.’

A stakeholder organisation suggested that Ofsted should not reduce the number of meetings with staff as:

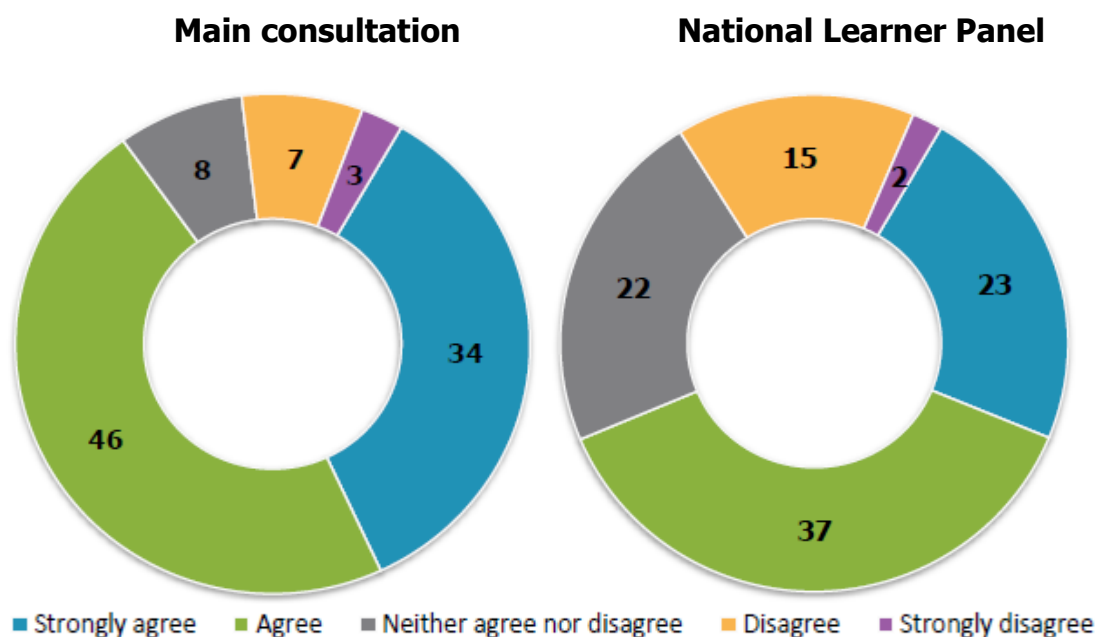
'it is necessary for college staff to develop a context for inspectors, provide additional evidence and answer queries'.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will focus more sharply on how well leadership and management improve the quality of teaching and learning, and raise learners' aspirations and achievements.
- Expectations on governors will be clear as they have a crucial role in challenging the provision and ensuring that it improves.
- We will take into account the professional development of staff and the support they receive to improve their teaching.
- We will focus on how effectively leadership and management at all levels: meet the needs and interests of learners; raise expectations; promote ambition; and achieve high standards.
- We will place greater emphasis on the impact for learners and reduce the focus on policies and procedures.
- We will judge and report on whether a provider is meeting their statutory safeguarding responsibilities in leadership, taking into account the impact on learners of the provider's safety and safeguarding arrangements.
- As part of leadership and management, we will inspect and evaluate how well the curriculum meets the needs and interests of learners and the local community.
- We will continue to judge the provider's ability to self-assess accurately and self-critically, and to use self-assessment to constantly drive improvement.

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that capacity to improve is adequately represented by a judgement on the quality of leadership and management?

Eighty per cent of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal not to grade capacity to improve separately, but to incorporate it within leadership and management. Eight per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 10% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Some of the comments agreeing with this proposal were:

‘This is a logical move which we welcome.’

‘We believe that it is difficult to separate Capacity to Improve from Leadership and Management as the two are so tightly bound together.’

One provider association stated that:

‘Many of our members regret the capacity to improve grade has disappeared. This was a grade that measured both aspiration and ability to achieve that goal...Our members would like Ofsted to look forward as well as back’.

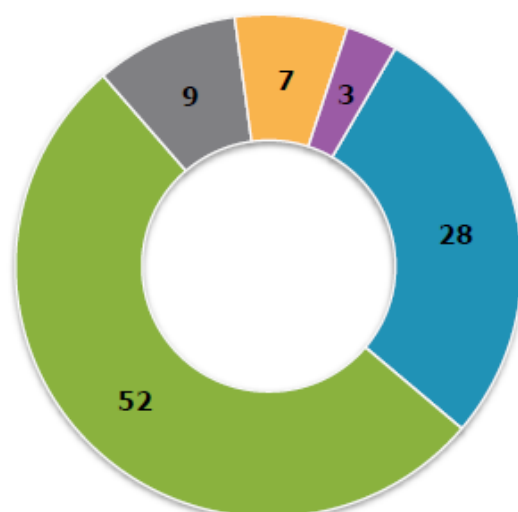
Proposals on the way forward

- Capacity to improve will be subsumed in leadership and management, and will be considered by inspectors as part of the overall judgement.
- We will focus on how effectively leadership and management at all levels: meet the needs and interests of learners; raise expectations; promote ambition; and achieve high standards.

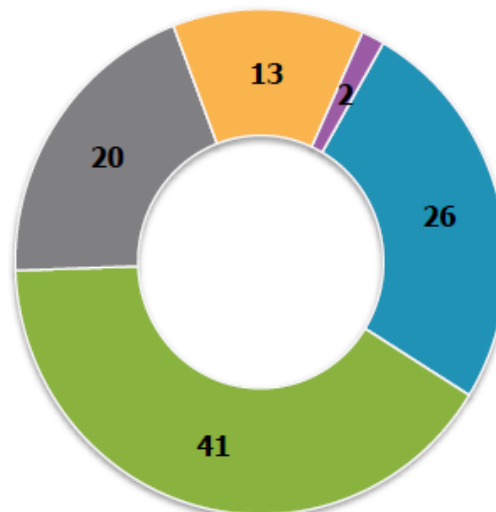
Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to judging equality and diversity?

80% of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. Nine per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 10% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Main consultation



National Learner Panel



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

While most respondents supported removing the limiting grade for equality and diversity, there was also very strong support for maintaining focus on this aspect.

Comments included:

‘Equality and diversity should be firmly embedded and makes sense that it should be seen as seamless throughout the organisation and its delivery.’

Two large provider associations agreed with this proposal.

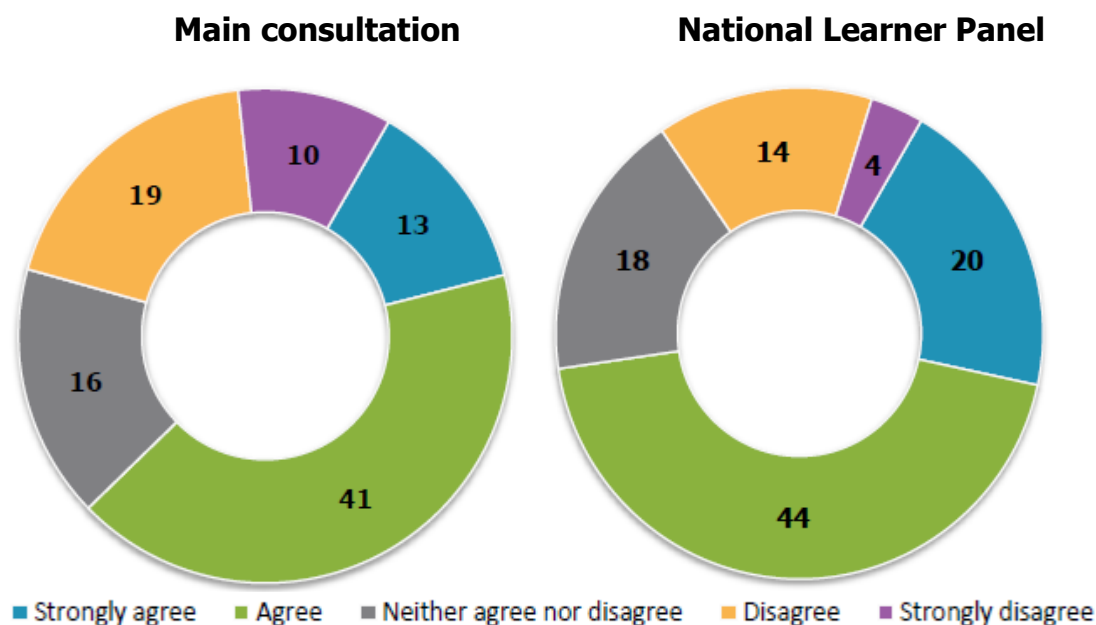
A trade union strongly disagreed, saying that equality and diversity should remain a limiting grade and that the proposals would reduce the importance of this area.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will continue to consider equality of opportunity in every aspect of the inspection framework, but specifically take account of how effectively leaders and managers discharge this fundamental responsibility.
- We will remove the limiting contributory grade and report paragraph on equality and diversity from leadership and management, and replace it with text under each of the three key headline grades (outcomes for learners; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; and leadership and management).
- The revised methodology will focus even more closely on the impact of equality and diversity on learners. At the core of this will be a sharp focus on the progress that all individuals and groups of learners are making over time, and whether providers are effectively narrowing the gap in achievement between potentially vulnerable learners and their peers.

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposals to inspect and report on subject areas?

Although the response to this proposal was one of the most negative in the consultation, the majority of respondents still agreed. Sixteen per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 29% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



There was very strong support for inspections of subject areas to continue and to result in detailed text in the inspection report. Respondents who commented on this were very strongly in favour; some of the reasons were that:

- they are useful in identifying how to drive improvement
- reporting separately provides an excellent opportunity for feedback to whole teams of staff, which would be lost otherwise
- provision can vary considerably in different subject areas.

Comments included:

‘We believe that the loss of subject area reports and grades will lead to a loss of ownership of inspection outcomes within the college at lower levels; and a loss of ability to validate our own comparative judgements. If there are findings, from specialist inspectors, they might as well be written up and not lost. We need to be able to use them and therefore need the specific subject area reports.’

‘Keep the report on each subject area, it feeds into the cycle of improvement and would be counterproductive to remove it’.

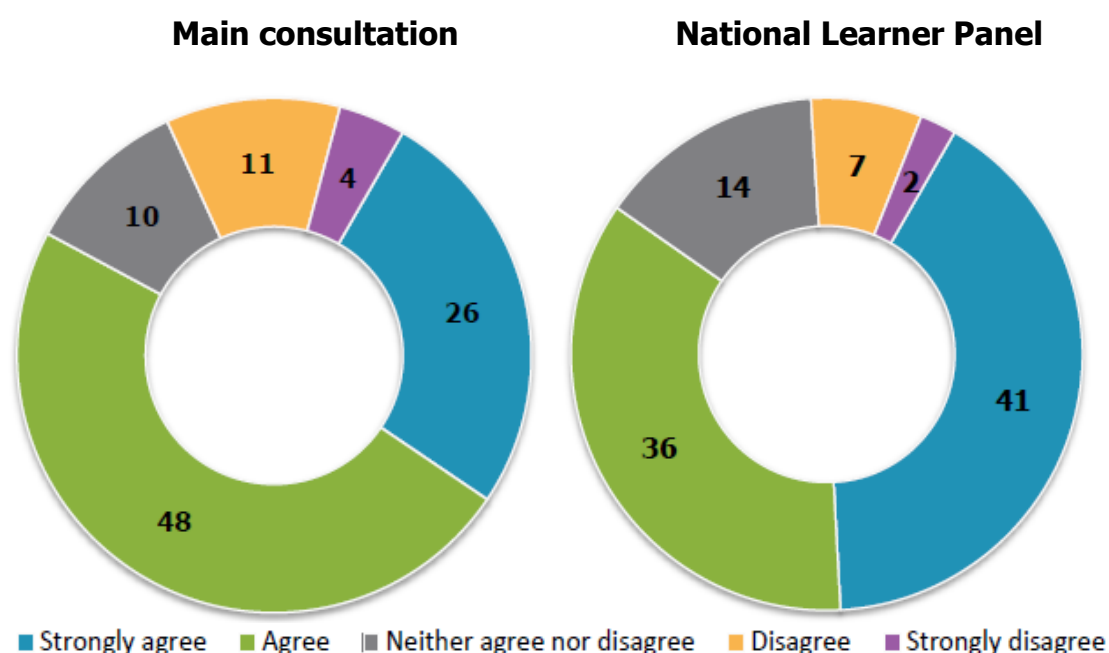
Two large provider associations said that subject areas should continue to be inspected by specialist inspectors and that they should be graded.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will continue to inspect a sample of subject areas and to deploy subject specialist inspectors who will increase their focus on teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors will evaluate the outcomes for learners and the teaching and learning in subject areas.
- As well as awarding an overall grade for teaching, learning and assessment at provider level, each subject area inspected will be graded for teaching, learning and assessment with reference to outcomes for learners. We will continue to include detailed findings on each subject area inspected but report these under teaching, learning and assessment rather than in a separate section of the report.

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should move to devoting a greater proportion of inspection effort to satisfactory and inadequate providers?

A large majority of respondents to the main consultation agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. Ten per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



While many respondents were in favour of gathering the views of learners, employers and parents/carers between inspections, some raised concerns about how representative the views would be. They felt that these views should be used with care, particularly if they are few in number.

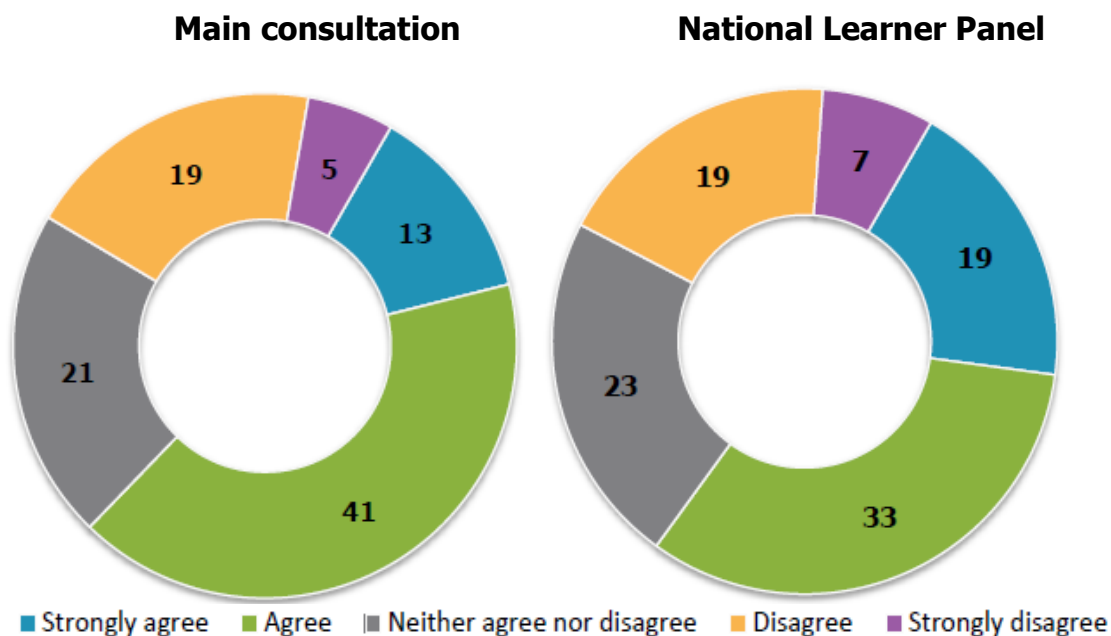
Some respondents had concerns about outstanding providers being exempt from inspection.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will continue to inspect providers judged to be good at their last inspection around every six years, unless we have concerns about their performance.
- We will continue to explore the possibility of establishing a secure web-based system for gathering the views of learners, employers and parents/carers between inspections.
- We will devote a higher proportion of our resources to poorly performing provision.
- We will continue to inspect providers judged as inadequate at their last inspection with a monitoring visit within 6–8 months of the inspection, and then re-inspect in 12–15 months.
- We are consulting separately on arrangements for satisfactory providers.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Ofsted should respond positively to most requests for inspection and charge for such inspections?

This proposal received one of the more negative responses overall, although the majority of respondents to the main consultation still agreed. Twenty-one per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 24% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



A number of respondents were strongly against this proposal and felt it would undermine the inspection process. However, others felt that it was reasonable to charge for an inspection when a provider requests it.

Proposals on the way forward

- We are currently developing our policy on requested inspections in line with the provisions in the Education Act 2011. This includes how we will prioritise requests and how inspections will be charged for.

Additional responses from the National Learner Panel

As well as the main consultation questions, we asked the National Learner Panel three more questions.

Q1. After an inspection, would you like to receive a short letter telling you what the inspectors found?

- 83% agreed or strongly agreed.
- Learners in colleges responded slightly more positively than learners at independent training providers or those learning at their place of employment.

Q2. How would you prefer to give your views during an inspection? (Learners were able to select multiple answers.)

- 55% said an online questionnaire
- 43% said in person
- 42% said a paper- or email-based questionnaire
- 34% said a group meeting
- 7% said by text
- 4% said a telephone questionnaire
- 1% said 'other'.

Q3. Would you be interested in giving your views between inspections at least once a year? (Learners were able to select multiple answers.)

- 70% said yes, via an online questionnaire
- 38% said yes, via a paper- or email-based questionnaire
- 3% said yes but via another route
- 13% said no.

Proposals on the way forward

- We will make inspection reports more accessible to learners, with a learners' summary on overall effectiveness.
- We will engage with learners to seek their views on inspection and our intended report format before the new inspection framework comes into effect.

- We will continue to explore the possibility of establishing a secure web-based system for gathering the views of learners, employers and parents/carers between inspections.

Analysis of consultation responses by type of respondent

When Ofsted published its proposals for further education and skills inspections from September 2012, it also launched a 12-week consultation to test the proposals. This included a National Learner Panel survey of 750 learners. The responses to the National Learner Panel survey were broadly in line with those of the main consultation.

Two hundred and nine parents responded to an Ofsted parents' panel survey. The responses from parents were broadly in line with those for the main consultation. However, the very large majority (83%) of parents strongly agreed with Ofsted's proposed approach for inspecting and reporting on subject areas compared with 54% for the main consultation.

Most stakeholders had consulted with their members in detail before submitting a response, often using a separate survey. The Institute for Learning responded based on a survey of 2,128 members; the Association of Colleges responded on behalf of 86 colleges; and Landex's response was based on 43 colleges.

The online responses for the different groups generally followed a similar pattern to the overall figures. All three types of providers showed strong support for the key judgments. The online responses for independent learning providers tended to be more positive than those for colleges. However, the numbers of providers were small so these results should be used with caution.

Table 1. Numbers of online respondents by type

Type of respondent	
an employee of a learning and skills provider or college	100
an adult learner/student/participant	35
other	36
a teacher/trainer	31
an employer with an SFA training contract	19
a parent or carer	5
a member of the public	5
an employer without an SFA training contract	1
prefer not to say	1

Not every respondent answered all the questions in the online consultation. Where proportions of responses to specific questions are used in the analysis, these relate to the total who responded to the specific question, not to the consultation overall.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were responding on behalf of an organisation.

Table 2. Numbers of online respondents by type of organisation

Type of organisation	
a GFE/tertiary college	65
other	37
an independent training provider	24
a sixth form college	22
a local authority	21
a higher education institution	15
a not-for-profit organisation	13
an independent specialist college	9
a school	9
a Next Step contractor	3

Annex B. Summary of the pilot inspection findings

The pilot inspections identified a number of strengths in the proposed new framework.

- The approach to judging overall effectiveness and the three key headline grades worked well.
- Reducing the number of evaluative statements and contributory grades under each of the key aspects worked well. Inspectors were able to make secure judgements.
- The pilot inspections indicated that the proposed new framework has achieved its key aim of increasing the focus on teaching, learning and assessment. An increased proportion of inspectors' time was spent on this area and feedback has been positive from providers and inspectors.
- Continuing to deploy specialist inspectors contributed to a clear focus on teaching, learning and assessment, which has led to richer text in reports.
- Increasing the focus on the extent to which leadership and management improve teaching and learning worked well.

As expected from pilot inspections, a number of areas for further development were identified.

- The approach to inspecting leadership and management was not streamlined enough. We have now produced clearer guidance to support inspectors and reduce the time they spend in meetings and reviewing paperwork.

Next steps

The findings from the pilot inspections and the feedback from the participating providers generally support the proposed new framework and evaluation schedule. We have taken careful account of the feedback and have amended the evaluation criteria in the light of the comments received.