

Further education and skills sector subject areas

This document lists the sector subject areas inspectors may inspect and grade on inspections of further education and skills providers.

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Introduction

1. This document lists the sector subject areas inspectors may inspect and grade on inspections of further education and skills providers.
2. The list is based on, but not the same as, the 15 sector subject areas classified by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)¹.
3. Most of the sector subject areas have a number of secondary subject areas or tiers. For example, sector subject area seven (retail and commercial enterprise), covers warehousing, hospitality, hairdressing and beauty therapy, as well as retailing. Ofsted will normally inspect, report and grade at the second-tier subject level and not at the first-tier level.
4. First-tier descriptors are largely the same as those set out by Ofqual. While most second-tier areas also mirror the Ofqual list, some have been added and others altered to better reflect the provision we inspect.
5. Where appropriate, inspectors will combine two second-tier areas to be inspected together.
6. Where two second tiers of a sector subject area are very different and a significant number of learners are following learning programmes in each, they may both be selected and inspected individually.
7. Ofsted inspects 'family learning' and 'community development' within community learning and skills provision. These two areas are included in the list of sector subject areas inspectors may inspect and grade.
8. Where providers are unable to readily provide qualification success rate data and other information by the non-Ofqual second-tier areas listed below, they should provide information at the most appropriate Ofqual second-tier area(s).
9. Further information on the inspection of sector subject areas can be found in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills from September 2012*².

¹ <http://ofqual.gov.uk/how-we-regulate/becoming-a-recognised-awarding-organisation/applying-for-recognition/sector-subject-areas/>

² *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills from September 2012*, Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120061.

Sector subject areas inspectors may inspect and grade on inspections of further education and skills providers

First tier	Second tier
Health, public services and care	Medicine and dentistry
	Nursing and dental health
	Complementary health studies
	Health and social care
	Public services
	Early years and playwork
Science and mathematics	Science
	Psychology
	Mathematics and statistics
Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	Agriculture
	Horticulture and forestry
	Horticulture
	Forestry
	Animal care and veterinary science
	Animal care
	Equine studies
	Environmental conservation
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Engineering
	Manufacturing technologies
	Motor vehicle
	Transportation operations and maintenance
Construction, planning and the built environment	Architecture
	Building and construction
	Building services
	Construction crafts
Information and communication technology	ICT for practitioners
	Communications technology
	ICT for users
Retail and commercial enterprise	Retailing and wholesaling
	Call centre operations
	Warehousing and distribution
	Service enterprises
	Hairdressing and beauty therapy
	Hairdressing
	Beauty therapy
	Hospitality and catering
Leisure, travel and tourism	Sport, leisure and recreation
	Sport
	Public services
	Travel and tourism

First tier	Second tier
Arts, media and publishing	Performing arts
	Visual arts
	Media and communication
	Publishing and information services
Humanities	Humanities
	History
	Archaeology and archaeological sciences
	Philosophy
	Theology and religious studies
Social sciences	Social sciences
	Geography
	Sociology and social policy
	Psychology
	Politics
	Economics
	Anthropology
Languages, literature and culture	English
	Classical and modern foreign languages
	Classical languages
	Modern foreign languages
	Linguistics
Education and training	Teaching and lecturing
	Training to provide learning support
Preparation for life and work	English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
	Independent living and leisure skills
	Community learning
	Foundation English
	Foundation mathematics
	Foundation English and mathematics
	Employability training
Business, administration and law	Accounting and finance
	Administration
	Business management
	Marketing and sales
	Customer service
	Law and legal services
	Business
Family learning	Family learning
Community development	Community development