

Notification: Being selected for inspection

This booklet explains why you have been selected for inspection and what happens next.



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LEARNING NETWORK



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Notification: Being selected for inspection

- All government-funded training provision is inspected in a four year cycle.
- Your inspection will take place three to six months after the date you are notified and will normally last around four days.
- The lead inspector allocated to your inspection will confirm the exact dates.



Introduction

With this booklet you will have received a formal letter of notification telling you that your organisation has been selected for inspection. This booklet gives you more information about why you will be inspected and answers some of the questions we know many providers have when they are first notified of inspection.

There are some important actions that you will need to complete quickly. You can find more information on the back of your notification letter.

Why are we being inspected?

All providers who provide government-funded training or education and are covered by the Learning and Skills Act 2000, are inspected once in a four year cycle.

You can find out more about the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the inspection process in the brochure *Committed to Excellence* or by visiting our website (www.ali.gov.uk).

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the ALI has a duty to inspect all publicly-funded learning for adults aged 19 or over and work-based learning for all those aged 16 and over, in order to:

- Give an independent account of the quality of education and training, the standards achieved and the efficiency with which resources are managed.
- Help bring about improvement by identifying strengths and weaknesses and highlighting good and poor practice.
- Keep the Secretary of State and the funding bodies informed about the quality and standards of education and training.

How has our organisation been selected?

The ALI holds a database of providers who receive funding under the Learning and Skills Act. This is regularly updated with data provided by the funding bodies. Each quarter we select a representative sample of providers. We consult the funding bodies about these providers, to ensure they are still receiving funding and currently have learners. Once this list is finalised we notify the providers themselves.

Can we ask for a deferment?

It is possible to have your inspection deferred if there are serious and justifiable reasons for doing so. You may ask to be considered for a deferment if you have, for example, just merged with another provider or have only been in business for a very short time. You will need to write to David Fletcher, Head of Inspection Planning and Deployment, enclosing the written support of your funding body. You can either email this to **inspection.scheduling@ali.gov.uk** or send it to us at the address on the back of this booklet. The ALI has the right to refuse deferment if the grounds are not substantial.

When will we be inspected?

The inspection programme is planned on a quarterly basis. Your notification letter tells you the three-month period in which your inspection will take place. Providers normally have between three to six months' notice before the inspection date. A schedule of forthcoming inspections is available on the ALI website (**www.ali.gov.uk**).

How long will the inspection last?

Inspections are planned to suit the circumstances and size of each provider. Many inspections last four days, but some will take longer in order to cover the provision satisfactorily. Your lead inspector will work with you to plan the inspection and determine how long the inspection should take.

When will we know the exact dates of the inspection?

The lead inspector will contact you within the next few weeks to introduce themselves and to discuss your inspection dates. They will be able to answer any questions.

Is there any flexibility about when we are inspected?

We recognise that there may be certain dates during the three-month period selected for your inspection which you would prefer to avoid. Wherever possible we will try to take this into account in our planning. It is important that you quickly notify us of any dates which will be difficult for you. Please send an email to inspection.scheduling@ali.gov.uk or write to us at the address on the back of this booklet.

The ALI carries out over 150 inspections each quarter at providers' premises all over the country. This requires meticulous planning. We will always do our best to accommodate any requests to avoid certain dates but we cannot make guarantees. Once the date has been fixed it will not be possible to rearrange your inspection.

How much will the inspection disrupt our operation?

The inspection will inevitably have an impact on your day-to-day operation. Your lead inspector will try to minimise any disruption, but inspection is a period of intensive activity and it is important that you are prepared for that.

Your nominee (the person you choose to represent your organisation on the inspection team) will have a significant amount of preparation work, will be actively involved with the inspection team while the inspection takes place and will have some follow-up duties such as checking the accuracy of the inspection report.

The inspectorate will do its best to keep any additional costs incurred to a minimum. Any necessary charges will be borne by the inspectorate, for example, we will cover the cost of room hire if you are not able to supply a suitable base room. Inspectors will pay for their own refreshments and food.

Inspection is a demanding process with a lot at stake. Our inspectors know that it is a stressful time for you and will do everything they can to support you through the process.

REMEMBER

- You should be prepared for some disruption to your day-to-day activity during the inspection.
- Your nominee will be engaged in inspection-related activity before, during and after the inspection itself.

Will inspectors understand the context in which we work?

Every provider is unique. The ALI has a wide remit ranging across the whole spectrum of adult learning.

All inspections are carried out using the *Common Inspection Framework*. The key strength of this document is that it focuses on the experience and expectations of the individual learner. This means it is equally effective and relevant in any learning environment, enabling comparison between the quality of provision offered by different types of provider.

In applying the framework to a particular provider, inspectors recognise the context in which different learning is taking place. The ALI has successfully pioneered ways of adapting the interpretation of the framework to suit the diverse – and sometimes unique – contexts in which learning takes place. To help providers understand how the *Common Inspection Framework* can be applied in various contexts, the inspectorate has prepared guidance notes, which are available on our website (www.ali.gov.uk).

To make comparisons easier between providers of similar work, learning is grouped into 14 areas of learning that represent occupational or subject areas – for example engineering, hair and beauty therapy, or visual and performing arts. You will find a detailed breakdown in the Appendix of **Providing data: An overview**. Inspectors also assess the quality of literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision across all the areas of learning they inspect, as the need for good basic skills underpins all forms of learning.

Who will inspect us?

All our inspectors are subject or occupational specialists with extensive experience of managing education and training. The ALI currently employs 140 lead inspectors and 14 inspection managers.

We also contract with around 600 associate inspectors. These people are also subject or occupational experts who work part-time for the inspectorate. We match their expertise to the specific requirements of each inspection.

Our recruitment and selection process is extremely rigorous and we require our inspectors to undergo regular training and professional development.

REMEMBER

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- Inspections are carried out using the *Common Inspection Framework*.
- Learning is grouped into 14 occupational or subject areas of learning.
- Inspectors are occupational or subject experts with extensive experience of managing education and training.

Where can we get further information and advice?



You may call the ALI inspection planning helpline on **02476 716640** where you can leave a message and the most appropriate person will return your call. Or you can email your enquiry to **inspection.notification@ali.gov.uk**.

Please remember your lead inspector will be in contact with you in the next few weeks and will be able to answer all of your inspection related questions.

You can find comprehensive guidance notes on the ALI website together with all published inspection reports (**www.ali.gov.uk**).

- For guidance notes, follow the 'About Inspection' link.
- For inspection reports, follow the 'Inspection Reports and Statistics' link.

AND finally

- Make sure you look at the ***What you need to do*** section. This takes you step by step through the information you need to return to us.
- There are some important actions that you need to complete quickly. You can find more information and dates on the back of your notification letter.



Through Excalibur, the Adult Learning Inspectorate aims to build a national quality community for everyone in the Learning & Skills sector.

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