

# Initial Teacher Education (ITE) inspection handbook

For use from September 2013

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This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for ITE inspections in England from September 2013.

It provides instructions and guidance for inspectors conducting inspections of ITE. It sets out what inspectors will do and what ITE partnerships can expect, and provides guidance for inspectors on making their judgements.

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

1. This handbook sets out the statutory basis and framework for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2013. It also sets out the main activities that inspectors will undertake when conducting inspections of ITE, and the judgements they will make and on which they will report.

### What are the legal requirements for the inspection of ITE?

2. The Education Act 1994 provides the remit for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) to inspect initial training of teachers for schools and, when requested by the Secretary of State, a duty to do so. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Education and Inspections (Prescribed Education and Training etc) Regulations 2007 extended the remit of HMCI to cover the inspection of publicly funded training of further education teachers.

3. As a result, Ofsted is responsible for conducting inspections of:

- all providers of programmes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) for maintained schools<sup>1</sup>
- programmes of further education teacher training validated by higher education institutions.

### The ITE inspection framework

4. The ITE inspection framework sets out the purpose of ITE inspections, how inspections promote improvement and the principles of inspection. It explains who inspects ITE and the factors that determine the timing of an ITE inspection.

### What is the purpose of ITE inspection?

5. The inspection of an ITE partnership provides an independent external evaluation of its effectiveness and a diagnosis of what it should do to improve. It is based on the range of evidence available to inspectors, which they evaluate against a national framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Where ITE partnerships provide an Assessment Only (AO) route to QTS, they will be inspected against the AO criteria: specifically criterion A3.4 'that rigorous moderation procedures are in place to assure the reliability, accuracy and consistency of assessments of candidates against the standards for QTS.' The full AO criteria are available here:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/assessment%20only%20criteria%202012.pdf>.

6. Ofsted's inspections of ITE perform three essential functions. They:
- provide trainees and prospective trainees with an expert and independent assessment of how well an ITE partnership is performing and the quality of teacher training offered
  - provide information to the Secretary of State for Education and to Parliament about the work of ITE partnerships and the extent to which an acceptable standard of teacher training is being provided (This provides assurance that minimum standards are being met, provides confidence in the use of public money and assists accountability, as well as indicating where improvements are needed.)<sup>2</sup>
  - promote the improvement of individual ITE partnerships and the education system as a whole.

### **How does inspection promote improvement?**

7. Ofsted is required to carry out its work in ways that encourage the services it inspects and regulates to improve, to be user-focused and to be efficient and effective in the use of resources.<sup>3</sup>

8. Inspection acts in a number of ways to drive and support improvement in the ITE sector. It:

- raises expectations by setting the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of ITE partnerships
- provides a sharp challenge and the impetus to act where improvement is needed
- clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses
- recommends specific priorities for improvement for the ITE partnership and, when appropriate, checks on and promotes subsequent progress
- promotes rigour in the way that ITE partnerships evaluate their own performance, thereby enhancing their capacity to improve
- monitors the progress and performance of ITE partnerships that are not yet good, providing challenge and support to the senior leaders and managers who are responsible.

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<sup>2</sup> Under section 118 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006;  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>.

<sup>3</sup> Under sections 117(1) and 119(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

## What are the principles of ITE inspection?

9. ITE inspections will:
- support and promote improvement by:
    - establishing a clear standard for an acceptable quality of teacher training
    - adjusting the focus and type of inspection to have the greatest impact
    - clearly identifying strengths and weaknesses
    - identifying precise actions to underpin recommendations
    - explaining and discussing inspection findings with those whose work has been inspected
    - monitoring the progress and performance of ITE partnerships that are not yet good, providing challenge and support to the senior leaders and managers who are responsible
  - be proportionate by:
    - adjusting the frequency of inspection having regard to previous inspection outcomes and risk assessment
    - deploying resources where improvement is most needed, or where inspection can add most value
  - focus on the needs of users by:
    - taking account of users' views, including trainees, former trainees and employers, when we plan and conduct inspections
    - drawing on users' views to inform our judgements and the outcomes of inspection
    - encouraging ITE partnerships to focus on the needs of users
  - focus on the needs of ITE partnerships by:
    - providing high-quality and timely communication with ITE partnerships
    - making use, as far as possible, of the existing data, documentation and systems of the ITE partnership inspected and avoiding placing unnecessary burdens on them
    - taking account of an ITE partnership's self-evaluation
  - be transparent and consistent by:
    - making clear and transparent judgements based on sound evidence
    - inspecting and reporting with integrity
    - having clear evaluation criteria, procedures and guidance that are well understood by ITE partnerships and users and that are readily available
  - be accountable by:

- reporting the outcomes of inspection without fear or favour
- publishing clear, accurate, timely reports that provide trainees and prospective trainees with an authoritative, independent assessment of the quality of education provided by the ITE partnership
- demonstrate value for money by:
  - targeting inspection resources and deploying them effectively and efficiently
  - evaluating the outcomes and processes of inspection and making improvements where necessary.

## **Who inspects ITE?**

10. ITE inspectors are either Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), employed directly by Ofsted, or Additional Inspectors employed directly or contracted by inspection service providers (ISPs). ISPs are independent commercial organisations contracted by Ofsted to provide inspection services; they are responsible for the administrative arrangements for inspections. ITE inspections are normally led by HMI.

11. Ofsted prescribes the qualifications and experience required by Additional Inspectors, the initial and continuing training that they should receive, and the standards they are required to meet. Ofsted also publishes the names of Additional Inspectors.

12. A small proportion of inspections may involve seconded inspectors, serving ITE practitioners, working with Ofsted for a period of 12 months.

13. All inspectors undertake regular training to ensure they are familiar with changes in inspection frameworks, inspection methodology and developments in educational practice.

## **What determines the timing of an ITE inspection?**

14. Inspection can take place at any point after the end of the first half of the autumn term of an academic year. The inspection arrangements will ensure that the frequency of inspection is proportionate to the performance and circumstances of ITE partnerships. This means that some ITE partnerships will be inspected more frequently than at six-year intervals. A sample of good and outstanding ITE partnerships will be inspected in each year of the inspection cycle.

15. An ITE partnership that has been judged to require improvement will have a re-inspection 12 months later. We will normally limit the number of times a provider can



be judged to require improvement to two consecutive inspections before it is considered to be inadequate for Overall effectiveness.<sup>4</sup>

16. An ITE partnership judged to be inadequate will be re-inspected 12 months later.

## **ITE inspection handbook**

17. This handbook is in two parts and has an annex about focused monitoring inspections.

- Part 1: Instructions and guidance for inspectors and inspection service providers on the preparation for and conduct of ITE inspections.
- Part 2: Criteria and grade descriptors to guide inspectors in judging the quality of training provided by the ITE partnerships they inspect, and an indication of the main types of evidence they are likely to collect and analyse.
- Annex A: Instructions and guidance for inspectors and inspection service providers on the preparation for and conduct of focused monitoring inspections to primary ITE partnerships to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of training in phonics.

## **Part 1. Instructions and guidance**

### **Before the inspection**

#### **Inspectors' planning and preparation**

18. The lead inspector must prepare for the inspection by gaining a broad overview of the ITE partnership's recent performance and how this may have changed since the last inspection. She/he will summarise the outcomes of this preparation on evidence forms.

19. Inspectors must use a range of measures to develop an initial picture of the ITE partnership's performance. Planning for the inspection will be informed by analysis of:

- the last inspection report
- the outcomes of any risk assessment undertaken by Ofsted

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<sup>4</sup> Where a QTS ITE partnership has received two consecutive confirmed Ofsted judgements of lower than 'good' for any one phase of its provision, the NCTL will withdraw the provider's accreditation. This includes where Ofsted has judged that the phase of provision was 'inadequate' under the previous inspection framework. The full withdrawal of accreditation process from September 2013 is published at:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/careers/traininganddevelopment/initial/b00204055/accreditation-for-itt>

- available regional and national data, including the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) survey (where relevant)
- information from the trainee online questionnaire
- any information available on the ITE partnership's website
- information provided to Ofsted on an annual basis by the ITE partnership
- information from lesson observations of NQTs gathered as part of section 5 inspections of maintained schools from January 2013.

## The views of trainees

20. Trainees' perceptions are important in coming to a view about the effectiveness of an ITE partnership. Inspectors will use the trainee online questionnaire as one of the sources of information to take trainees' views into account. Inspectors will also take account of results of past surveys carried out internally by the ITE partnership or externally validated data from, for example, exit and induction tutor surveys and the NQT survey (where relevant).

ITE partnerships may want to encourage trainees to complete the trainee online questionnaire and can place a link on their website.

21. Inspectors will access summary information from the trainee online survey twice: once before the inspection begins and then again at the end of the second day of the inspection.

## Notification of inspection

22. Inspectors will ask for information or evidence relating to matters that are fundamental to the work of any ITE partnership. Documentation may be provided in the form in which it is held, if it is not openly available on the ITE partnership's website.

23. Inspectors will need appropriate access to any information held on the ITE partnership's virtual learning environment or management information system. Only the minimum information necessary to carry out the inspection will be requested.

24. When inspectors make their initial telephone call to the provider's representative,<sup>5</sup> they are likely to request:

- details of current training and assessment programmes offered by the ITE partnership, the number of trainees in each age phase and their subject(s)/specialisms

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<sup>5</sup> The provider's representative is nominated by the ITE partnership. S/he plays an important role in liaising with the lead inspector(s) before and during the inspection. There will be ongoing professional dialogue with the provider's representative about the context of the ITE partnership's work and the emerging findings before and during the inspection.

- information about the organisation of the ITE partnership, including staff names and responsibilities
- information about specific school, college and/or other setting and centre-based training, recruitment and selection and other events taking place during the inspection week
- background information on each trainee including qualifications, relevant prior experience and their current level of achievement
- information about former trainees teaching in partnership schools, colleges and/or other settings
- details of placements, including addresses and unique reference numbers (URNs) for schools, colleges and/or or settings
- a summary self-evaluation, including an analysis of outcomes for trainees.

25. During the inspection week, inspectors are likely to request:

- handbooks and/or materials related to any school, college and/or other setting and centre-based training observed
- evidence of internal and external monitoring and evaluation, including external examiners' reports, and how the findings are used to improve outcomes for trainees
- evidence of improvement plans and their impact on provision and outcomes
- evidence of the quality and effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process
- evidence of the involvement of schools, colleges and/or other settings in the leadership of the ITE partnership, the recruitment and selection of trainees and the design and delivery of training and assessment
- evidence of the experience and expertise of mentors and trainers
- evidence of the professional development provided for mentors and trainers
- evidence of the quality and effectiveness of the ITE partnership's work in the areas covered by the annual thematic inspection<sup>6</sup>
- evidence of how the ITE partnership has improved the quality of teachers' skills in: teaching early reading using systematic synthetic phonics; communication and language development; mathematics; managing

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<sup>6</sup> Ofsted will write to ITE partnerships at the start of each year of the inspection cycle to confirm the particular focus of any thematic inspections.

behaviour and discipline; and meeting the needs of pupils<sup>7</sup> with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language (EAL)

- evidence of how the ITE partnership meets the statutory initial teacher training criteria<sup>8</sup> and requirements, and all relevant legislation, including that related to: promoting equality and diversity; eliminating discrimination; and safeguarding.

26. For each trainee observed, it would be helpful to have a brief pen portrait available for inspectors during the inspection week. This is likely to include:

- a synthesis of information gathered during selection and in the early stages of the training to determine the trainee's potential, strengths and specific training needs
- the ITE partnership's evaluation of the trainee's progress against these expectations to his/her current level of achievement
- a brief account of particular features of training that have led to the trainee's current level of achievement
- the record of evidence against the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards*<sup>9</sup> or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education.<sup>10</sup>

27. ITE partnerships will normally be notified of their inspection two working days before the inspection begins. The lead inspector will do everything possible to relieve anxiety and avoid disrupting the ITE partnership's plans and routines.

Inspectors must observe the inspectors' code of conduct (as indicated in paragraphs 64–66). They should be as flexible as possible to fit in with the ITE partnership's arrangements, while ensuring that they can gain robust evidence to support inspection judgements.

28. The inspection service provider (ISP) will telephone the ITE partnership to inform them about the inspection. This will normally be by 9.30am on the Thursday before an inspection begins. The ISP will send confirmation of the inspection to the lead inspector and to the ITE partnership by email. This will include a letter giving formal notification of the inspection.

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<sup>7</sup> Throughout this document, the term 'pupils' is used to describe learners of all ages.

<sup>8</sup> *Initial teacher training (ITT) criteria*, DfE, 2012;

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/TA-00059-2012>.

<sup>9</sup> *Teachers' Standards*, DfE, 2012;

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00066-2011>.

<sup>10</sup> *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*, Lifelong Learning UK, 2007;

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/LLUK-00559-2007>.

29. The lead inspector will telephone the provider's representative to introduce themselves and to arrange for phase lead inspectors to contact the relevant phase leaders and managers to make the practical arrangements for the inspection.

If the lead inspector is unable to speak to the provider's representative, s/he will ask to speak to the next most senior member of staff.

During this conversation, the lead inspector will:

- offer to talk to the provider's representative by telephone if s/he is not present that day
- request information from the ITE partnership (as indicated in paragraph 24)
- arrange for a longer telephone call with the provider's representative to discuss the ITE partnership's self-evaluation and analysis of outcomes for trainees and other relevant matters
- clarify any cross-phase aspects of the inspection that the lead inspector could undertake to avoid duplication, for example compliance, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and safeguarding checks, or reporting and monitoring incidents of discrimination or harassment
- receive information about staff absence and other practical issues
- find out whether there are particular reasons why they cannot observe any trainees or training sessions
- agree a place where the inspection team can meet.

## Information for inspectors

30. After receiving the information requested from the ITE partnership, lead inspectors will liaise with phase leaders and managers to select a sample of trainees and former trainees to observe teaching. Inspectors will try to maximise the time available by visiting a number of trainees and former trainees based in the same schools, colleges and/or other settings. Lead inspectors must check that the schools, colleges and/or other settings selected are not due to be visited as part of another Ofsted inspection by completing a record of visit (ROV) form and emailing it to [dataacquisition@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:dataacquisition@ofsted.gov.uk).

31. Lead inspectors must provide a letter for the ITE partnership to send electronically to any school, college and/or other setting that will be visited by inspectors as part of the ITE inspection. This letter explains that the inspector will visit the school, college and/or other setting as part of the inspection of the ITE partnership. Lead inspectors must identify the nature and timing of inspection activities to be undertaken in schools, colleges and/or other settings to enable the ITE partnership to make the necessary practical arrangements. These activities are likely to include observations of trainees' and former trainees' teaching, discussions

with trainees, former trainees, mentors and induction tutors, and time to read trainees' files.

32. The lead inspectors will identify any centre-based training sessions and/or other events that they wish to observe and any discussions that will need to be arranged. Lead inspectors should inform the ITE partnership of these requirements promptly to enable them to make the necessary practical arrangements.

33. The ITE partnership will confirm the inspection timetable in discussion with the lead inspector and will set out the practical arrangements for the inspection team, including, for example, rooms and car parking.

34. The lead inspector should prepare and distribute brief joining instructions to the inspection team. These are likely to include:

- essential information about the ITE partnership and the timing of the inspection
- a brief summary of the pre-inspection information
- a clear indication of individual inspectors' roles and responsibilities
- an inspection programme including details of the trainees and former trainees to be observed, the schools, colleges and/or other settings to be visited and any other inspection activities, including team and grading meetings.

35. Lead inspectors must deploy inspection team members effectively to contribute to the evaluation of the three key judgements and come to a collective view about the overall effectiveness of the ITE partnership.

36. Inspectors must plan sufficient time for team meetings and feedback so that they can conclude the inspection in good time.

## Requests for deferral

37. Inspectors should advise ITE partnerships to consult Ofsted's policy on the deferral of inspections<sup>11</sup> before making a request for deferral.

## During the inspection

### Gathering and recording evidence

38. Inspectors must spend as much time as possible gathering first-hand evidence about the quality of training across the partnership. This should involve observations of school-, college- and/or setting- and/or centre-based training delivered by

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<sup>11</sup> *Deferral of initial teacher education (ITE) inspections* (120329), Ofsted, 2013; <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120329>

mentors and trainers, and observations of trainees and former trainees teaching wherever possible. Inspectors must: compare their observations with records of performance and other observations; talk to trainees and former trainees about their teaching; gauge their understanding and engagement in their own professional development; and seek their views about their training.

39. Inspectors must record their evidence clearly and legibly on evidence forms, ensuring that all relevant sections of the form are completed for all evidence-gathering activities. Summary evaluation forms are used for recording analyses of data and the evidence that underpins key judgements, and for summarising the main points of discussion when feeding back to senior leaders and managers.

40. Evidence forms are the main record of evidence that has been considered in the inspection and may be scrutinised for retrieval, for quality assurance monitoring and in the event of a complaint.

## Observations of teaching and training

41. The key purpose of teaching and training observations is to evaluate the quality of teaching and training and their contribution to learning. Inspectors should also identify ways in which teaching and training can be improved. These observations and discussions with trainees and former trainees and/or mentors and trainers must provide robust evidence to enable inspectors to:

- judge the accuracy of the ITE partnership's assessment of trainees and the precision of its self-evaluation
- thoroughly test out issues from the pre-inspection analysis
- gather evidence on how well trainees teach and how well trainees and groups of trainees are prepared to meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education by the end of their training
- devise detailed and specific recommendations on how to improve trainees' teaching and the quality of training they receive.

42. Lead inspectors may ask for a number of the teaching observations to be jointly carried out with mentors and/or trainers. For these observations, the mentor or trainer rather than the inspector would feed back to the trainee. Inspectors would normally expect to see a detailed written lesson plan for every lesson they observe taught by trainees. They will also expect trainees to have the following documentation with them in their school, college or setting:

- teaching files containing lesson plans, schemes of work and teaching resources
- trainees' self-evaluations and/or reflective journals

- profiles/portfolios of evidence
- subject knowledge audits and records
- records of feedback, meetings with mentors and tutors, and reviews of targets
- assignments, directed tasks and feedback sheets.

## **Feedback and discussion with trainees, former trainees, mentors and trainers**

43. The quality and professionalism of inspectors' interaction with trainees, former trainees, mentors and trainers is essential to developmental inspection – a process that is valued for the insights it provides – and is integral to the code of practice. People whose work is being evaluated expect and deserve to know the inspector's observations.

44. Inspectors should be aware of the effect of their presence in lessons and in training sessions.

45. Inspectors should offer feedback to the trainees and former trainees they observe teaching and to mentors and trainers whose sessions they observe where it is practical to do so. The feedback arrangements for these sessions will be explained to those involved.

46. Feedback on teaching and training sessions observed will identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the activity observed and give judgements in the context of the observation, focusing on:

- pupils' learning and the trainee's or former trainee's contribution to this

or:

- trainees' professional development and the mentor's and trainer's contribution to this

and:

- the quality of teaching or training observed
- how teaching or training could be improved.

47. Inspectors should be clear in feedback that any judgements given reflect the part of the session observed and are not a judgement on the individual. They are used as part of the evidence to make judgements about the quality of the ITE partnership.

48. Other discussion that might take place at the same time as the feedback might include:



- the context and content of the session
- where it fits into a sequence or programme of sessions
- other teaching and learning activities that are used
- the extent to which trainees and former trainees are monitored and supported.

## **The use of data on inspection**

49. Inspection involves the use of a range of data about the ITE partnership's performance but, in particular, the most recent assessment and tracking data on trainees' outcomes. This will include a focus on the outcomes for trainees and trends over time.

50. The data, including that provided by the ITE partnership, will be used to:

- check the accuracy of the ITE partnership's assessment of trainees
- check the robustness and precision of the ITE partnership's self-evaluation, particularly on outcomes for trainees and trends over time
- check how well the ITE partnership is using data to improve or sustain outcomes for trainees.

## **Meetings with stakeholders**

51. Inspectors may conduct meetings or hold telephone discussions with individuals or small groups of:

- trainees
- former trainees
- trainers
- mentors and induction tutors (where relevant)
- phase leaders and managers
- members of the strategic partnership committee
- other stakeholders, including headteachers and employers.

## **Engaging with the provider's representative and phase leaders and managers**

52. Inspection has the strongest impact on improvement when the ITE partnership understands the evidence and findings that have led to the judgements and recommendations for improvement. Lead inspectors should invite nominated phase leaders and managers to act as observers at team and grading meetings. This will ensure that they:

- are kept up-to-date with how the inspection is proceeding

- understand how the inspection team reaches its judgements
- have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
- are given the opportunity to present additional evidence.

53. The lead inspector should meet with the provider's representative during the inspection to:

- provide an update on emerging issues and to enable the ITE partnership to provide any further relevant evidence
- allow the provider's representative to raise any concerns, including those related to the conduct of the inspection or the conduct of individual inspectors
- alert the provider's representative to any serious concerns that may lead to the ITE partnership being judged inadequate and/or non-compliant with initial teacher training (ITT) criteria and other statutory requirements.

54. The notes of any key points of discussions with the provider's representative will be recorded on an evidence form.

### **Team and grading meetings during the inspection**

55. The inspection team for each phase will:

- meet briefly at the end of each day where possible<sup>12</sup> to discuss emerging findings; the phase leaders and managers of the ITE partnership will be invited as observers
- meet towards the end of the inspection at an inspection team grading meeting; the phase leaders and managers of the ITE partnership are invited as observers but all judgements are made by inspectors and the inspection team
- meet with other inspection teams at a cross-phase grading meeting, where relevant, to finalise judgements and identify areas for improvement; the phase leaders and managers and the provider's representative are invited as observers but all judgements are made by inspectors and the inspection team
- record the outcomes of all team meetings on evidence forms.

### **Reaching final judgements**

56. Towards the end of the inspection, the team will hold a phase grading meeting to consider the evidence available and make its final judgements. The lead inspector

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<sup>12</sup> Where this is not possible, team members will discuss their findings by telephone with the lead inspector, who will discuss these with phase leaders and managers or the provider's representative.

is responsible for ensuring that judgements about the ITE partnership are collectively agreed by the inspection team, with reference to the grade descriptors in the evaluation schedule (part 2 of this handbook), and that they are supported convincingly by evidence. Inspectors identify the strengths and weaknesses of the ITE partnership and what it must do to improve. Final judgement grades will be recorded and key points for feedback will be identified as the meeting progresses.

57. Where there are multi-phase inspections, phase teams will also meet in a cross-phase grading meeting to agree that final judgements across the phases are consistent, that similar evidence leads to similar judgements and that the grade criteria are interpreted in the same way. Lead inspectors will also agree the points to be included in the commentary at the start of the report.

## Feedback

### Providing feedback to the ITE partnership

58. Before leaving, the lead inspector must ensure that the ITE partnership is clear about:

- the grades awarded for each key judgement
- the fact that grades may be subject to change and are, therefore, to be treated as confidential until the ITE partnership receives a copy of the final inspection report
- the main findings of the inspection
- the recommendations for improvement
- the procedures leading to the publication of the report
- the complaints procedure
- the post-inspection survey
- where relevant, the implications of the ITE partnership being judged to be inadequate, non-compliant or to require improvement.

59. At the discretion of the lead inspector, other senior staff who have not been present at team or grading meetings may attend this feedback meeting.

60. The lead inspector should explain to those present that the purpose of the feedback is to provide the main findings from the inspection and to set out how the ITE partnership can improve further. Lead inspectors should provide an opportunity for members of the ITE partnership to seek clarification about the judgements, but discussion is likely to be brief. An inspector will complete an evidence form summarising the key points raised at the feedback meeting.

## After the inspection

### The inspection report

61. Following the inspection, the lead inspector writes a report about the main findings of the inspection. The findings should be consistent with those given orally to the ITE partnership.

62. The report contains discrete sections for the different phases inspected. The lead inspector uploads the report, the completed quality assurance reader checklist and electronic summary evaluation forms onto the portal and completes the necessary performance management documentation on their team. Paper evidence is posted to the relevant inspection service provider (ISP). Lead inspectors will return a final version of the record of visit (ROV) form at the end of the inspection to [dataacquisition@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:dataacquisition@ofsted.gov.uk), confirming which schools, colleges and/or other settings were visited during the inspection.

### Arrangements for publication of the report

63. The ISP will forward the report to the ITE partnership for a factual accuracy check within nine working days of the end of the inspection. The ITE partnership will have five working days to respond. The lead inspector will respond to the ITE partnership's comments about factual accuracy.<sup>13</sup>

The ITE partnership will receive an electronic version of the report within 25 working days of the end of the on-site inspection. After that time, we will publish the report on Ofsted's website.

## The code of conduct for inspections

64. So that inspection is productive and beneficial, it is important that inspectors and ITE partnerships establish and maintain an appropriate working relationship based on courtesy and professional behaviour. Inspectors are expected to uphold the code of conduct below.

### Inspectors' code of conduct

65. Inspectors are required to uphold the highest professional standards in their work and to treat everyone they encounter during inspections fairly and with respect. Inspectors will:

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and inspect without fear or favour

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<sup>13</sup> In the unlikely circumstances where there is a grade change or the text of a report has been subject to significant amendments made after the ITE partnership has completed its factual accuracy check, the lead inspector will talk this through with the provider's representative.

- evaluate provision in line with frameworks, regional and national data, the *Teachers' Standards* or relevant professional standards for ITE in further education, and statutory and initial teacher training criteria and requirements
- base all evaluations on clear and robust evidence
- have no declared connection with the ITE partnership that could undermine their objectivity
- report honestly and clearly, ensuring that judgements are fair and reliable
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy, respect and sensitivity
- try to minimise the stress on those involved in the inspection
- act in the best interests and well-being of stakeholders
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those being inspected, and communicate judgements clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about individuals and their work
- respond appropriately to reasonable requests
- take prompt and appropriate action on any safeguarding or health and safety issues.

### **The ITE partnership's engagement with inspectors**

66. Ofsted expects ITE partnerships to play their part by ensuring that inspectors can conduct their inspections in an open and honest way, and evaluate the ITE partnership objectively. Ofsted expects ITE partnership staff to:

- apply their own codes of conduct in their dealings with inspectors
- enable inspectors to conduct their inspections in an open and honest way
- enable inspectors to evaluate the ITE partnership objectively against the inspection framework
- provide evidence that will enable inspectors to report honestly, fairly and reliably about the ITE partnership
- liaise with inspectors to minimise disruption, stress and bureaucracy
- ensure that the health and safety of inspectors is not prejudiced while they are on the ITE partnership's premises
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with inspectors
- draw any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors promptly and in a suitable manner

- understand the need for inspectors to observe practice and talk to those they observe without the presence of a manager.

## Quality assurance and complaints

### How are inspections quality assured?

67. Responsibility for assuring the quality of the inspection and the subsequent report lies with the lead inspector and the inspection service provider, and with Ofsted internally. The lead inspector is expected to set clear expectations for the inspection team and ensure that those expectations are met. The lead inspector must ensure that all judgements are supported by evidence and that the way in which the inspection is conducted meets the expected standard.

68. Some inspections are subject to external quality assurance by HMI. This might consist of a telephone call to discuss progress, or an on-site visit. When an external quality assurance visit is scheduled, the lead inspector will explain clearly the purpose and likely format of the visit during the initial telephone conversation with the provider's representative.

69. Lead inspectors are asked to contact the National Lead for ITE, including FE, if an ITE partnership is likely to be judged outstanding, inadequate or requires improvement or if there is any potential aspect of non-compliance.

70. All ITE partnerships are invited to take part in a post-inspection survey so that their views about the quality of the inspection are obtained and contribute to the development of inspection.

### What happens if an ITE partnership has a concern or complaint during the inspection?

71. If an ITE partnership raises a concern during the course of an inspection, the lead inspector must do all that is possible to remedy the problem. The complaints procedure encourages ITE partnerships to speak to the lead inspector where they have a concern. It is often easier to resolve issues on the spot and this helps to avoid formal complaints later.

72. If the ITE partnership is dissatisfied with the lead inspector's response, or in any case wishes to take the complaint further, the complaints procedure is on the Ofsted website.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted* (130128), 2013; <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-procedure-raising-concerns-and-making-complaints-about-ofsted>.

## Part 2. The evaluation schedule, criteria and grade descriptors

73. Inspectors evaluate the extent to which Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships enable trainees to meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers by the end of their training. This is defined in the *Teachers' Standards* or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education. Inspectors also evaluate whether ITE partnerships meet the statutory initial teacher training criteria and requirements and all relevant legislation, including that related to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination, and safeguarding.

74. The evaluation schedule sets out criteria and grade descriptors to guide inspectors when judging the quality of the ITE partnerships they inspect. The schedule also indicates the main types of evidence they are expected to collect and analyse. This guidance is not exhaustive and does not replace the expert judgement of inspectors.

75. The evaluation schedule is designed to apply to the specific context of each ITE partnership being inspected. Inspectors should apply grade descriptors in relation to the phase of ITE they are inspecting. Inspectors will use the evaluation schedule in conjunction with the instructions and guidance in part 1 of this handbook.

### Judging the quality of an ITE partnership

76. ITE inspection is primarily about evaluating how well trainees are trained to be good or better teachers.

77. For each phase inspected, inspectors must evaluate:

- the extent to which the ITE partnership secures consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees.




78. To make this judgement, inspectors must evaluate each of the three key judgements:

- Outcomes for trainees
- Quality of training across the partnership
- Leadership and management of the partnership.

They do this by answering the following three key questions.

- What is the quality of outcomes for trainees?
- How well does the ITE partnership prepare trainees to teach pupils in the age range, and/or subject(s)/specialisms for which they are being trained?
- How well do leaders and managers at all levels of the ITE partnership ensure that the best outcomes are achieved and sustained?

**Table 1. Key judgements and key questions**

Overall effectiveness	The extent to which the ITE partnership secures consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees
<p><i>Outcomes for trainees</i></p> 	<p><b>What is the quality of outcomes for trainees?</b>            Attainment            How well trainees teach            Completion rates            Employment rates</p>
<p><i>Quality of training across the partnership</i></p> 	<p><b>How well does the ITE partnership prepare trainees to teach pupils in the age range, and/or subject(s)/specialisms for which they are being trained?</b>            Overall consistency, coherence and quality of all aspects of the training            High-quality training and support that prepares trainees with the skills they need            The quality of placements            Subject and phase-specific mentoring            The accuracy of assessment</p>
<p><i>Leadership and management of the partnership</i></p> 	<p><b>How well do leaders and managers at all levels of the ITE partnership ensure that the best outcomes are achieved and sustained?</b>            Vision for excellence            The engagement of schools, colleges and/or other settings            The rigour of recruitment and selection process            Effective monitoring and evaluation            Compliance with ITT criteria and requirements            Capacity to improve further</p>



79. In judging the quality and effectiveness of the ITE partnership in securing consistently high quality outcomes for trainees, inspectors will decide whether the ITE partnership is outstanding, good, requires improvement or is inadequate.

80. In making these judgements, inspectors will analyse the evidence available and decide which grade descriptor provides the **best fit**. Inspectors will check all the criteria for inadequate before considering judgements at a higher level. When evidence indicates that **any** of the bullet points in the descriptor for inadequate applies, then that aspect of the ITE partnership's work will be judged inadequate.

81. For each of the three key judgements, inspectors will use the following scale:

- grade 1: outstanding
- grade 2: good
- grade 3: requires improvement
- grade 4: inadequate.

82. In making all their judgements, inspectors must draw on all the available evidence, use their professional knowledge, and consider the guidance in this handbook, particularly the grade descriptors.

## Outcomes for trainees

### Criteria and outline guidance

83. Outcomes are evaluated in terms of:

- attainment
- how well trainees teach
- completion rates
- employment rates.

84. For each phase inspected, inspectors must gather evidence on each of these criteria to reach their overall judgement about how well individual trainees benefit from their training.

85. Inspectors must test the ITE partnership's response to individual needs by observing how well it helps **all** trainees to become good or better teachers. Where inspection evidence reveals that variations in the quality of provision have an adverse impact on particular groups, inspectors will identify this as an area for improvement.

86. Depending on the type of ITE partnership, and where relevant, inspectors will pay particular attention to the achievement of:

- trainees in different primary or secondary subject(s)/specialisms
- trainees following undergraduate, professional graduate and postgraduate training routes
- trainees following specific age-range training programmes
- trainees placed in particular schools, colleges and/or settings or clusters of schools, colleges and/or settings
- in-service/pre-service cohorts of trainees in further education colleges and other further education and skills settings
- trainees working in other learning and skills settings, for example work-based learning
- trainees with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.<sup>15</sup>

### **Attainment**

87. Attainment is defined as the standard reached by a trainee at the end of his/her training. For primary and secondary trainees, this is how well they meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards*.

88. The Teachers' Standards states that:

'Providers of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) will assess trainees against the standards in a way that is consistent with what could reasonably be expected of a trainee teacher prior to the award of [qualified teacher status (QTS)]. Providers will need to ensure that their programmes are designed and delivered in such a way as to allow all trainees to meet these standards, as set out in the Secretary of State's *Requirements for Initial Teacher Training*'.

89. Inspectors must consider whether trainees awarded QTS have demonstrated the *Teachers' Standards* in full.

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<sup>15</sup> This includes trainees identified by gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or age, and trainees of different faiths, disabled trainees and those who have special educational needs.

90. For ITE in further education, the relevant professional standards are currently set out in the *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*.<sup>16</sup> It states that:

‘the skills, knowledge and attributes required of those who perform the wide variety of teaching and training roles undertaken within the sector with learners and employers. Not all standards will necessarily relate to all teaching roles. Rather they supply the basis for the development of contextualised role specifications and units of assessment, which provide benchmarks for performances in practice of the variety of roles performed by teachers, trainers, tutors and lecturers within the lifelong learning sector. Together, these will identify the components of: the initial teaching award (Passport); qualifications leading to Qualified Teacher, Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and other intermediate and advanced teaching qualifications.’

### How well trainees teach

91. When inspectors observe teaching they are also observing the pupils’ responses. The key factor in judging the quality of teaching is the impact teaching has on the quality of learning.

92. When assessing the quality of primary and secondary trainees’ teaching, inspectors should refer to the *Teachers’ Standards* in full.

93. In part one of the *Teachers’ Standards*, standards for teaching are presented as separate headings, numbered from one to eight. They state that:

‘A teacher must:

- set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
- promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
- demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- plan and teach well-structured lessons
- adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- make accurate and productive use of assessment
- manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
- fulfil wider professional responsibilities.’

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<sup>16</sup> *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*, Lifelong Learning UK, 2007;  
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/LLUK-00559-2007>.

94. In part two, the standards for professional and personal conduct state that:

‘A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher’s career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.’

95. The *Teachers’ Standards* includes a series of bullet points on pages 6-9 and states that:

‘The bullets, which are an integral part of the standards, are designed to amplify the scope of each heading. The bulleted sub-headings should not be interpreted as separate standards in their own right, but should be used by those assessing trainees to track progress against the standard, to determine areas where additional development might need to be observed, or to identify areas where a trainee is already demonstrating excellent practice relevant to that standard.’

96. The standards set out the key areas in which a teacher should be able to assess his or her own practice, and receive feedback from colleagues. Inspectors must ensure that the ITE partnership has systems and procedures in place for trainees to be appropriately assessed and receive feedback to support their professional development.

97. When assessing the quality of further education trainees’ teaching, inspectors should refer to the trainees’ competence in teaching a particular area of specialism.

### **Completion rates**

98. Completion rates are defined as the proportion of trainees who successfully complete their training and, in the case of primary and secondary trainees, achieve qualified teacher status (QTS). Judgements will be based on comparisons with national and regional benchmark data.

### **Employment rates**

99. Employment rates are defined as the proportion of trainees who either secure or continue in employment as teachers. Judgements will be based on comparisons with national and regional benchmark data.

## Grade descriptors: Outcomes for trainees

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.*

### Outstanding (1)

- All primary and secondary trainees awarded QTS exceed the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* by the end of their training. Trainees demonstrate excellent practice in some of the standards for teaching and their personal and professional conduct.

**or**

All further education (FE) trainees meet the relevant professional standards for ITE in FE by the end of their training at an outstanding level.

- Much of trainees' teaching is outstanding and never less than consistently good.
- Completion rates are consistently high<sup>17</sup>.
- Employment rates are consistently high.
- There are no significant variations in the outcomes achieved by different groups of trainees.

### Good (2)

- All primary and secondary trainees awarded QTS exceed the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* by the end of their training.

**or**

All FE trainees meet the professional standards for ITE in FE by the end of their training at a good level.

- Much of trainees' teaching is predominantly good, with examples of outstanding teaching.
- Completion rates are above national and regional benchmarks.
- Employment rates are above national and regional benchmarks.
- Outcomes for almost all trainees and groups of trainees are at least good or improving rapidly.

### Requires improvement (3)

- All primary and secondary trainees awarded QTS meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* by the end of their training.

**or**

All FE trainees meet the professional standards for ITE in FE by the end of their training.

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<sup>17</sup> Consistently high is defined as for the last three years based on a comparison with national and regional benchmark data

- Trainees' teaching requires improvement as it is not yet good.
- Completion rates are either in line and not improving or below national and regional benchmarks.
- Employment rates are either in line and not improving or below national and regional benchmarks.
- The quality of outcomes for all groups of trainees requires improvement as it is not yet good.

#### **Inadequate (4)**

Outcomes are likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.

- Trainees awarded QTS fail to meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* by the end of their training.

**or**

- Trainees fail to meet the professional standards for ITE in FE by the end of their training.
- Weak teaching contributes to pupils or groups of pupils making inadequate progress.
- Completion rates are consistently low.
- Employment rates are consistently low.
- There are wide gaps in the attainment of different groups of trainees.

## Quality of training across the partnership

### Criteria and outline guidance

100. The quality of training is evaluated in terms of:

- the overall consistency, coherence and quality of all aspects of the training
- high-quality training and support that prepares trainees with the skills they need
- the quality of placements
- subject and phase specific mentoring
- the accuracy of assessment.

101. For each phase inspected, inspectors gather evidence on each of these criteria to reach their judgements.

102. Inspectors must evaluate the quality and effectiveness of training across the partnership in ensuring that the best outcomes for trainees are achieved and sustained. Trainees must meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* for primary and secondary trainees or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education. Inspectors must also ensure that the ITE partnership complies with the initial teacher training (ITT) criteria and requirements.

103. Judgements on the quality of training across the partnership will be based predominantly on first-hand evidence gained from:

- direct observation of a sample of trainees' and former trainees' teaching
- direct observation of school, college and/or setting and/or centre-based training (where possible).

104. Direct observation will be supplemented by a range of other evidence enabling inspectors to evaluate the impact that training has on trainees' and former trainees' teaching and professional development over time. Inspectors should use discussions to probe trainees' and former trainees' knowledge and understanding of relevant phase, subject and curriculum issues.

105. Additional evidence relating to the quality of training may include:

- analysis of data on the outcomes for trainees
- interviews with trainees, former trainees, trainers, mentors, induction tutors (where relevant) and pupils
- joint observations with mentors, trainers and/or induction tutors
- interviews with headteachers and employers
- analysis of trainees' teaching files and records of evidence, including the feedback they receive and the developmental targets they are set in relation to the *Teachers' Standards* or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education
- analysis of relevant training materials
- case or impact studies provided by the ITE partnership.

106. Inspectors must evaluate the extent to which trainees benefit from:

- the overall consistency, coherence and quality of all aspects of the training, for example through:
  - the design and delivery of the training
  - the experience and expertise of trainers
  - the provision of training that builds on what trainees have already achieved and experienced before starting their training programme
  - the identification of trainees' prior experience, relevant subject and curriculum knowledge and understanding, and response to trainees' specific training needs
  - the links between generic phase and specific subject or curriculum training
- high-quality training and support that prepares trainees with the skills they need to:
  - critically evaluate their own teaching
  - meet the needs of those they teach
  - show through their teaching that they understand how pupils learn
  - use a range of approaches to teaching and learning, including information and communication technology (ICT) and educational technology where relevant



- recognise the signs that may indicate disability or special educational needs and make the necessary preparation to help pupils overcome any barriers to their learning, including those for whom English is an additional language (EAL)
- make effective use of other adults, including teaching assistants, to improve pupils' progress
- manage behaviour and discipline through effective teaching
- develop strategies to manage behaviour successfully and tackle bullying, including cyber and prejudice-based bullying
- develop the literacy (reading, writing and communication) and mathematical skills of their pupils

and for primary trainees to:

- teach early reading and demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics, communication and language development
- teach early mathematics and demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies
- teach physical education and demonstrate sufficient subject knowledge and teaching strategies, including for pupils with special educational needs.
- the quality of placements, including:
  - how well placement arrangements are made
  - the provision of a range of high-quality placements in which trainees develop their teaching skills. It is particularly important:
    - to work with the full range of pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, those with EAL and those from different cultural backgrounds
    - to develop their skills in managing pupils' behaviour successfully
    - for primary trainees to teach systematic synthetic phonics on a regular basis
  - opportunities to encounter and learn from good and outstanding practice
- subject and phase specific mentoring that:
  - is provided by experienced and expert mentors
  - responds to trainees' specific training needs, including enhancing their subject and curriculum knowledge and phase expertise
  - improves trainees' teaching skills
  - models good practice in teaching
  - provides high-quality coaching and mentoring to enhance trainees' professional development



- the accuracy of assessment, including:
  - the provision of accurate assessment, high-quality verbal and written feedback
  - precise developmental targets to improve trainees' teaching and ensure agreed actions are implemented
  - accurate and rigorous final assessments for the award of qualified teacher status in relation to the *Teachers' Standards* for primary and secondary trainees, or the relevant requirements for ITE in further education.

### Grade descriptors: Quality of training across the partnership

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.*

#### Outstanding (1)

- Much of the training, as judged through the impact on outcomes for trainees, is outstanding and never less than consistently good.
- High-quality training prepares trainees and former trainees to teach exceptionally well, demonstrating:
  - strong subject and curriculum knowledge
  - phase expertise
  - the ability to use a range of teaching and learning strategies to great effect.
- Trainees are well prepared to accurately assess achievement and demonstrate through their planning and teaching that their pupils, including those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, make good progress.
- Outstanding training in behaviour management equips trainees with the knowledge, understanding and skills to manage behaviour and discipline effectively and create an excellent climate for learning.
- Expert mentors and trainers have consistently high expectations and work collaboratively to ensure training is coherent and highly relevant to the needs of trainees.
- High-quality, complementary placements meet trainees' needs very well and ensure trainees gain substantial practical experience to develop their evaluative and practical teaching skills effectively in different settings.
- High-quality training enables trainees to teach reading, writing, communication and mathematics effectively to enhance the progress of pupils they teach.
- **Primary training** in early reading, systematic synthetic phonics, communication and language development and primary mathematics is of outstanding quality and ensures trainees have gained sufficient practical experience to teach these aspects with confidence and competence by the end of their training.
- Assessment of trainees is rigorous and precise. Consistently high-quality oral and written feedback and challenging developmental targets support trainees' critical reflections, enabling them to analyse, evaluate and improve their practice.

### Good (2)

- The quality of training across the partnership, as judged by the impact on outcomes for trainees, is consistently good, with some examples of outstanding training.
- High-quality training prepares trainees and former trainees to teach well, demonstrating:
  - good subject and curriculum knowledge
  - phase expertise
  - the ability to use a range of teaching and learning strategies to good effect.
- Training prepares trainees to assess pupils' achievement and plan and teach lessons that enable pupils, including those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, to make at least expected progress.
- Training in behaviour management is of good quality and ensures trainees are confident and prepared to manage behaviour and discipline in the classroom.
- Effective mentors and trainers work well together to ensure that training is cohesive and identifies and meets the needs of trainees.
- Targeted use of good training placements ensures trainees have sufficient practical experience to develop their teaching skills in different settings.
- Good training enables trainees to develop the reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills of the pupils they teach.
- **Primary training** in early reading, systematic synthetic phonics, communication and language development, and primary mathematics is of consistently good quality and ensures trainees have sufficient opportunities to teach these aspects with increasing confidence by the end of their training.
- Assessment of trainees is accurate and consistent. Good quality oral and written feedback is used to set well-focused developmental targets that support trainees to improve their practice.

### Requires improvement (3)

- The quality of training across the partnership, as judged by the impact on outcomes for trainees, requires improvement as it is not yet good.
- Final assessments of trainees are accurate in determining whether trainees have met the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' Standards* or relevant professional standards for ITE in further education.

### Inadequate (4)

Training across the partnership is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply.

- The quality of training across the partnership, as judged by the impact on outcomes for trainees is inadequate.
- Trainees and former trainees are insufficiently prepared to teach pupils in the age range and/or subject(s)/specialisms for which they are trained.
- Mentors and trainers lack the expertise required to support trainees' professional development or have low expectations.
- Placements fail to meet trainees' needs or provide them with sufficient opportunities to develop their teaching skills or demonstrate they can manage behaviour effectively.
- Training fails to equip trainees with the expertise required to enable pupils to communicate, read, write or use mathematics as well as they should.

- **Primary trainees** are insufficiently prepared to teach systematic synthetic phonics and/or primary mathematics.
- Assessment is inaccurate.
- Poor quality oral and written feedback and the lack of appropriate developmental targets inhibit trainees' reflections and their ability to improve their teaching

or:

- final assessments of trainees at the pass/fail boundary are inaccurate

or:

- the ITE partnership fails to comply with the initial teacher training criteria.

## Leadership and management of the partnership

### Criteria and outline guidance

107. The quality of leadership and management is evaluated in terms of:

- how relentlessly leaders and managers pursue a vision for excellence focused on improving or sustaining high-quality provision and outcomes for trainees
- how effectively schools, colleges and/or other settings are strongly engaged in the ITE partnership
- the rigour of the recruitment and selection process
- evidence of effective monitoring and evaluation
- how well the partnership meets current statutory initial teacher training criteria and requirements and all relevant legislation
- demonstrable capacity to bring about further improvement.

108. Within the context of the ITE partnership, inspectors must examine the impact of leaders and managers at all levels in improving or sustaining high-quality provision (training and assessment) and outcomes for trainees. Inspectors should take account of ongoing changes to the ways in which ITE partnerships are being led and managed. Inspectors must also consider the success of leaders and managers of the ITE partnership in preparing trainees to meet the minimum level of practice expected of teachers as defined in the *Teachers' standards* or the relevant professional standards for ITE in further education. They should also ensure compliance with the initial teacher training statutory criteria and requirements and all relevant legislation.

109. Inspectors must consider:

- how relentlessly leaders and managers pursue a vision for excellence focused on improving or sustaining high-quality provision and outcomes for trainees, for example through:
  - the rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans based on robust and perceptive self-evaluation
  - a thorough analysis of outcomes for trainees, including improvements in trainees’ practice in teaching reading using systematic synthetic phonics, behaviour management, and meeting the needs of pupils who are disabled or those who have special educational needs
  - the consistent application of policies and procedures across the ITE partnership
  - training that uses the most up-to-date research to promote high levels of subject and curriculum knowledge and excellence in teaching
  - providing high-quality professional development for all mentors and trainers involved in the ITE partnership
- how effectively schools, colleges and/or other settings are strongly engaged in the ITE partnership, for example through their involvement in:
  - strategic leadership and management
  - recruitment and selection of trainees
  - the design and delivery of training and assessment
- the rigour of the recruitment and selection process in:
  - recruiting high-quality trainees that meet the needs of local or regional employers
  - selecting candidates with appropriate qualifications, excellent subject/specialist knowledge and a demonstrable aptitude for teaching
  - placing applicants on a training programme that makes best use of their skills, aptitudes and previous experience and develops their subject knowledge where appropriate
- evidence of effective monitoring and evaluation, for example through:
  - monitoring the performance of trainees and the quality of training and assessment, including acting on findings to improve or sustain high-quality outcomes for trainees
  - evaluating accurately the performance of the ITE partnership relative to other ITE partnerships
  - drawing on satisfaction surveys of employers, trainees, former trainees and Newly Qualified Teacher responses (where appropriate) to review and improve provision

- how well the partnership meets current statutory initial teacher training criteria and requirements and all relevant legislation, including that related to:
  - promoting equality and diversity
  - eliminating discrimination
  - safeguarding
- demonstrable capacity to bring about further improvement as shown by a combination of:
  - a track record of improving or maintaining high-quality provision
  - improvements in the quality of training, including national priority areas for ITE, and the impact this has on improving trainees' practice over time
  - sustaining or improving high-quality trainee outcomes.

### **Grade descriptors: Leadership and management of the partnership**

*Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.*

#### **Outstanding (1)**

- The pursuit of excellence in all of the ITE partnership's activities is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to strongly improve, or sustain, the highest levels of provision and outcomes over a sustained period of time. Leaders and managers base their actions on a deep and accurate understanding of the ITE partnership's performance and strengths.
- Rigorous and well-embedded quality assurance systems are used extremely effectively to sustain high-quality outcomes and to continuously improve the quality of provision across the ITE partnership.
- Improvement planning is based on the rigorous, accurate and systematic analysis of internal and externally validated data, thorough self-evaluation and is extremely responsive to satisfaction surveys from employers, trainees, former trainees and the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) survey (where appropriate) who attest to the high quality of the training.
- All leaders and managers focus relentlessly on continually improving the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees.
- Mentors and trainers are of the highest quality and benefit from high-quality and well-focused professional development. As a result, the quality of training across the partnership is likely to be outstanding or at least consistently good and improving.
- Schools, colleges and/or other settings are influential in shaping the provision and are heavily involved in recruitment and selection and the strategic leadership and management of the ITE partnership.
- Rigorous selection procedures ensure the best possible trainees are recruited to meet specific local and/or regional needs. Trainees selected demonstrate excellent subject and curriculum knowledge, or a clear potential to develop this during their course, and have a strong aptitude for teaching.

- The performance of trainees and groups of trainees is monitored extremely rigorously from the point of selection to final assessment to ensure that all who are awarded qualified teacher status (QTS) become good or better teachers, with excellent subject knowledge, by the end of their training.

### **Good (2)**

- Key leaders and managers consistently communicate high expectations and ambition for the ITE partnership.
- Self-evaluation is robust and the ITE partnership's actions have been carefully planned, and are concerted and effective.
- Robust quality assurance systems enable the ITE partnership to continue improving the quality of provision and outcomes for trainees. Where weaknesses are identified, appropriate interventions are used to secure rapid improvements.
- Improvement planning is based on the accurate analysis of internal and externally evaluated data, realistic self-evaluation and is responsive to satisfaction surveys from employers, trainees, former trainees and the NQT survey (where appropriate).
- The quality of training is good and/or improving strongly as a result of accurate monitoring and professional development that is of good quality and closely matched to the needs of mentors and trainers.
- Schools, colleges and/or other settings are closely involved in the leadership and management and other aspects of the ITE partnership.
- Comprehensive selection procedures are used to assess trainees' potential to meet a local or regional need. Trainees' subject and curriculum knowledge is assessed accurately and they demonstrate a positive aptitude for teaching.
- The performance of trainees and groups of trainees is monitored effectively to ensure most trainees awarded QTS become at least good teachers by the end of their training.

### **Requires improvement (3)**

- The leadership and management of the partnership meet all relevant statutory criteria and requirements for initial teacher training and all relevant legislation, but requires improvement.
- Leaders and managers are able to demonstrate the capacity to tackle important improvements.

### **Inadequate (4)**

Leadership and management of the partnership are likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.

- Leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to secure the quality and consistency of provision across the partnership or to improve outcomes for trainees.
- Capacity for further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements since the last inspection. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is inaccurate in its evaluation of provision and outcomes.
- Improvement planning is not based on the accurate analysis of internal and externally evaluated data and realistic self-evaluation, and is unresponsive to satisfaction surveys from employers, trainees, former trainees and the NQT survey (where appropriate)
- Schools, colleges and/or other settings are insufficiently involved in the leadership and management of the partnership, the selection of trainees or the design and delivery of



training and assessment.

- Selection procedures lack the rigour required to assess trainees' potential to meet local and regional needs accurately and/or lead to low attainment, completion and employment rates.
- Any of the statutory criteria and requirements for initial teacher training or relevant legislation related to promoting equality and diversity and for eliminating discrimination or safeguarding are not met.

## Overall effectiveness

110. For each phase inspected, inspectors must evaluate:

- the extent to which the ITE partnership secures consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees.

111. In judging Overall effectiveness, inspectors must take account of the full range of evidence, including the three key judgements, and will then decide whether the ITE partnership's overall effectiveness for each phase is outstanding, good, requires improvement or is inadequate.

### Criteria and outline guidance

112. Inspectors must cover the main contributory judgements:

- outcomes for trainees
- the quality of training across the partnership
- the leadership and management of the partnership.

113. Inspectors must also consider:

- the extent to which the initial teacher training (ITT) provided by the ITE partnership is compliant with the relevant statutory ITT criteria and requirements and all relevant legislation, including that related to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.

### Grade descriptors: Overall effectiveness

#### Outstanding (1)

- The ITE partnership's practice consistently reflects the highest aspirations for trainees and expectations of mentors and trainers are exacting.
- The ITE partnership ensures that best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- The quality of training across the partnership is outstanding in all aspects, including in literacy – and systematic synthetic phonics for **primary trainees** – and highly relevant to trainees' needs.
- Outstanding training contributes to outstanding outcomes for all trainees or, in

exceptional circumstances, outcomes that are good and rapidly improving.

- The leadership and management of the partnership are outstanding.
- The ITE partnership has an outstanding reputation with its trainees, former trainees, schools, colleges and/or settings, other partners and employers and its trainees are very well prepared to join the profession as good or better teachers.

### **Good (2)**

- The ITE partnership takes effective action to enable most trainees to become at least good teachers.
- Trainees benefit from training that is at least good in all aspects, including in literacy and, for **primary trainees**, in systematic synthetic phonics.
- High-quality training contributes to good and improving outcomes for all trainees.
- Leaders and managers are good and play a significant role in sustaining or improving the quality of provision and trainees' outcomes.
- A positive climate for professional development for mentors and trainers exists.
- The ITE partnership is well respected by its trainees, former trainees, schools, colleges and/or other settings, other partners and employers and its trainees are well prepared for employment in the teaching profession.

### **Requires improvement (3)**

- Initial teacher training is compliant with statutory criteria and requirements and/or all relevant legislation, including that related to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.
- The quality of the ITE partnership in securing consistently high-quality outcomes for trainees requires improvement. Although there may be significant good practice, the ITE partnership is performing less well than might be reasonably expected in one or more of the key areas. This would be shown where any of the three key judgements are graded as requires improvement (grade 3).

### **Inadequate (4)**

Overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if inspectors judge any of the following to be inadequate:

- Outcomes for trainees
- Quality of training across the partnership
- Leadership and management of the partnership

or:

- initial teacher training is non-compliant with statutory criteria and requirements and/or all relevant legislation, including that related to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination and safeguarding.

## **Annex A. Instructions and guidance for focused monitoring inspections**

### **Background**

114. These monitoring inspections focus solely on the quality and effectiveness of phonics training in primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships and are undertaken as part of the ITE inspection framework. Inspectors will focus on trainees' skills in teaching early reading using systematic synthetic phonics.

115. ITE partnerships are selected for either ITE inspections or focused monitoring inspections based on an annual risk assessment process that uses a range of data available to Ofsted. This includes, but is not limited to, the results of the Teaching Agency's Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) survey. High priority will be given to focused monitoring inspections where responses to the NQT survey indicate significant and repeated dissatisfaction with NQTs' preparedness to teach phonics.

116. ITE partnerships will receive their next ITE inspection in accordance with routine inspection scheduling arrangements. Focused monitoring inspections cannot change the primary inspection grade for Overall effectiveness, but if the monitoring inspection raises concerns about the standard of training provided, then this may influence the timing of the next inspection of the ITE partnership.

117. This guidance sets out the judgements that inspectors make and report on when evaluating the quality and effectiveness of phonics training and the range and types of evidence they will use.

118. All monitoring inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles and code of conduct for inspectors as set out in paragraphs 64–66.

119. Focused monitoring inspections are led by a specialist primary ITE lead inspector who is allocated three days to plan, conduct and report on the inspection event. S/he may be joined by up to three team inspectors on the second day of the inspection, depending on the size of the primary ITE partnership.

### **Evaluating the quality and effectiveness of training in phonics**

#### **Introduction**

120. In all focused monitoring inspections, inspectors are required to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of training in phonics.

121. Inspectors make their judgements using the four-point scale: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is requires improvement; and 4 is inadequate.

122. Inspectors must make their judgements by carefully considering the evidence gathered and by using their professional judgement.

## Outline guidance

123. Inspectors must consider first-hand evidence – including a sample of observations of trainees and NQTs teaching phonics – and observations of any school- or centre-based phonics training taking place at the time of the focused monitoring inspection.

124. Inspectors should take account of the following in their evaluation:

- the quality and effectiveness of training in preparing trainees to teach phonics to pupils in the age range for which they are trained
- whether trainees, 'if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics'<sup>18</sup> by the end of their training
- any specific issues raised in the last inspection report about phonics and whether these have been tackled effectively and are showing clear signs of improvement
- the views of trainees, NQTs, mentors, trainers, induction tutors and employers on the quality of training in phonics and its impact on trainees' and NQTs' teaching and pupils' learning
- the effectiveness of the ITE partnership's work in seeking and responding to satisfaction surveys, including those from trainees, NQTs, induction tutors and employers about the quality of training in phonics
- the quality of outcomes for trainees in relation to how well trainees teach phonics
- the quality, coherence and rigour of school- and centre-based training in phonics
- the quality and effectiveness of training materials, directed tasks, assignments and audits related to phonics
- the quality and effectiveness of placement schools in providing experiences that develop trainees' confidence and competence in the teaching of phonics
- the expertise and effectiveness of mentors and other trainers in providing high-quality training in phonics
- the way trainees' knowledge, understanding and ability to teach phonics is tracked, and the effectiveness of interventions to improve trainees' progress and development

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<sup>18</sup> Page 7 of the *Teachers' Standards* states that 'A teacher must .....demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge';  
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00066-2011>.

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in ensuring that the quality and effectiveness of the training in phonics, and the outcomes for trainees in phonics, are sustained or improving.

## **Focused monitoring inspections**

125. The lead inspector will telephone the ITE partnership the afternoon before to inform the provider's representative of the inspection and their expected time of arrival to complete on-site preparation. If the provider's representative is unavailable, the lead inspector will ask to speak to the most senior member of staff present. If it is not possible to contact the ITE partnership, the lead inspector will inform the ITE partnership of the focused monitoring inspection on arrival.

126. Inspectors and ITE partnerships should follow the guidance for deferral in paragraph 37.

127. As soon as it is certain that the focused monitoring inspection can take place, the lead inspector will notify the inspection service provider (ISP) who will send formal confirmation to the ITE partnership by email. The email will include contact details for the ISP and an outline of the arrangements for the publication of the focused monitoring inspection letter after the event.

128. Inspectors should make initial preparations for the inspection prior to contacting the ITE partnership and should complete their on-site preparation with the provider's representative during the afternoon of the first day. When doing so, they should be flexible enough to gather secure evidence to evaluate and report on the main focus of the inspection. Wherever possible, inspectors should maximise the time available by visiting a number of trainees and former trainees based in particular schools, colleges and/or settings.

## **During the inspection**

### **Inspection activities**

129. Inspection activities should involve:

- observations of school- and/or centre-based training in phonics
- lesson observations of trainees and NQTs teaching phonics
- analysis of directed tasks, assignments and audits related to phonics
- scrutiny of the ITE partnership's records and documentation, including:
  - data on outcomes
  - training materials
  - evaluations of the quality of school- and centre-based training in phonics
  - tracking documentation used to measure trainees' progress in phonics

- discussions with:
  - individual and/or groups of trainees and NQTs
  - trainers, mentors, induction tutors and employers
  - key staff involved in training in phonics
  - leaders and managers
- examination of additional documentation, including, for example:
  - reports or action plans from the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and/or other key partners
  - minutes – particularly when, for example, a separate committee has been established to oversee progress on phonics provision
  - analysis of trainees', NQTs' and employers' views on the impact of actions taken to improve phonics provision
  - case or impact studies provided by the ITE partnership.

130. While discussions are important, the main focus will be on gathering first-hand evidence, including observations of school- and/or centre-based training in phonics and trainees' and NQTs' teaching of phonics.

131. Inspection activities will be tightly focused on:

- issues that relate directly to the quality and effectiveness of training in phonics
- any concerns raised by the pre-inspection analysis or during the inspection, including those raised by trainees.

## **Recording evidence**

132. Inspectors will follow the guidance on completing evidence forms in paragraphs 38–40.

## **Engaging with the provider's representative and phase leaders and managers**

133. The principles for engaging with the provider's representative and leaders and managers are set out in paragraphs 52–54 and should be applied during focused monitoring inspections. The lead inspector should exercise discretion in adapting and extending the approach according to the ITE partnership's circumstances.

134. It is important that professional dialogue is maintained throughout the inspection. Emerging strengths and issues should be discussed during feedback at the end of the inspection and should not be a surprise to the ITE partnership.

135. Throughout the inspection, inspectors are asked to thoroughly probe the areas of concern and acknowledge where the ITE partnership has been successful in tackling areas for improvement.

### **Feedback on observations of trainees, Newly Qualified Teachers and school- and centre-based training sessions**

136. Feedback on the quality of teaching and learning in phonics is an integral and essential part of the inspection. Inspectors must follow the guidance for feedback and discussion in paragraphs 43–48.

### **Oral feedback at the end of the inspection**

137. Inspectors must provide brief oral feedback at the end of the focused monitoring inspection. It is the lead inspector's responsibility to manage the meeting.

138. The lead inspector and provider's representative should decide which members of the ITE partnership will attend the feedback, especially where the feedback is challenging or raises sensitive issues.

139. The feedback must:

- report on the range of evidence gathered
- explain the focused monitoring inspection judgement
- make clear that the text of the monitoring letter will be quality assured and may differ slightly from the wording of the oral feedback, although it will contain the same clear messages and the judgements will not change.

140. If the monitoring inspection has raised serious concerns, this may affect the timing of the next ITE inspection. The lead inspector will make sure that the primary ITE partnership is aware of this and will inform the Managing Inspector for ITE. However, the likely timing of any further inspection will not be indicated to the ITE partnership.

### **The monitoring inspection letter**

141. The letter will be published on Ofsted's website within 15 days of the end of the inspection.

142. The arrangements for publishing the letter are as follows.

- The lead inspector completes the letter on the day after the inspection and sends it to the appropriate inspection service provider (ISP) by 9am on the second working day after the inspection.
- The ISP edits and sends the letter to the primary ITE partnership within five working days of the end of the inspection. A proportion of letters may also be surveyed by HMI.

- The ITE partnership has 24 hours to check the letter and report any factual inaccuracies to the ISP.
- The ISP prepares a final version of the letter, which is sent to:
  - the ITE partnership
  - the lead inspector
  - the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL).

143. In general, monitoring letters are expected to be between 700 and 1,000 words in length. Inspectors will make professional judgements about the extent of detail needed to clearly explain the quality and effectiveness of its training in phonics, depending on the complexity of circumstances. The letter will include:

- the judgement made (using the four-point scale set out in paragraph 121) on the quality and effectiveness of training in phonics
- the quality of outcomes for trainees in relation to how well trainees teach phonics
- the quality of training across the partnership in preparing trainees to teach phonics confidently and competently
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in ensuring that the quality and effectiveness of the training in phonics, and the outcomes for trainees in phonics, are sustained or improving.