

Consultation on how Estyn inspects

Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. It is independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales. The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. This consultation seeks your views on Estyn's inspections. Any changes will be made from September 2017.

This consultation relates to the following sectors:

- primary schools
- secondary schools
- all-age schools
- federated schools
- special schools
- pupil referral units
- independent schools and independent special schools and colleges
- initial teacher education and training
- further education institutions
- adult community learning
- work-based learning

Non-maintained settings and local authorities are not included, though the feedback may also inform future inspection arrangements in those sectors.

The inspection arrangements for the further education sector were reviewed last year to reflect changes in the sector in recent years. This consultation will have a bearing on the inspection framework for further education institutions. Any adjustments may be introduced over a longer period of time and in light of an evaluation of the new arrangements in the sector.

Estyn introduced the current inspection arrangements in September 2010 at the start of a six-year cycle of inspections (2010-2016) for most sectors that it inspects. A mid-cycle review, done by Estyn in early 2012, showed that stakeholders were generally positive about these arrangements. In 2013, Estyn and the Welsh Government consulted on changes to the frequency of inspections and the notice period prior to inspection. As a result, regulations were changed to break the predictability of the timing of school inspections.

Since then, major changes have been planned for the education system in Wales as a result of the New Deal and the Successful Futures and Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers reports. It is timely to look again at what and how Estyn inspects. Estyn welcomes a wide debate with learners, professionals, parents or carers and anyone with an interest in education about our future inspection arrangements.

Some aspects of what and how Estyn inspects are legal requirements. Any changes to these aspects would take a little longer and be subject to further consultation.

How to submit your views

There are two ways of completing and submitting your response:

- 1 Complete the online questionnaire at www.estyn.gov.wales/consultation
- 2 Print this document and post your response to:

Consultation Officer
 Estyn,
 Anchor Court,
 Keen Road,
 Cardiff
 CF24 5JW

The consultation will launch on 30 September 2015 and will close on 11 November 2015. Please make sure all postal responses arrive at Estyn by this date.

Confidentiality

The information provided will be held by Estyn and individual responses will not be shared with anybody outside the organisation. The information will be used to help improve how Estyn inspects education and training in Wales. If you disclose your identity, it will be treated in confidence.

Key information about you

Please choose one option below which best describes the capacity in which you are completing this questionnaire.

Learner <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/carer <input type="checkbox"/>	Education professional <input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the public <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify):			

Which sector(s) are you interested in? (Please select all that apply).

Adult community learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authorities and regional consortia	<input type="checkbox"/>
All-age and federated schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	Primary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early years settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil referral units	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent schools and independent special schools and colleges	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initial teacher education and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work-based learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify):			

Question 1: Planning initial inspections

At the moment, all providers are inspected in the same way. In future we could decide to inspect providers in different ways depending on how they did in their last inspection or for some other reason.

Please tick one box against the statements below to indicate your preferred approach.

<p>All providers should be inspected in the same way</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Estyn should look at their last inspection and other information and decide how to inspect them</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Do something different</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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If you have selected 'do something different', please use the box below to state how you feel inspections of education and training providers in Wales should be carried out.

Question 2a: Follow-up activity in schools

During an inspection, inspectors consider whether the provider needs any follow-up activity.

For schools, Estyn has four categories of follow up:

Category	Description
Local authority monitoring	Local authority monitors progress and gives Estyn a report after about 12-18 months
Estyn monitoring	Estyn checks progress and/or visits the school after about 12-18 months
Significant Improvement	Estyn visits the school to check progress after about 12 months
Special measures	Estyn visits the school every term to check progress

Do you feel that these four levels of monitoring are effective for schools?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure / no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Question 2b: Follow-up activity in post-16 providers

For post-16 providers, there are two categories of follow up, called Estyn monitoring and re-inspection.

Do you feel that these two levels of monitoring are effective for post-16 providers?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure / no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to provide suggestions on how Estyn could improve its follow-up arrangements for both schools and post-16 providers.

Question 3: Estyn's common inspection framework

The common inspection framework tells everyone what we look at on an inspection. There are three key questions (Key Questions 1, 2 and 3) split into 10 different areas (1.1 - 3.4). Currently we ask questions about all these areas.

More information about Estyn's common inspection framework can be found on Estyn's website: <http://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/inspection-explained/common-inspection-framework>

How important is it that we continue to inspect each of these areas?

	Very important	Important	Not very important	Not at all important	Unsure
Key Question 1: Outcomes for learners					
1.1 Standards – do learners work well and get good results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Wellbeing – are learners enjoying education?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key Question 2: Quality of provision					
2.1 Learning experiences – do subjects (the curriculum) help learning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Teaching – is teaching meeting learners' needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Care, support and guidance – is there support when learners need it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 Learning environment – is the provider a positive place to learn?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key Question 3: Leadership					
3.1 Leadership and management – is there good leadership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Quality improvement – does the provider keep getting better?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Partnership working – is the provider working well with others to help learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Resource management – does the provider make good use of money and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use the box below to provide suggestions on any areas that you feel that Estyn should prioritise or focus on in its inspections, including areas that are not included in the current framework.

Question 4a: Estyn's judgement words

Estyn currently uses the following judgement words and descriptions in its reports to describe providers.

Judgement word	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

Do you think that Estyn should continue to use these four words and descriptions for inspection judgements?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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If you selected 'No', please use the box below to state what you would find more useful.

Question 4b: Making judgements

Currently, Estyn makes 15 judgements in an inspection report. Inspectors make a judgement against each of the 10 quality indicators described earlier in question 3 (standards, wellbeing, teaching etc). They then use these findings to make a judgement for three key questions on outcomes, provision and leadership. Inspectors also make two judgements about the provider’s overall performance and how likely they are to improve.

What are your views on the number of different judgements that Estyn makes?

Far too many <input type="checkbox"/>	Too many <input type="checkbox"/>	Just about right <input type="checkbox"/>	Too few <input type="checkbox"/>	Far too few <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/no response <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to explain your answer and to make any further comments about what Estyn should make judgements on.

Question 5: Notice period

Since 2010, providers across most sectors have 20 working days’ notice before an inspection.

What do you think about the present notice period?

Far too long <input type="checkbox"/>	Too long <input type="checkbox"/>	Just about right <input type="checkbox"/>	Too short <input type="checkbox"/>	Far too short <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/no response <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to state what you feel the notice period should be and to explain your reasons why.

Question 6: Involving parents/carers, pupils, staff and governors in inspections

Parents/carers in schools

Currently, parents/carers can complete an online questionnaire and can attend a parents/carers meeting before the start of the inspection to share their views.

Question 6a: Should Estyn continue to use anonymous questionnaires to seek the views of parents/carers before an inspection?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Question 6b: Should Estyn continue to invite parents/carers to attend a meeting as part of an inspection?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Learners

At the moment, a proportion of learners over the age of seven complete an online questionnaire before an inspection. Inspectors also meet groups of learners during an inspection and speak to individual learners when they observe lessons.

Question 6c: Should Estyn continue to use anonymous questionnaires to seek the views of learners before an inspection?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Staff

Inspectors interview some members of staff during inspections but Estyn does not use a staff questionnaire to enable all members of staff to share their views.

Question 6d: Should Estyn introduce anonymous staff questionnaires before an inspection?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Governors

Where a provider has a governing body or similar body, inspectors interview the chair of governors and a small number of other representatives.

Question 6e: Should Estyn introduce anonymous governor questionnaires for all governors before an inspection?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no preference <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to provide suggestions on any other ways Estyn can involve everyone in inspections.

Question 7: Inspection reports

To be useful, inspection reports should be easy to understand and published quickly after the inspection. They should give the reader a clear picture of a provider's strengths and weaknesses. They should also help providers to improve.

Using the above definition of usefulness, how far do you agree or disagree that Estyn's inspection reports are useful?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no response <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to provide suggestions on how Estyn can improve its inspection reports.

Question 8: Lay inspectors

Lay inspectors are members of the general public who are trained by Estyn to take part in school inspections. They are not education professionals, but they provide a lay person's opinion.

How far do you agree or disagree that Estyn should include a lay inspector on school inspection teams?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure/ no response <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the box below to explain your choice and provide any other suggestions about the use of lay inspectors on inspections.

Question 9: General comments

Estyn consulted on its inspection arrangements in 2012 and there was strong support for the aspects such as:

- a senior member of staff from a similar provider (a 'peer inspector') should be included as a member of the inspection team
- a senior member of staff from the provider should be invited to join the inspection team as a 'nominee'
- inspection should build on the provider's own self-evaluation

Estyn is committed to improving the way it inspects and aims to build on these strengths.

We are interested in your views on how we can do our work more effectively.

Please use the box below to provide feedback on any other aspects of Estyn's inspection arrangements and to provide suggestions on any other issues that should be considered as part of the review.

Additional information

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please use the box below to state the name of the organisation.

If you are happy for Estyn to contact you again in relation to your comments please provide your contact details below:

Thank you for taking part in Estyn’s consultation. The information received will be used to develop how Estyn inspects. The new arrangements will start in September 2017. If you have any questions regarding the consultation, please email Estyn at: consultation@estyn.gov.wales