



Guidance

Risk assessment methodology: initial teacher education

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Introduction

We use risk assessment to ensure that our approach to inspection is proportionate and to focus our efforts where they can have the greatest impact. We will apply the methodology described here for all initial teacher education (ITE) inspections. We base the selection criteria on the [ITE inspection framework and handbook](#). It is important to note that the risk assessment process is not used in any way to pre-judge inspection outcomes.

A new 6-year cycle of ITE inspections began in the 2020/21 academic year. These inspections will normally take place across the spring and summer academic terms, with re-inspections taking place the following year in the corresponding term.

The risk assessment process

Risk assessment has 2 stages:

- stage 1 involves analysing eligible partnerships based on published and unpublished data
- stage 2 involves a more in-depth desk-based review by Senior Her Majesty's Inspectors (SHMI), where they consider a wider range of available information

Stage 1: analysing eligible partnerships

The initial dataset used for risk assessment contains all accredited ITE partnerships that are open and offering ITE courses at that time.

This year's risk assessment was predominantly based on 5 factors:

- known concerns for a partnership, where applicable
- identifying new partnerships and new phases offered by existing partnerships
- those partnerships previously only inspected as an employment-based initial teacher training (EBITT) phase
- each partnership's latest and previous overall effectiveness grade
- the length of time since the partnership's last inspection

For the purposes of risk assessment, if we have inspected a partnership more than once across different educational phases within an inspection cycle, we take the earliest of these inspections as its last.

We prioritise inspection of new partnerships or those offering a new phase (early years, primary, secondary or further education) within their second year of operation. We also prioritise inspection of any partnership only inspected as an EBITT in the previous inspection cycle, given that employment-based routes are no longer judged as a separate provision of ITE.

We allocated a risk score based on grade movement to the latest and previous overall effectiveness grades for each phase of the partnership. We combined these risk scores to produce an overall risk score for each partnership. These were then considered alongside the length of time since its last inspection.

We used the following data sources:

- unpublished newly accredited partnership information from the Department for Education
- published latest and previous inspection data taken from Ofsted ITE inspection reports
- unpublished partnership survey data, acquired from an annual survey sent to ITE partnerships to update us on programmes and courses available during the next academic year

Stage 2: desk-based review

SHMI review the information from stage 1 of the risk assessment process. They also review risk by considering:

- qualifying complaints
- survey inspection outcomes
- any other significant concerns relating to the partnership

Timing of inspections

For further information on the use of risk assessment and the timing of inspections, please refer to the [ITE inspection framework and handbook](#).

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