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Guidance

Further education and skills handbook

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Introduction

1. This handbook describes the main activities that inspectors carry out when they inspect and regulate providers of education and skills for learners aged 16 to 19 and adults and inspections for 2018. It sets out the evaluation criteria that inspectors use to make their judgements and on which they report.

2. The handbook has 5 parts.

- Part 1. How further education and skills providers will be inspected. We combine information about the processes before, during and after inspection
- Part 2. The evaluation schedule. This contains the evaluation criteria inspectors use to make judgements about the quality of further education and skills provision and other types of evidence used
- Part 3. The handbook is a guide for inspectors on how to carry out inspections of further education and skills provision. It also contains information for providers and stakeholders to inform them about inspection processes and procedures. It balances the need for consistent inspections with the need to respond to each provider's individual circumstances. It also includes the inspection of 16 to 19 study programmes under the Education (Independent Schools) Regulations 2022. Inspectors will apply their professional judgement when they use this handbook.

Types of providers subject to inspection covered by this handbook

4. The providers we inspect under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and using this handbook are:

- further education colleges
- sixth form colleges
- independent specialist colleges
- 16 to 19 academies (free schools)
- independent training providers (those delivering apprenticeship training up to and including level 5)[FE0006.R1]
- local authority providers
- designated institutions[FE0006.R2]
- adult education providers
- independent providers that provide further education and/or apprenticeship training up to and including level 5[FE0006.R3]
- 16 to 19 academies free schools

5. The term 'further education and skills provider' covers all of these types of provider and also includes the provision of 16 to 19 study programmes, traineeships, programmes for young people, and learning, apprenticeship provision and adult provision (except for high needs learners). Apprenticeship training at all levels is underpinned by the Skills for Life.

6. Learner' is a collective term used throughout this handbook to refer to learners aged 16 or over (ie, between relevant, 16 or 19 years old) whether they are a student, an apprentice or trainee, who is in education or training of the kind set out in FE0006.R1.

7. Teacher' is a collective term used throughout this handbook to refer to teachers, trainers, lecturers, assessors and staff in similar roles.

Privacy notice

8. During an inspection, inspectors will collect information about staff and learners by talking to them, looking at documents, records and survey responses and other recorded information and by observing everyday life of the provider. Inspectors may also collect information from other sources, such as Ofsted's Parent View. Inspectors will report and list the sources used in the inspection report. Inspectors will not name learners, but some of the information may make it possible to identify an individual learner.

9. Individuals and organisations have legal requirements to provide information to Ofsted as part of inspections. Ofsted has legal powers under section 122 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to require the provision of information from providers of education and skills for learners aged 16 and over. Inspectors use this power to gather information on a learner, key any documents relating to the education or training' of students from providers. Ofsted also has the power to require other inspectors to inspect or participate and other directors that may hold this information.

Inspection during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic

10. This section sets out our approach as inspectors resume. It covers how we will reflect the COVID-19 sector plans making judgements. We will keep our inspection and methodology under review as circumstances change and we continue to emerge from the pandemic. This section should be read alongside the other parts of the inspection handbook.

Preparation and planning

11. During the planning and with the inspection nominee, the lead inspector will seek to understand the specific impact of COVID-19 on the provider and learners and how the provider has responded to the challenges it faced.

12. This discussion will also explore how the provider implemented the curriculum remotely and what, if any, elements of remote education remain in place at the time of inspection.

13. In this conversation, the lead inspector and nominee will agree safety protocols that inspectors will follow and follow to ensure that the inspection is completed in COVID-19 secure way.

Curriculum

14. Inspectors recognise that providers may have been unable to implement the curriculum in the usual way during the COVID-19 pandemic. They will seek to understand how leaders and managers adapted and prioritised the curriculum.

15. This will include explaining how the provider has implemented the curriculum remotely, what, if any, elements of remote education remain in place at the time of inspection, and how the provider has identified and addressed any gaps and new learning needs and how they have responded to their in-person curriculum.

Personal development

16. When focusing on personal and personal development, inspectors will seek to understand what took place before the pandemic, what the provider has in place now and how it has adapted its offer. Inspectors will also explore how the provider's personal development offer took place before the pandemic restrictions been disrupted. Therefore, they will focus on understanding the steps that leaders have taken to offer a wide range of personal development opportunities.

Remote education

17. Ofsted does not have a preferred model for remote education. The quality of remote education delivered that inspector judged COVID will not impact on an judgement of the provider's education.

18. Where remote education remains in place, inspectors may observe remote teaching and training and review materials. We will only expect to see the provider's typical remote education and do not expect providers to arrange anything extra for inspection.

19. To understand the implementation of the curriculum, inspectors may discuss remote education with leaders, staff and learners. They may focus on the unintended aims and learning outcomes.

20. Given the above, when we refer to the implementation of the curriculum and quality of education within this handbook, we are including remote education. We consider that education delivered remotely or online should be integrated into the programme of education and should be designed to support the wider implementation of the provider's curriculum.

External data

21. Inspectors will consider available external data throughout the inspection, as set out in paragraphs 393 to 395. However, they will be mindful of the age and relevance of the data when making judgements.

Leadership

22. We recognise that responding to COVID-19 has placed great demands on leaders and managers and may have disrupted development plans.

23. Inspectors will seek to understand how leaders and managers supported learners and staff through the COVID-19 pandemic, for example by understanding:

- remote education was put in place and monitored
- how leaders and managers ensured access to remote education
- vulnerable learners were kept safe and prioritised for face-to-face provision
- where necessary, employers, parents and carers were kept up to date with developments and changes
- COVID-19 related staff sickness and absence impacted on the running of the provider
- staff and learners' wellbeing have been prioritised

Safeguarding

24. Inspectors will pay attention to how leaders and managers adapted approaches to safeguarding during the pandemic to make sure that:

- vulnerable learners were prioritised for face-to-face education as necessary
- safeguarding procedures remained effective for those remote education, on-site provision and in the community

Inspectors will discuss how safeguarding arrangements have changed over time due to the pandemic, and how leaders and managers have made sure that they remain effective.

Remote elements of the inspection

25. As with our practice before the pandemic, we will continue to carry out some elements of our inspection remotely. We will do this where we judge that it will not affect the quality of the inspection. We may also ask leaders to make some staff available, for example, those responsible for governance, subcontractors and others.

Part 1. How further education and skills providers will be inspected

How providers are selected for inspection

26. To decide when we should next inspect a provider, we use the 'frequency of inspection' guidance set out below. We also use risk assessment to ensure that our approach to inspection is proportionate, so that we can focus our efforts where we can have the greatest impact.

27. We use a broad range of information to assess risk and performance when selecting providers for inspection. We consider factors in particular to good or outstanding providers. The indicators include:

- previous inspection reports
- learner numbers
- performance data
- destination data
- information provided or concerns raised, by a funding body, a government regulator, a professional, statutory or regulatory body, or an employer, parent, carer or learner
- information from other inspectorates, including from independent inspectors
- relevant local initiatives, such as changes to leaders or structures
- any information about significant changes to the type of provision and the number of learners in a provider
- the size and scope of a provider, including the number and type of courses and the geographical spread of education or training centres and any recent changes to these
- the outcomes of monitoring visits or any other related activity

28. We can use relevant information at any point during the year to select providers. We will review this information regularly.

Frequency of inspection

Providers judged outstanding

29. Providers judged outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection are now eligible for a shorter inspection.

30. Those judged to be outstanding at their previous inspection before September 2015 will normally receive an initial full inspection. We will provide this report.

31. Those providers judged outstanding from September 2015 onwards will normally receive a shorter inspection. We will provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that this is the most appropriate way forward. This might, for example, if there are concerns about safeguarding, if the provider's performance has declined or if the provision has changed substantially.

32. We will normally inspect the following types of outstanding provider by September 2022:

- further education colleges
- sixth form colleges
- designated institutions
- 16 to 19 academies free schools
- independent specialist colleges
- employer providers

33. We will continue to inspect the following types of outstanding provider normally within 6 years since the date we published their last inspection report:

- higher education institutions offering further education and/or apprenticeship training up to and including level 5
- local authority providers
- independent specialist colleges

34. A provider judged as outstanding may also be inspected as part of our survey or research work or through a monitoring visit.

Providers judged good

35. Providers judged good for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection will normally be inspected within 5 years of the publication of this inspection report.[TIF0001] This will normally be a shorter inspection but inspectors may decide if it is appropriate to carry out a full inspection. We will decide if this is the most appropriate way of gathering information. We may also decide to inspect the staff learners, employers, those responsible for governance, subcontractors and others.

Part 1. How further education and skills providers will be inspected

New providers

36. To decide when we should next inspect a provider, we use the 'frequency of inspection' guidance set out below. We also use risk assessment to ensure that our approach to inspection is proportionate, so that we can focus our efforts where we can have the greatest impact.

37. We use a broad range of information to assess risk and performance when selecting providers for inspection. We consider factors in particular to good or outstanding providers. The indicators include:

- previous inspection reports
- learner numbers
- performance data
- destination data
- information provided or concerns raised, by a funding body, a government regulator, a professional, statutory or regulatory body, or an employer, parent, carer or learner
- information from other inspectorates, including from independent inspectors
- relevant local initiatives, such as changes to leaders or structures
- any information about significant changes to the type of provision and the number of learners in a provider
- the size and scope of a provider, including the number and type of courses and the geographical spread of education or training centres and any recent changes to these
- the outcomes of monitoring visits or any other related activity

38. We can use relevant information at any point during the year to select providers. We will review this information regularly.

Frequency of inspection

Providers judged outstanding

39. Providers judged outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection are now eligible for a shorter inspection.

40. Those judged to be outstanding at their previous inspection before September 2015 will normally receive an initial full inspection. We will provide this report.

41. Those providers judged outstanding from September 2015 onwards will normally receive a shorter inspection. We will provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that this is the most appropriate way forward. This might, for example, if there are concerns about safeguarding, if the provider's performance has declined or if the provision has changed substantially.

42. We will normally inspect the following types of outstanding provider by September 2022:

- further education colleges
- sixth form colleges
- designated institutions
- 16 to 19 academies free schools
- independent specialist colleges
- employer providers

43. We will continue to inspect the following types of outstanding provider normally within 6 years since the date we published their last inspection report:

- higher education institutions offering further education and/or apprenticeship training up to and including level 5
- local authority providers
- independent specialist colleges

44. A provider judged as outstanding may also be inspected as part of our survey or research work or through a monitoring visit.

Providers judged good

45. Providers judged good for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection will normally be inspected within 5 years of the publication of this inspection report.[TIF0001] This will normally be a shorter inspection but inspectors may decide if it is appropriate to carry out a full inspection. We will decide if this is the most appropriate way of gathering information. We may also decide to inspect the staff learners, employers, those responsible for governance, subcontractors and others.

Providers with Level 5 apprenticeship provision

46. From 1 April 2021, Ofsted is responsible for inspecting apprenticeships training for learners aged 19 and over at level 5 (South Wales and North Wales are inspected by Estyn).

47. How this affects providers in different categories is set out below.[FE0006.R1]

Providers with Level 5 apprenticeship provision that have already received a full inspection

Providers in training providers that have already received a full Ofsted inspection (whether under the EIF or previous inspection frameworks) and that delivered apprenticeship training. When they next receive a full or short inspection or monitoring visit, we will include the provision of apprenticeships at level 5 in the scope of the apprenticeship provision and any other provision they delivery (including other inspection (as set out in paragraph 20). Timing of their inspection will depend on their overall effectiveness and, as usual, will be set out above.[FE0006.R2]

Providers with Level 5 apprenticeship provision and no other provision subject to inspection by Ofsted

Providers that only deliver apprenticeship provision at level 5. We will inspect providers delivering no other provision subject to Ofsted inspection (see paragraph 20) will be inspected within 5 years of the publication of their last inspection report, or monitoring visit within 24 months of April 2021, when we introduce our inspection of level 5 apprenticeships.

a. These providers will then receive a full inspection within 24 months of the monitoring visit report being published. When a provider receives a full inspection, we will include the provision of apprenticeships at level 5 in the scope of the apprenticeship provision and any other provision they delivery (including other inspection (as set out in paragraph 20) will also include a possible two-week multi-provision inspection of safeguarding.

New providers with Level 5 apprenticeship provision that have not yet received their monitoring visit or full inspection

a. New providers that have delivered apprenticeship provision of levels 2 and 3 as well as at levels 4 to 5 and have not previously received a monitoring visit or full inspection will normally receive a monitoring visit within 36 months of the date they started to deliver apprenticeships at level 5. We will provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that this is the most appropriate way forward.

a.[FE0006.R3] These providers will then receive a full inspection within 24 months of the monitoring visit report being published. When a provider receives a full inspection, we will include the provision of apprenticeships at level 5 in the scope of the apprenticeship provision and any other provision they delivery (including other inspection (as set out in paragraph 20) will also include a possible two-week multi-provision inspection of safeguarding.

New providers with Level 5 apprenticeship provision that have not yet received their monitoring visit or full inspection

a. New providers that have delivered apprenticeship provision of levels 2 and 3 as well as at levels 4 to 5 and have not previously received a monitoring visit or full inspection will normally receive a monitoring visit within 36 months of the date they started to deliver apprenticeships at level 5. We will provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that this is the most appropriate way forward.

a.[FE0006.R4] These providers will then receive a full inspection within 24 months of the monitoring visit report being published. When a provider receives a full inspection, we will include the provision of apprenticeships at level 5 in the scope of the apprenticeship provision and any other provision they delivery (including other inspection (as set out in paragraph 20) will also include a possible two-week multi-provision inspection of safeguarding.

Providers with level 5 apprenticeship provision and no other provision subject to inspection by Ofsted

Providers that only deliver apprenticeship provision at level 5. We will inspect providers delivering no other provision subject to Ofsted inspection (see paragraph 20) will be inspected within 5 years of the publication of their last inspection report, or monitoring visit within 24 months of April 2021, when we introduce our inspection of level 5 apprenticeships.

a. These providers will then receive a full inspection within 24 months of the monitoring visit report being published. When a provider receives a full inspection, we will include the provision of apprenticeships at level 5 in the scope of the apprenticeship provision and any other provision they delivery (including other inspection (as set out in Paragraph 20) will also include a possible two-week multi-provision inspection of safeguarding.

New providers with level 5 apprenticeship provision that have received a new provider monitoring visit or full inspection

48. New providers that have received their first new provider monitoring visit but have not yet received their full inspection will normally receive this within 40 months of the date of publication of their new provider monitoring visit.

Newly merged colleges

49. A newly merged college will normally receive a full inspection within 3 years of the date of the merger. We will provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that the original dates of the types of merger, as one of merged colleges, as new colleges.[FE0006.R5] Where a merger involves a college that has been judged inadequate, we will inform the Secretary of State for Education.

50. Any newly merged college may receive a monitoring visit at any reasonable time. A newly merged college may receive a monitoring visit before the first full inspection if the overall effectiveness grade of one or more of the predecessor colleges was inadequate or if the merger involves a college that has been judged inadequate or requires Ofsted about the progress of the merged college, including from the most recent report(s) of the predecessor college(s). Monitoring visits will normally arise on a proportionate basis, taking into account the risk to the quality of the provision and report with normally additional Concerns about risks arising from the other sources may lead to an earlier full inspection.[FE0006.R6]

Sixth form colleges that consent to become 16 to 19 academies

51. Sixth form colleges that consent to become 16 to 19 academies will be treated as new providers and will normally receive a full inspection. We will provide a report. We will normally visit the inspection that the performance drops, or there is other concerning reason, such as safeguarding concerns. These first were good will normally receive a full inspection within 3 years of the publication of their last inspection report. Those that were inadequate will inspection within that timeline if risks are identified. Those judged as requires improvement will normally be inspected within 2 to 30 months of the publication of their last inspection report. Those judged outstanding will normally inspect within 7 to 30 months of the publication of the previous report (see paragraphs 29 and 32). Those judged inadequate will normally be inspected within 18 months of the publication of their last inspection report (see paragraphs 33 and 34).[FE0006.R7] They will normally receive an monitoring visit within 24 months (see paragraphs 37 and 38).[FE0006.R8]

52. If, 8 to 10 the academy has had to be transferred (transferred to a new sponsor) or otherwise intervened, we will treat it as a new provider from the point of its transfer for the purposes of inspection.

Types of inspection

Full inspection

53. Providers that are graded as requires improvement or inadequate will undergo a full inspection as outlined in paragraphs 56 and 57. Inspectors grade the overall effectiveness of the provision, taking into account the quality of education, behaviour and the criteria and grade descriptors set out in part 2 of this handbook. Providers graded as outstanding or good may also undergo a full inspection if, for example, there are concerns about safeguarding, if the provider's performance has declined or the provision is in scope for inspection under the Education (Independent Schools) Regulations 2022 or if the quality or scope of any provider at any reasonable time.

Short inspections

54. Providers judged good at their previous inspection will normally receive a short inspection but may receive a full inspection (see above).

55. Providers judged outstanding at their previous inspection look place before September 2015 will normally receive a full inspection (see above). Providers judged outstanding at their previous inspection after September 2015 will normally receive a shorter inspection (see above). Providers judged outstanding at their previous inspection look place before September 2015 will normally receive a full inspection (see above).

56. A short inspection will determine primarily whether the quality of education/training that learners receive is good. We provide a report. We will decide if the information suggests that the provision is good. The information about short inspections, see paragraphs 179 to 220 and the handbook.

Survey and research visits

57. We may visit providers, including those judged good or outstanding, as part of our survey and research work. Based on our annual priorities. We may carry out visits at any reasonable time.

Monitoring visits

58. A monitoring visit is an interim type of inspection that explores one or more specific areas. We may use monitoring visits to evaluate the provision of education and training, to encourage improvement, assess risk and measure progress. We may carry out monitoring visit of any provider at any reasonable time.

59. We will normally carry out the following progress judgements on monitoring visits:

- insufficient progress: progress has been either slow or inadequate or both, and the demonstrable impact on learners has been inadequate[FE0006.R9]
- reasonable progress: the provider's actions are already having a beneficial impact on learners, and the actions taken are sustainable and are based on a thorough quality assurance process
- significant progress: progress has been rapid and is already having considerable beneficial impact on learners

60. Monitoring visits follow a similar process to that set out in part 1 of this handbook. Inspectors will normally give a short notice period. Inspectors will discuss the main themes explored on that visit. They will use part 2 of this handbook to the evaluation contract for monitoring visits.

Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded

61. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that becomes newly directly publicly funded. We will normally carry out the first visit within 12 months of the provider's first date of starting to deliver the directly funded provision.[FE0006.R10] These monitoring visits will follow themes. In each case, inspectors will review:

- progress in leadership and management in the first theme
- progress in providing a high-quality of education or training in the second theme
- progress in providing high-quality apprenticeships arrangements the third theme

62. The precise wording of the themes for the most commonly recurring types of new provider are as follows:

	Leadership and management	Quality of education and training	Safeguarding
Providers seeking direct funding from the ESFA for the first time	Their leaders and managers have established a clear vision for education and training and have secured governance and quality assurance arrangements	Their leaders and managers have established a high-quality curriculum that is ambitious for all their learners	They have established a culture of safeguarding that is ambitious for their learners
Providers seeking direct funding from the ESFA for a new type of provision	Their leaders and managers have secured governance and quality assurance arrangements for the new provision	Their leaders and managers have made a high-quality curriculum that is ambitious for their learners in the new provision	They have established a culture of safeguarding that is ambitious for their learners in the new provision
New independent training providers	They have strategic leaders who are ambitious for their learners and have secured governance and quality assurance arrangements	They have established a high-quality curriculum that is ambitious for their learners	They have established a culture of safeguarding that is ambitious for their learners
Providers seeking to become 16 to 19 academies	They have strategic leaders who are ambitious for their learners and have secured governance and quality assurance arrangements that are ready for academy status	They have established a high-quality curriculum that is ambitious for their learners and have independent, commissioned, quality assurance arrangements in place	They have established a culture of safeguarding that is ambitious for their learners

63. We will adapt these themes to apply to other types of new provision as necessary to reflect the EIF, the Ofsted inspection framework and inspection handbooks.

64. For these new providers, inspectors make progress judgements by taking account the provider is newly directly funded and by considering the impact of actions taken to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviour of learners.

65. If the provider has other types of provision, each type of provision will be covered by a separate theme and progress judgement.

66. If a provider is judged to have made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged to require improvement

67. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged to require improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged to require improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R11] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R12] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R13]

68. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged to require improvement

69. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged to require improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged to require improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R14] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R15] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R16]

70. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged inadequate

71. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged to require improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged inadequate within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R17] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R18] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R19]

72. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged to requires improvement

73. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged to requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R20] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R21] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R22]

74. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

75. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R23] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R24] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R25]

76. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

77. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R26] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R27] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R28]

78. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

79. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R29] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R30] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R31]

80. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

81. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R32] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R33] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R34]

82. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

83. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R35] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R36] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R37]

84. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

85. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R38] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R39] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R40]

86. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits to providers judged requires improvement

87. We will normally carry out a monitoring visit to any provider that has been judged requires improvement. The visit will normally take place between 7 and 12 months from the date of the inspection report. We will normally carry out the first monitoring visit to providers judged requires improvement within 12 months of the inspection. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R41] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R42] Inspectors will make progress judgements in the following areas of improvement identified in that report. The monitoring visit will result in a judgement of sufficient progress or insufficient progress in the overall effectiveness of the provision.[FE0006.R43]

88. If the provider has made insufficient progress in the safeguarding theme, we will carry out a full inspection of safeguarding within 12 months of the progress judgements within 6 months of the monitoring visit.

will set out what progress the provider has made since the previous inspection.

Re-inspection monitoring visits to providers judged to be inadequate

69. We normally carry out re-inspection monitoring visits to providers found to be inadequate overall after the publication of their inspection report, except when their main funding has been terminated and/or they have been removed from the RoATP and they deliver only apprenticeship provision.[footnote 35]

70. Re-inspection monitoring visit themes will be based on the main areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. Inspectors will make a progress judgement against each theme as set out in paragraph 60. The re-inspection monitoring visit report will be published. Through the monitoring visit, inspectors will challenge the provider to improve. The report will set out what progress the provider has made since the previous inspection.

71. The first re-inspection monitoring visit will normally take place within 6 months of the date of publication of the previous inspection report, if the provider continues to be funded. A second re-inspection monitoring visit will normally take place within 10 months of the date of publication of the previous inspection report, if the provider continues to be funded.[footnote 36]

Interim visits and progress monitoring visits

72. We suspended routine inspection activity between 17 March 2020 and 15 March 2021. During that time, we carried out the following forms of interim inspection activity.

Interim visits

73. Between September and December 2020, we carried out interim visits to a range of providers. We published the reports. These included no specific judgements or recommendations.

Progress monitoring visits

74. From 25 January 2021 to 19 March 2021, we carried out progress monitoring visits (PMVs) to:

- providers that were judged to require improvement and that had not yet received a monitoring visit since their previous full inspection
- providers that were judged inadequate and that had not yet received a monitoring visit since their previous full inspection or that were due their second re-inspection monitoring visit (if they continued to be publicly funded)
- new providers (as per paragraphs 38/9) that were due a full inspection and that had received a new provider monitoring visit 2 years ago or more (subject to a provider's individual circumstances)
- other providers as necessary

75. These PMVs were a type of monitoring visit so we published their reports and these included a single progress judgement against the following overall theme:

- What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?

76. We carried out PMVs under the national lockdown in force at that time. Therefore, we did them remotely. This limited our ability to provide the same level of assurance that on-site activity would provide.

77. Following the PMV, a provider that requires improvement would receive a requires improvement monitoring visit (RIMV), following normal arrangements. However, these providers may have chosen to forgo their RIMV and go straight to a full re-inspection as their next inspection activity.

78. Following the PMV, an inadequate provider would normally receive a re-inspection monitoring visit (RMV), following normal arrangements. However, these providers may have chosen to forgo their RMV (or both RMVs if they are due 2 visits) and go straight to the full re-inspection as their next inspection activity.

79. Following a PMV, all other providers will receive whatever inspection they would expect under normal arrangements. We will take into account the outcome of a provider's PMV when reviewing the timing of its next full inspection.

Pilots

80. From time to time, we may pilot different approaches to inspection. We will provide details for this on a case-by-case basis.

Scope of inspection

81. We will normally inspect providers that have one or more of the following that they are directly responsible for:

- direct funding from ESFA
- an advanced learner loans facility from ESFA
- adult education funding from Greater London Authority (GLA) and/or one of the mayoral and combined authorities (MCAs)[footnote 37]
- apprenticeship training provision funded through the apprenticeship levy[footnote 38]

82. Subcontracted provision that is part of the directly funded provider's responsibility is also within the scope of inspection. As part of the inspection, inspectors may look at any provision carried out on behalf of the provider by subcontractors or partners. Typically, visits to, or communications with, subcontractors are likely to include inspecting the direct contract holder's arrangements to quality assure and improve the provision.

83. Inspections will not include provision that the provider operates under subcontracted arrangements on behalf of other providers.

84. Ofsted reserves the right to inspect and grade any subcontractor and its provision as a separate entity against the EIF and this handbook.

85. Any provision that is part of a pilot scheme is normally outside the scope for inspection. Provision funded by the European Social Fund is normally outside the scope of inspection.

Inspecting residential provision in colleges

86. We inspect residential accommodation in colleges taking into account the national minimum standards for the accommodation of students aged under 18. The standards apply to 'institutions within the further education sector', as defined by section 91 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, which have residential accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds. These inspections are separate from the inspection of the education and training provision of the college described in this handbook.

87. Our social care inspectors carry out these inspections. The approach is set out in the 'Social care common inspection framework (SCCIF): residential provision of further education colleges'. If a college is registered as a care home, the Care Quality Commission inspects the accommodation.

Inspection of religious education and collective worship in relation to Catholic sixth-form colleges

88. In the case of these colleges, the relevant Catholic diocese will inspect their denominational religious education, Catholic ethos and the content of collective worship. Our inspectors will not comment on the content of religious worship or on denominational religious education. Inspectors may visit lessons and assemblies in order to help them evaluate how these contribute to students' personal development and behaviour and attitudes.

What inspections will cover

89. On a full inspection, inspectors will make an overall effectiveness judgement and key judgements on:

- the quality of education
- behaviour and attitudes
- personal development
- leadership and management

90. They will also make judgements on each major type of provision offered, as set out in the table below.

Type of provision	Description of provision
Education programmes for young people	Provision funded through the ESFA 16 to 18 classroom-based funding stream for study programmes and traineeships for those aged 16 to 18 and for ESFA-funded full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds enrolled in colleges. This may include provision funded through the 16 to 19 tuition fund. T level technical education programmes are not currently treated as within inspection scope.
Adult learning programmes	Provision funded through the adult education budget and/or advanced learning loans, including employability training for learners aged 19 and over referred for training by Jobcentre Plus. This includes community learning provision and traineeships for those aged 19 and over. This may include adult education provision funded by GLA and/or MCAs.
Apprenticeships (at all levels)	Apprenticeship training at all levels: that is levels 2 to 7 funded by the ESFA and/or through the apprenticeship levy in whatever type of provider they are delivered.[footnote 39] This includes, from 1 April 2021, apprenticeships at levels 6 and 7 (whether degree or non-degree). The whole of a provider's apprenticeship provision is inspected, graded and reported on collectively, irrespective of the level(s) of provision delivered. The inspection of the level 5 learning and skills teacher apprenticeship standard and level 6 teacher apprenticeship fall under the initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook. and not the education inspection framework and so not on inspections covered by this handbook.
Provision for learners with high needs	Provision for learners for which providers receive high-needs funding in addition to 16 to 18 ESFA funding for study programmes and/or 16 to 18 apprenticeships. Learners up to the age of 24 may be eligible for this funding.

91. Inspectors will take account of all types of provision within the scope of the inspection. They will grade and report on the types of provision. If the number of learners in a particular type of provision is very low and/or the provision is very new and inspectors cannot gather sufficient evidence to arrive at a graded judgement, it will not be graded.[footnote 40]

92. The quality of provision for learners with high needs and with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), a much broader group than those attracting high-needs funding, will always be considered during the inspection of any type of provision.

93. Sector subject areas will not be graded or reported on separately. However, inspectors may use their subject expertise to contribute to the evidence base for types of provision judgements, key judgements and progress judgements.[footnote 41]

94. The lead inspector will normally confirm to the provider which types of provision will be graded separately.

Before the inspection

95. The lead inspector's planning will focus primarily on how inspectors will gather evidence of learners' experiences, to evaluate the different types of provision offered by the provider against the 4 key judgements of the EIF.

96. Inspectors' evidence-gathering will be primarily made up of focused curriculum reviews or 'deep dives', including lesson/session/lecture/workshop visits, scrutinising learners' work/training and assessment, and discussions with learners and teachers/trainers. Inspectors may carry out some inspection activities jointly with members of the provider's staff.

97. Inspectors may plan visits to learners at work at their employer's or at subcontractor's premises and carry out inspection activities. These visits give inspectors the opportunity to hold discussions with learners and employers, to discuss learning programmes and to look at learners' work. Inspectors may carry out interviews/discussions with learners, employers and staff via telephone, video calls or webinars.

The role of the nominee in inspection

98. Each provider is invited to nominate a senior member of staff to act as the provider's main link with the inspection team. The nominee should:

- have a detailed understanding of the provider's programmes and operations, including, where appropriate, those of subcontractors
- be sufficiently senior to ensure the cooperation of staff at all levels
- have authority to carry out the role with autonomy

99. The nominee's responsibilities include:

- providing information for the lead inspector to support inspection planning
- liaising with the lead inspector and ensuring that documents and other information are available, and that staff can attend meetings
- briefing the provider's staff about arrangements
- informing learners and employers about the inspection[footnote 42]
- informing learners, employers, parents, carers and staff that they can give their views through the relevant online questionnaires (see 'Seeking the views of learners, parents and carers, employers and staff' below)[footnote 43]
- attending team meetings, in particular the final grading/ judgement team meeting
- coordinating feedback arrangements in particular at the end of the inspection

Notification of inspection

100. Notification of all types of further education and skills inspections and monitoring visits normally takes place up to 2 working days before the inspection unless the inspection is unannounced. Ofsted reserves the right to carry out unannounced inspections or monitoring visits.

101. We will normally notify the provider in the morning of the notification day and will email the notification letter. The lead inspector will then contact the provider, normally by phone, as soon as possible and by the following morning at the latest. The lead inspector should make sure that:

- good communications and effective working relationships are established
- the arrangements for the inspection are confirmed

Planning for the inspection

102. As soon as the provider has been notified of the inspection, staff should draw together the information in paragraph 105. These should be working documents and not prepared specifically for the inspection. Inspectors should keep the review of documentation to a minimum. Providers are not expected to prepare anything extra for inspectors.

103. Inspectors should be aware that the provider will need to accommodate the inspection while still managing day-to-day operations.

104. A provider may request a deferral of its monitoring visit or inspection. We will decide whether this should be granted in accordance with our deferral policy. The lead inspector will liaise with the provider to ensure that, wherever possible, the inspection or monitoring visit can go ahead.

105. To ensure that the lead inspector has a clear understanding of the scope and range of provision and information needed to plan the logistics of the inspection, the nominee will send the following information, as applicable, as soon as possible:

- details of the courses/programmes being delivered and their mode of delivery, including through remote and/or online delivery
- timetables for lessons/sessions/lectures/seminars/workshops or other learning activities during the week
- a list of provider staff and a diagram of the organisational structure
- the geographical spread of training premises and learners, particularly work-based learners and apprentices, according to regions or sub-regions
- the names and location of employers
- the names and location of subcontractors
- contact information for key staff
- the current number of learners in the following age groups: 14 to 16; 16 to 18; 19+ [footnote 44]
- the current overall number of learners (excluding apprentices) at level 1 or below, level 2, level 3 and level 4/5, by subject area
- the current number of apprentices at each level, according to age groups: 16 to 18, 19 to 24, and 25+, by subject area and by apprenticeship framework or standard
- the current number of learners following employability programmes and those who have attended in the previous 12 months
- details of learners who are on a study programme but who are not working towards a substantial qualification
- the current number of learners following traineeships and those who have attended in the previous 12 months
- the current number of learners on community learning programmes and those who have attended in the previous 12 months
- the current number of learners with SEND and the number of learners for whom high-needs funding is received, and their particular needs

106. To ensure that the provider understands the inspection process, the lead inspector will hold a telephone planning meeting with the nominee/most senior member of staff. [footnote 45]

107. The lead inspector will use the telephone planning meeting to arrange how information is made available to inspectors. The provider should inform all subcontractors' staff, current learners, employers and other users about the inspection. It should emphasise that inspectors may visit any sessions involving learners either on the provider's premises or at other locations, including learners' workplaces or online.

108. During the planning call with the inspection nominee, the lead inspector will seek to understand the specific impact of COVID-19 on the provider and learners and how leaders and managers responded to the situation.

109. This discussion will also explore how the provider implemented the curriculum remotely and what, if any, elements of remote education remain in place at the time of inspection.

110. In this conversation, the nominee and lead inspector will agree safety protocols that the inspection team will follow to ensure that the inspection is completed in a COVID-19 secure way.

111. The lead inspector will discuss with the provider the inspectors' schedule and the activities that inspectors will carry out face to face and those they plan to carry out remotely, such as through telephone or video calls.

112. The lead inspector will draw up a pre-inspection team briefing for the inspection team and the nominee. The purpose of this briefing is to focus inspection activity and identify areas for exploration, in particular the areas of the curriculum that will be reviewed through 'deep dives' (focused curriculum reviews).

113. Inspectors will select the 'deep dive' curriculum review areas they will focus on (and associated inspection activities, such as which learners and employers are being visited). They will take into account a range of factors, including:

- the types of provision
- the courses on offer, their subjects and levels
- the relative performance on different courses
- the number, spread and coverage of sites
- the value of the provider's contract(s) with funding agencies or with employers
- the geographical spread of learners
- the geographical spread of employers
- the mode of delivery and attendance, including remote and/or online delivery/attendance
- information from the provider's nominee, learners and employers
- information from commissioning or funding bodies

114. The team briefing letter will provide details about the start of the on-site inspection, including the location and timing of the initial meeting and any other relevant arrangements for the first day, including the planned curriculum reviews.

Seeking the views of learners, parents and carers, employers and staff

115. Learners' views are important to inspection. It is important that all learners can express their views to inspectors. This also applies to employers and any other key stakeholders. Inspectors will consider the views of learners, parents and carers, provider staff and employers as important evidence.

116. Ofsted's online questionnaires for learners and employers (called Learner View and Employer View) are available to gather the views of learners and employers at the point of inspection. There are also online questionnaires for parents and carers of learners and for provider staff available at the point of inspection. After notifying the provider of the inspection, we ask the nominee to tell all staff, learners, employers and (where appropriate) parents and carers of learners that the inspection is taking place. The nominee should ask them to give their views to the inspection team by using these online questionnaires.[footnote 46]

117. Surveys of the views of learners, employers, parents/carers and staff carried out by the provider, funding bodies or other organisations provide evidence for the inspection and may indicate themes to explore further. They do not replace talking with learners, employers and staff during the inspection or views collected through our online questionnaires.

118. Inspectors will speak to a range of learners and employers, often as part of the 'deep dive' focused curriculum reviews. This may happen face to face or remotely, for instance through a webinar or online meeting. We may use other surveys to capture views.

119. Inspectors will take account of views expressed to them by learners, employers, parents, governors, staff and the nominee. Staff and learners must be able to speak to inspectors in private to ensure that the presence of the nominee or senior staff does not influence their responses. Meetings during the inspection may include those with samples of learners selected by inspectors and open-invitation meetings.

120. The lead inspector will take account of any external views on the provider's performance, for example through briefings from commissioning and funding bodies or other relevant regulators or inspectorates.

During the inspection

Days allocated to inspection and inspection team members

121. Inspections and monitoring visits will be led by either one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or an Ofsted Inspector (OI) assisted by other HMIs and/or OIs.[footnote 47]

122. A full inspection normally lasts between 2 and 5 days on site. The number of inspectors involved will vary according to the size and complexity of the provider. Some inspectors may only be needed for part of the inspection. How the lead inspector will deploy the team depends on the number of learners and sites, the type(s) of provision and range of learning programmes.

123. Short inspections (see paragraphs 171 to 202) normally last no longer than 2 days on site. The number of inspectors involved will vary according to the size and complexity of the provider. Some inspectors may only be needed for part of the inspection.

124. Monitoring visits usually last between 1 and 2 days, depending on the scope of the visit and size of the provider. They will usually involve one or two inspectors (but may sometimes involve more).

Gathering and recording evidence

125. Inspections will normally begin with in-depth discussions with provider leaders and managers about the provider's curriculum to establish the intent of the curriculum. Inspectors will ask about what leaders intend learners to learn; what are the end points and next steps they wish them to reach through this; what are the key concepts that they need to understand; and in what order they will learn them.

126. Although meetings with leaders are important, inspectors' first priority during inspections is to collect first-hand evidence.

127. Inspectors will primarily do this through a range of inspection activities, grouped into focused curriculum reviews, known as 'deep dives'. These will provide evidence of the effective implementation of the curriculum and its intent – but they will also gather evidence which may be relevant to the other key judgement areas and progress judgements. These activities will be focused on curriculum areas selected by the lead inspector (see paragraph 113).

128. These inspection activities include:

- direct observation of teaching, training and assessment
- meetings and discussions with teachers, trainers and other staff (in particular subject specialists and subject leaders to understand the intent and implementation of the curriculum)
- interviews and discussions with learners (these may happen in formal planned meetings or in more informal settings)
- scrutinising learners' work
- evaluating learning materials, including resources for online and/or remote learning, and learners' use of them
- analysing provider and learner records, showing planning for, and monitoring of, learners' individual progress and destinations from their starting points when they began their courses or apprenticeships
- assessing learners' progress
- examining what learners know, understand, and can do and make as a result of their learning

129. Evidence drawn from these different activities and focused on specific curriculum areas should provide valid, reliable and sufficient evidence of the quality of education and training when connected, combined and brought together.

130. Evidence from these curriculum-related activities will also inform the other key judgements: behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management.

131. Inspectors will also carry out other inspection activities to gather evidence for the key judgements. These may include:

- analysing documents relating to leadership and management (such as records about safeguarding or notes of governors' meetings), or personal development and behaviour and attitudes (such as records about attendance or enrichment activities)
- analysing learner, employer, parent/carer and staff views provided through questionnaires and other sources
- meeting with learners, employers, staff, governors, board members, councillors, trustees, subcontractors, where appropriate

132. During the inspection, inspectors will collect, analyse and record evidence and their judgements on paper or electronic evidence forms. It is essential that the evidence accurately reflects discussions. Inspectors should identify clearly information that was provided in confidence. The evidence forms, together with any briefings, plans or instructions prepared by the lead inspector, and responses from learners and employers (in hard copy, online or other formats) contribute to the evidence base. The lead inspector is responsible for assuring the quality of evidence.

133. Ofsted has no preferred teaching style. Inspectors judge the quality of education by the ways in which learners acquire knowledge, develop skills and exhibit appropriate behaviours for work and success in life or study. Teaching staff should plan their lessons/sessions as usual.

134. Inspectors may visit employers, to observe learners' on-the-job skills development and speak to employers and their staff.

135. Inspectors will not normally indicate which sessions they plan to observe. The team reserves the right to visit any learner or employer and may cancel or add visits to ensure that enough evidence is collected. Inspectors will not normally give feedback to individual members of staff following these sessions.

Observations of teaching and training

136. An important element of the inspection approach will be to visit lessons, workshops or sessions where teaching, training, learning and assessment are happening. This may include visits to online lessons. Inspectors may often invite appropriate staff from the provider to take part in joint observations of these learning sessions.

137. Observation is primarily useful for gathering evidence about curriculum implementation and how teaching and training sessions contribute to the quality of education and training. Inspectors can use observations to gather evidence about how well staff implement the curriculum by looking at teaching of one or more subjects, and by triangulating observations with evidence collected through discussions with staff, learners, and, where relevant, employers, and through work scrutiny.

138. Inspectors will connect observation activity to other evidence for triangulation and as part of the deep dives. Observation is not about evaluating individual teachers or trainers. Inspectors will not grade the teaching or training they observe. Instead, inspectors will view teaching and training across a sample of the provision to provide part of the evidence base to inform inspection judgements, in particular the quality of education and training.

139. Observation is also useful for gathering evidence that contributes to other key judgements, including behaviour and attitudes. Observation enables inspectors to see direct evidence about how behaviour is managed and how behaviours and attitudes are developed in individual learning sessions. This evidence will complement the other evidence that inspectors gather about behaviour and attitudes during inspection.

Work scrutiny

140. Inspectors may scrutinise learners' work across the provider and aggregate insights to provide part of the evidence for an overall view of quality of education, primarily around the impact of the education provided. Inspectors will not evaluate individual pieces of work. Inspectors will connect work scrutiny to lesson observation and, where possible, conversations with learners, staff and, where appropriate, with employers.

141. Inspectors may invite appropriate staff from the provider to take part in joint scrutiny of learners' work.

142. Work scrutiny is useful primarily for gathering evidence about the curriculum impact of the quality of education. Inspectors can use work scrutiny to evaluate learners' progress and progression through their course of study. Work scrutiny will show whether learners know more and can do more, and whether the knowledge and skills they have learned are well sequenced and have developed incrementally. Inspectors will synthesise what they find in order to contribute to their overall assessment of the quality of education across the provider.

The use of data

143. Inspection uses a range of data that is available. Both before and during the inspection, inspectors will analyse the performance of the provider using the most recent validated data. They will take into account the age and relevance of the data. Analysis may be at overall provider level and/or for individual subjects or types of provision. Although data alone will not lead directly to judgements, the primary data that measures success for each type of provision will provide important evidence for judging the impact of the quality of education.

144. Inspectors will evaluate learners' progress in relation to their starting points, based on their rate of learning, acquisition of knowledge, skills and behaviours and whether they have achieved their individual, challenging targets. They will also take account of data about the destinations learners go to when they leave the provider.

145. Inspectors will not look at internal progress and attainment data on GCSE and A-level courses where fixed-time terminal examinations comprise the entire assessment of the course. Similarly, inspectors will not normally look at predicted in-year achievement and attainment data more generally (teacher assessed grades from 2020 and 2021 will not normally be used to assess impact). That does not mean providers cannot use this data if they consider it appropriate. Inspectors will, however, put more focus on the curriculum and less on providers' generation, analysis and interpretation of performance data. Inspectors will be interested in the conclusions drawn and actions taken from any internal assessment information but they will not examine or verify that information first hand.

The self-assessment report

146. Inspectors will use self-assessment reports, or equivalent documents, to assess risk, monitor standards and plan for inspection.

147. If these documents are not available in advance, the provider should share the latest report/plan(s) with the lead inspector following notification of the inspection.

148. Inspectors will, in any case, use other readily available information about the provider.

149. Ofsted does not require self-assessment to be provided in a specific format. Any assessment that is provided should be part of the provider's processes and not generated solely for inspection purposes.[footnote 48]

Meetings during inspection

150. Inspectors are likely to have a number of different meetings with provider staff for different purposes. They will try to minimise disruption to the provider's regular business and to the inspection team's focus on assessing the quality of education and training. Therefore, meetings will be kept brief and purposeful.

151. Inspections will normally begin with in-depth discussion with senior leaders and managers about the provider's curriculum to establish the intent of the curriculum. This initial meeting will also provide useful insights into leadership and management and other areas. There may be other meetings with senior leaders, including the nominee as necessary, as the inspection progresses.

152. Inspectors carrying out deep dives focusing on specific areas of the curriculum will normally meet with key curriculum staff. This is to understand its intent and implementation before carrying out their inspection activities to review that area of the curriculum. Other types of meeting have been referred to above in paragraphs 125 and

[108]

[109] The inspection team itself will lead meetings. They may include the whole team or specific inspectors, or they may be held remotely, by telephone or video call, or face to face. These meetings may include:

- an initial team meeting to:
  - brief the inspection team on the schedule for the inspection
  - clarify any questions about team members' roles
  - receive a brief update from the provider, including, if appropriate, an initial briefing on the provider's quality and safety management responsibilities (for example, as covered at the inspection [PROVIDER])
- a meeting for the nominee to hear the emerging judgements and identify any outstanding questions or areas of concern
- a closing progress judgement meeting to reach judgements about the provider

[110] The nominee may attend some inspection team meetings, although they may not participate in discussions about inspection judgements. The inspection team should make sure that the nominee has a clear understanding of the judgements and the appropriate evidence to take into account. Any concerns about evidence should be raised with the inspection team. The nominee will report to the provider's staff on the progress of the inspection.

[111] Inspectors may hold additional meetings with the provider's staff.

[112] The lead inspector will hold a feedback meeting for the provider and invites to attend the inspection team, the nominee and the inspection. Members of NHSE may attend to hear the feedback. [PROVIDER]

Reaching final judgements

[113] Inspection will discuss emerging findings with the nominee and, where appropriate, with senior staff.

[114] The lead inspector ensures that the inspection team agrees the judgements for the inspections using the descriptors in part 2 of this handbook. [PROVIDER] The inspection team should take into account any relevant evidence, including any evidence from most recent inspections of the provider's services.

Providing feedback

[115] Before leaving, the lead inspector should ensure that the provider is clear:

- about the grades awarded for each judgement required [PROVIDER]
- about the evidence, including any concerns, and what it means, or may be subject to change through moderation and quality assurance [PROVIDER]
- about the next steps in the inspection process, including, if appropriate, will be generally reflected in the report, although the form of the report may differ from the oral feedback
- about the inspection findings and areas for improvement
- about the next steps for providers using the wider Care Quality Commission (CQC), ESFA, DfE, Ofsted, Office for Students (OfS) or other relevant regulatory/inspective bodies, including the provider's rating
- about the consequences of the visit to the accreditation of the provider
- about the complaints procedure
- where relevant, about the impact of the provider being judged as requires improvement or inadequate overall [PROVIDER]
- [116] The lead inspector should provide the leadership and management of a sixth-form college, further education and apprenticeship institution and provider with responsibility for this has implications for the college in relation to apportioning money qualified staff in future years. [PROVIDER]

After the inspection

Arrangements for publishing the report

[117] The lead inspector is responsible for writing the inspection report and submitting the evidence to Ofsted shortly after the inspection ends. The text of the report should reflect the feedback given to the provider at the end of the inspection. It should also give to the provider and the inspection.

[118] Inspection reports will be quality-assured before we send a draft copy to the provider. The provider will receive the draft report within 10 working days after the end of the inspection. The draft report is restricted and confidential to the relevant inspection team, the provider and Ofsted. It is not for wider circulation or publication, and should not be shared widely or published. The inspection process is not complete until the provider receives the final version of the report. We may share the draft report with other regulators, but only for the purpose of discharging their duties. We may share the draft report with the provider's staff, governors, or other people who are the relevant respublic/inspective as necessary (that might entail sharing the draft report with a wider group).

[119] The provider will have 5 working days to comment on the draft report, inspection process and findings. We will consider all comments. We will expect to them when we share the final report with the provider within 20 working days after the inspection.

[120] If the provider wishes to make a formal complaint, it has 5 working days after we share the final report to do so. We will not publish the report while we are dealing with a formal complaint that relates to our inspection report, unless it is clear that the complaint has been submitted. The publication of the report may be delayed.

The inspection and follow-time

[121] The evidence base for the inspection should be retained for the time specified in our retention schedule. We may use it to inform future inspections and the report. We may decide that retaining it for longer is worthwhile for research purposes.

Incomplete inspections

[122] We will carry out policy on incomplete inspections where appropriate.

Quality assurance and complaints

Quality assurance of inspection

[123] We will quality-assure the quality of the quality of their work. The lead inspector should ensure that inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles of inspection and the code of conduct (set out in the EIF).

[124] We monitor the quality of inspections through a range of formal processes. Senior HMIs or HPIs may visit some providers or monitor remotely to quality-assure inspections. We may also ask providers to provide feedback on inspections. Senior HMIs or HPIs will be responsible for feedback to the inspection team about the quality of their work and their conduct.

[125] All providers are invited to take part in a voluntary post-inspection survey in order to contribute to inspection development. The link to this survey is included with the final inspection report letter.

Handling concerns and complaints

[126] Most of the inspection process is carried out smoothly and without incident. If concerns arise during an inspection, they should be raised with the lead inspector as soon as possible in order to resolve issues before the inspection is completed. Providers can also raise concerns with Ofsted after the inspection should wish any concerns raised, and actions taken, in the inspection evidence.

[127] It is not possible to revoke concerns during the inspection, or through complaints, once the inspection has been completed. Providers may also lodge a formal complaint. The lead inspector should ensure that the provider is clear about the procedures for making a formal complaint and that information about how to complain is available on GOV.UK.

Short inspections

[128] Providers graded good for overall effectiveness at their previous inspection will usually be inspected within 3 years of the publication of that inspection report. We will receive a short inspection (see paragraph 139). Providers graded outstanding for overall effectiveness at their previous inspection will usually be inspected in September 2019 and will be inspected by September 2020 and usually receive a short inspection (see paragraph 2).

[129] A short inspection will determine whether the quality of educational training that learners receive is good for good providers (or outstanding for providers that were previously judged outstanding) and whether the provider is continuing to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship and management. They will also consider whether safeguarding arrangements are effective and if learners benefit from good or better education, training and care. We will also check that the provider is continuing to meet the requirements for judgeo necessary.

[130] In order to confirm whether the provider remains good/outstanding (as applicable), inspectors will need to see evidence that the provider is still good. We will be expected to carry out full inspection if we identify a reduced timeframe to be sure of sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the provider remains good/outstanding (as applicable) overall.

[131] A short inspection report will not give graded judgements for provision types. It will, however, report on the quality of provision overall.

Deciding short inspections for full inspections (outcomes 2 and 3)

[132] A short inspection will be converted to a full inspection if:

- the provider is currently judged good (that is, sufficient evidence is not expected to suggest that it may be judged outstanding (outcome 2). the lead inspector has identified evidence that suggests that the provider's quality of education training is currently good and there is evidence that the provider's quality of education training may include concerns about safeguarding (outcome 3)
- the provider is currently judged outstanding (that is, there is not sufficient evidence to confirm that the provider remains outstanding, or there is evidence to suggest it no longer be outstanding (which may include concerns about safeguarding) (outcome 3)

[133] In the cases of outcomes 2 or 3, the lead inspector will inform the provider by the end of the day/inspection of the decision to extend the inspection to a full inspection.

[134] For outcomes 2 and 3, the short inspection will be extended to a full inspection as soon as it is practicable, but no sooner than 10 working days after the end of the short inspection. These inspections may take place remotely or on site. The lead inspector will inform the provider of the date of the full inspection. The lead inspector will provide a proto-judgement against the EIF. The lead inspector form the short inspection will usually continue the full inspection.

[135] A decision to extend the inspection does not predetermine the outcome of the full inspection. The lead inspector will consider all evidence from the short inspection and the full inspection.

[136] The lead inspector of the full inspection will contract the nominee and tell them where the full inspection will take place. The lead inspector will share the inspection plan and deployment. The inspector may request further evidence and information for consideration before or during the full inspection.

[137] Between the end of the short inspection and the beginning of the full inspection following extension, evidence from the short inspection will be shared with the new inspection team. The lead inspector will conduct the evidence collected from the full inspection, sending teams for a full inspection.

[138] The full inspection may move straight to evidence gathering, without an initial team meeting.

[139] A short inspection report will not be published where the short inspection extends to a full inspection. Instead the provider will receive a full inspection report.

Inspectors' planning and preparation

[140] The lead inspector will share with the inspection team:

- essential information about the provider and the timings for the inspection
- a short summary of the evidence base (for example, based on a brief analysis of the provider's inspection information)
- a list of provider administration activity, including planned 'deep dive' focused activities, such as focused visits and monitoring visits

Notification and introduction

[141] We will normally notify the provider up to 2 working days before the inspection unless the inspection is unannounced. Ofsted reserves the right to carry out unannounced inspections at any time. The lead inspector will make sure that the notification day and will contact the notification letter. The lead inspector will also contact the provider as soon as possible.

[142] Leaders, managers and governors are not required to prepare documents or other materials for inspection. Inspectors will review documents and other materials that providers make available to them, but should not place any additional demands on staff beyond what they would usually produce as part of their normal business. Inspectors will use the provider's self-assessment and other evidence to inform their judgements against the EIF. The lead inspector form the short inspection will usually continue the full inspection.

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[151] During the initial telephone call to a provider selected for short inspection, the lead inspector will:

- establish contact with the provider's nominee
- confirm the date of the inspection
- explain the purpose of the inspection, including the scope and focus of the short inspection
- indicate the likely format and timings of the short inspection
- explain the requirement for the provider to make learners and carers (where appropriate) and provider staff aware of the inspection. These groups will be invited to give their views by means of online questionnaires
- explain the requirement for the provider to make governing governors, managers, staff, learners, employers and others
- make arrangements to visit employers or subcontractors as necessary

[152] Inspectors may also request further information during the telephone call, by subsequent email or at the first opportunity on site. This information may include:

- educational visits/ review lists (type of provision, course/programme, subject area, level, location)
- timetables for lessons/sessions/teaching or other learning activities
- a list of provider staff (where a large number of the organisational structure are working staff involved in delivery)
- lists of employers and subcontractors and their locations

[153] Requests for a referral will be handled in accordance with Ofsted's referral policy.

Feedback at the end of a short inspection

[154] The lead inspector will give oral feedback at the end of the short inspection. The inspector is responsible for managing this meeting and reporting the outcome of the nominee.

[155] The lead inspector will state one of the following:

- that the provider continues to be good/outstanding (depending on its current grade)
- that there is evidence that the provider may no longer be good/outstanding or that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the provider is still good/outstanding (as appropriate) and that the short inspection will be converted into a full inspection the extended into a full inspection and the process for this
- that there is sufficient evidence of improvement to the quality of education training to consider a return to the previous grade
- that the provider is inadequate, or that it is unclear whether the provider's safeguarding arrangements are judged to be effective and provide feedback on other research areas covered in the short inspection (as outlined in paragraph 127)

Reporting on the inspection

[156] If the quality of provision remains good/outstanding (as applicable), the provider will receive a short inspection letter setting out the inspection findings. These will include statements that the provider remains good/outstanding, a judgement on safeguarding, and, where relevant, a brief report on the areas of focus for the inspection. Ofsted will send out to all parties. If the provider is inadequate, Ofsted will send a full inspection report to Ofsted and to the provider's governing body and send a full inspection report.

Quality assurance and publication of the short inspection report

[157] We will quality-assure the quality of the short inspection report. The quality assurance and publication processes are the same as those for full inspection reports (see paragraphs 160 to 170).

Part 2. The evaluation schedule: how further education and skills providers will be judged

Background to the evaluation schedule

[1] This part of the further education and skills inspection handbook sets out the EIF (EIF) handbook and the EIF.

[2] The evaluation schedule is not exhaustive. It does not replace the professional judgement of inspectors. Inspectors must consider grade descriptors in the evaluation (topics) of provision inspected and context of the provider.

[3] In line with the EIF, inspectors will make judgements on the following areas:

- overall effectiveness
- and the 4 key judgements:
  - the quality of education
  - behaviour and attitudes
  - personal development
  - leadership and management

[4] We have created the criteria for each of these judgements using inspection evidence, including our research and evaluation and feedback from providers. We hold a full view of how the judgement criteria relate to the available research in our commentaries (see Education inspection framework: overview of research).

[5] Inspectors use the following 4-point scale to make all judgements: Outstanding, where applicable, use the effectiveness of the different types of provision offered:

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

The evaluation schedule and grade descriptors

Overall effectiveness

[6]b. Inspectors must use all their evidence to evaluate what it is like to be a learner at the provider. Inspectors will consider how well the provider's leaders and managers and inspectors will consider whether the quality of provision is good, outstanding, good and is therefore outstanding. If it is not good, inspectors will consider whether it requires improvement or is inadequate. Inspectors will also consider whether the provider is judged if one or more of the inadequate criteria apply, unless the inspection criteria apply solely due to the impact of COVID-19.

[6]b. In judging the overall effectiveness, inspectors will take account of:

- the overall effectiveness judgement for each type of provision inspected
- the 4 key judgements

[7]b. Inspectors will first judge the overall effectiveness of each type of provision inspected. For example, if a provider has been inspected for 16 to 19 study programmes, apprenticeships, and adult skills, inspectors will judge the quality of each type of provision. The inspection report will include a judgement for each type of provision inspected. Inspectors will then use the 4 key judgements, where there are differences in grades given for the quality of provision, inspectors will consider the following when awarding the grade for overall effectiveness:

- the number of learners in the funding value of the relevant provision
- the impact of the provision on learners' overall experience and quality of education received

[8]b. Inspectors will always make a written judgement about the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding learners.

[9]b. Before making the final judgement on overall effectiveness, inspectors must consider whether the provider's safeguarding arrangements are effective in all aspects. This includes learners with SEND and those who have high needs.

Grade descriptors for overall effectiveness

Outstanding (1)

- The quality of education is outstanding.
- All types of provision offered are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, a type of provision may be good, as long as there is compelling evidence that the provider is improving this provision rapidly and securely towards it being outstanding.
- Any sub-judgements are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, a sub-judgement may be good, as long as there is compelling evidence that the provider is improving this sub-quality and securely towards it being outstanding.
- Safeguarding is effective.

[10]. To judge whether a provider is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)

- The quality of education is at least good.
- Most types of provision offered are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, a type of provision may require improvement, if there is convincing evidence that the provider is improving this provision rapidly and securely towards it being good.
- Any sub-judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the sub-judgements may require improvement, as long as there is convincing evidence that the provider is improving it rapidly and securely towards it being good.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Requires improvement (3)

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, it is likely that, where the provider is judged to requires improvement for overall effectiveness, the provider is ineffective with respect to safeguarding.
- Safeguarding is effective, or if there are any weaknesses in safeguarding, they are not difficult to rectify, and there are no serious failings that leave learners being harmed or at risk of harm.

Inadequate (4)

- The judgement on the overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate when one or more of the sub-judgements is inadequate and/or safeguarding is ineffective.

Evaluating types of provision

214. The following section outlines what inspectors will look for to demonstrate how the grade descriptors for each type of provision apply to each type of provision.

Education programmes for young people

215. To achieve comparability with the way in which we inspect and judge 16 to 19 provision in schools and academies under the EIF, the considerations below align with those for 16 to 19 study programmes.

216. Inspectors will evaluate provision for learners aged 16 to 19 studying full time as a college and provision for learners on traineeships aged 16 to 19 as part of this judgement.

- Inspectors will consider how well leaders and teachers promote high expectations for learners and how they ensure that all learners, including those with SEND, receive high quality of provision for learners, including the most disadvantaged, from with SEND and those with high needs.
- Inspectors will consider how leaders and teachers develop or take on a personal curriculum that promotes progression and skills, as well as information, advice and English for all learners, including those without GCSE (aspects grades 9-7, 6-5, 4-3 and 2-1) in English and mathematics, and those who need to continue to develop English and mathematics. [PROVIDER]
- Inspectors will review how well high-quality impartial careers guidance enables learners to make informed decisions about their next steps in education or employment. Further training or independent living when they are ready to do so.
- Inspectors will use observations of teaching and training activities, and discussions with learners, to evaluate how well teachers and trainers deliver high-quality training. How well learners develop personal, social and independent learning.
- Inspectors will judge how well learners achieve high levels of practicality and independence, including, where appropriate, how well they are prepared for qualification or employment activities and/or work experience, ready-to-learn for employment or to progress to higher levels of study and/or independence.
- Inspectors will consider how well providers and their staff promote high expectations are appropriate and effective.

Adult learning programmes

217. Adult learning comprises a rich variety of learning and training, such as:

- Inspectors and judge, where appropriate, how well the curriculum, including the wider curriculum, is designed, taught and assessed to ensure that learners make clearly defined progress that is relevant for the education and training needs and interests of learners, and to local employment opportunities, and supports local and national priorities.
- Inspectors will judge how effectively, where appropriate, management and governance and funding or people are well-disaggregated and best ideally to participate in education and training, and how well leaders and managers ensure that learners and learners' progression to further learning and/or employment increase their personal circumstances.
- Inspectors will consider how well leaders and managers are continually learning building to develop learning programmes and projects that meet local and community needs, where appropriate.
- Inspectors will consider how well staff work with learners, employers and other partners such as charities to ensure that learners, including those with disadvantaged, enable learners to develop personal, social and employability skills that prepare them for work, further learning and/or independent living, where appropriate.
- Where appropriate, inspectors will judge how well providers and their staff promote learners' progress and achievements to inform teaching and support progression to further learning and employment.
- Inspectors will also consider whether arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable learners are appropriate and effective.

Apprenticeships

218. Inspectors will consider how well leaders and managers ensure that the apprenticeship curriculum meets the principles and requirements of the apprenticeship standards.

- Evidence will include the extent to which the provider's staff engage with employers and other partners.

- complete the apprenticeship commitment statement
- plan the initial assessment, review, assessments, coaches and mentors communicate up-to-date educational and technical subject knowledge that reflects current industry practice and developments/trends
- mentors and assessors understand the apprentice's scope that knowledge/skills/behaviours that they demonstrate the required skills and behaviours that enable them to successfully complete the end-point assessment, and understand the impact of skills gaps by progressing to further intermediate (more on other vocational/management promotion) or where appropriate, moving to a higher level of apprenticeship or professional
- mentors and assessors understand the apprentice's wider/supporting young people and vulnerable learners are appropriate and effective.

Provision for learners with learning needs

Ofsted, Part 3 of the Criterion and Paragraphs 44-47, 2019 explains the current arrangements for supporting learners with learning needs and disabilities. Part 3 of the Criterion and Paragraphs 44-47 explain how providers need to work together. Local authorities are responsible for the provision available to young people in the area by publishing the 'local offer'. A young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they are:

- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities

LEARNING TRAINING PROVIDERS

LTPs: Inspectors will consider the extent to which leaders, managers and governors use the funds to learners with high needs so that their individual learning programmes challenge learners to develop their independence. Improve their communication skills, vocational/occupational knowledge, and behaviours and attitudes to work.

- Inspectors will judge how successfully learners participate in learning and how individually tailored learning programmes that lead to good or exceptional employment outcomes. Inspectors will also consider how well learners are apprenticeship/ready for a greater independence in their employment.
- Inspectors will evaluate how effectively leaders and managers coordinate all aspects of provision, including the management of resources, staff recruitment, management, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, and the management of their time.
- Inspectors and inspectors will determine the extent to which the choice of accreditation helps learning programs towards further learning, vocational training, employment and independent living.
- Inspectors will evaluate how effectively leaders for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement are rigorous and successful and support the achievement of all learners.
- Inspectors will determine whether staff are suitably qualified and have appropriate experience and skills to teach and support the learners. They will also determine whether learning resources, including assistive technology and vocational learning resources, are suitable for the learners' programmes of study. Inspectors will also ask if providers ensure that learners are exercise their learners to achieve their challenging learning goals.
- Inspectors will evaluate how successfully learners develop skills to enhance their employment opportunities and independence in their everyday lives in different situations, including meaningful social experience, and how well they take an active part in their local community.
- Inspectors will judge how well learners achieve their learning goals, including qualifications, make progress and achieve, compared with all learners on the same course. Inspectors will also consider how well learners who are vulnerable or have a learning difficulty/ disability have learning or other activities.
- Inspectors will also consider whether arrangements for safeguarding learners are appropriate and effective.

The quality of education

EIF: Ofsted will evaluate the educational offer of the quality of education that a provider delivers to their learners. They will consider:

- the provider's curriculum, which embodies the decisions the provider has made about the knowledge, skills and behaviours the learners need to develop to fulfil their aspirations for learning, employment and independence.
- how the provider delivers the curriculum so that learners build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge to skills.
- the outcomes that learners achieve as a result of the education they have received

Intent

EIF: In evaluating the provider's educational intent, inspectors will primarily consider the curriculum intent provided by senior and subject leaders.

EIF: The evaluation focuses on factors that contribute to learners receiving education and training that enables them to achieve highly. These factors are:

- Leaders and managers have selected and developed a curriculum that develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need to fulfil their aspirations for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that prepare them for the next stage in education, training or employment. In this way, it can powerfully address social and cultural capital.
- It is clear what the curriculum is preparing learners for. It is clear what learners will need to be able to know and do at the end of their learning or training programme.
- Leaders, managers and teachers have planned and sequenced the curriculum so that learners can build on previous teaching and learning and develop the new knowledge and skills they need for future learning.
- The curriculum offers learners the knowledge and skills that their employers, local and regional context.
- Leaders have taken into account the needs of learners, employers, and the local and regional economy, as necessary. Curriculum intent is based on an account of detail and gaps that arise as a result of the pandemic.
- Leaders have taken into account the needs of learners with special educational and vocational additions. They have ensured that the curriculum should meet the needs of disadvantaged learners or those with SEND, including those who have high needs, and should meet those needs.

The curriculum

EIF: The curriculum sets out the aims of a programme of education and training. It also sets out the situation for those aims to be implemented, including the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners will acquire. It also sets out how learners will acquire and develop knowledge and skills.

EIF: We will judge providers taking into additionally different approaches to the curriculum. Providers may, for example, teach using a range of different models or curriculum approaches. Providers are able to show that they have thought carefully that they have built a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequence. Providers can show that they have effectively, their learning and skills sector is provider 1 curriculum basically.

Sources of evidence specific to curriculum intent

EIF: Inspectors will cover evidence about leaders' intent for the curriculum primarily through conversations with senior leaders. Inspectors will explore:

- how leaders have ensured that a subject curriculum includes content that has identified as most useful that this content is taught in a logical progression, including, where appropriate, how it is sequenced so that new knowledge and skills are/learners. This includes understanding how the pandemic has impacted on learners' knowledge, learning deep and new starting points.
- how leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious and provides knowledge and/or skills for the future/employment, including for those who have SEND.
- how leaders use links between different areas of knowledge and skills and recognise that some knowledge and skills are transferable.
- how carefully leaders have thought about the sequence of teaching knowledge and skills to build on learners' already known and can do.

EIF: Inspectors will also consider any discrepancies/evidence that leaders want to provide. Inspectors will also consider how well leaders have ensured that subject materials to be produced consistent in one specific format for inspection.

Implementation

EIF: In evaluating the implementation of the curriculum, Inspectors will focus on how the curriculum is taught at subject, class, lecture or workshop level.

EIF: We will focus on the following factors:

- Teachers having expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. If they do not, they are supported to address gaps in their learners are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching.
- Teachers have strategies to understanding concepts, presenting information clearly and promoting discussion.
- Teachers check learners' understanding effectively, and identify and correct misunderstandings.
- Teachers ensure that learners embed key concepts in their long-term memory and apply them fluently and consistently.
- Teachers deliver a curriculum sequenced so that they deliver the subject curriculum in a way that allows learners to make the knowledge to long-term memory. This is sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what learners know and can do, and that this knowledge and skills are secure.
- Teachers are assessed to have learners' understanding of what they are teaching.
- Teachers use assessment to keep learners to embed and use knowledge fluently, to develop their understanding, and to gain, extend and improve their skills and to simply memorise disconnected facts.

The use of assessment

EIF: When used effectively, assessment can help learners to embed and use knowledge fluently and to ensure that they are competent in applying their skills. The results of effective assessment used teachers to produce clear and achievable next steps for their learners. Inspectors will also look for evidence that the use of assessment is not burdensome for staff and learners. It is therefore important that leaders have ensured that the use of assessment is focused on what is most important.

EIF: Inspectors will evaluate how assessment supports the teaching of the curriculum, and not distracting teachers from their exercise individualisation. Inspectors will look for interventions that are/ impossible to deliver without lowering expectations of the curriculum for other learners. Inspectors will look for how well the curriculum and the provider impacts to any learners from a disadvantaged background.

Sources of evidence specific to curriculum implementation

EIF: The following activities will provide inspectors with evidence about the provider's curriculum implementation:

- discussions with subject specialists, subject leaders and teachers
- the curriculum that learners follow
- the intended end points towards which those learners are working
- their view of how those learners are progressing through the curriculum
- lessons and other learning activities, including those that take place in learners and/or subject leaders usually produce and use them
- visits to classes, lectures, workshops and other activities, including observations of teaching and learning
- scrutinising work produced by learners
- interviews with learners
- discussions with learners about how often they are expected to record, upload and review work
- discussions with subject specialists and leaders about the content and pedagogical approaches that they use, and what is done to support learners who have identified certain teachings
- discussions with staff, including specialist staff, who support learners in developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours
- where relevant, discussions with subject leaders and teachers about how the curriculum has been adapted remotely and remains of learners who are vulnerable remotely

EIF: In order to triangulate evidence effectively, Inspectors will ensure that they gather evidence from a range of sources and activities. Inspectors will also look for evidence that will ensure that the sample of learners they choose to observe will allow them to reach a valid and sufficiently reliable judgement on the quality of education offered by the provider overall.

Impact

EIF: When inspection evaluates the impact of the education provided by the provider, Ofsted focus on what learners have learned, and the skills they have gained and can demonstrate.

EIF: Inspectors will focus on the following factors:

- A well-constructed, well-taught curriculum will lead to learners learning more and to achieving good results. There need be no conflict between learning more and curriculum and achieving success in examinations and tests or assessments.
- Inspectors will consider how well leaders and GOVERNORS support the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life.
- End-point assessments and examinations are useful indications of learners' outcomes, but they are not the only indicators of the quality of education. Inspectors will look beyond this with their focused assessment of learners' work.
- All learning builds towards an end point. Learners are being prepared for their next stage of education, training or employment. Inspectors will look at how providers will consider whether learners are ready for their next steps.
- Inspectors will also consider whether learners are ready for the next stage and going to appropriate high-quality destinations.

Sources of evidence specific to curriculum impact

EIF: Inspectors will gather evidence of the impact of the education offered by the provider, using a variety of sources:

- outcomes generated and published performance information about learners' progress and attainment, where it is available in published national data
- first-hand evidence of the progress learners are making, drawing together the evidence from lessons and other learning activities, work scrutinies and discussions described above. Lower levels of evidence specific to curriculum implementation
- any information provided by the provider about the destinations to which their learners progress when they leave the provider
- telephone conversations or other remote discussions with a selection of learners and their parents
- discussions with learners, for instance about what they have learned about the knowledge and skills they have acquired and how their learning enables them to be successful.

Measuring impact, improvement and impact to reach a quality of education judgement

EIF: Inspectors will not grade intent, implementation and impact separately. Instead, inspectors will reach a single graded judgement for the quality of education and training, drawing on all the evidence they have gathered and using their professional judgement.

Grade descriptors for quality of education

EIF: The following are the descriptors used to be judged outstanding. It must meet the following criteria:

Outstanding (1)

- The provider meets all the criteria for a good quality of education security and consistently.
- The quality of education is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

Intent

- The provider's curriculum intent is strong. Throughout the provider and its subcontractors, teachers have a firm and common understanding of the intended curriculum and what it means for their practice.

Implementation

- The provider's implementation of the curriculum is consistently strong. Across aspects of the provider, including its subcontracted provision and for all learners, including those who have SEND, the curriculum is implemented at high quality. Training activities/ curriculum will be delivered the curriculum is coherent.
- The teachers that learners do see time attendance consistently demonstrating curriculum goals. It matches the area of curriculum that learners are studying (sequence and sequence towards continuously sufficient knowledge and skills and learning and development.

Impact

- The impact of the taught curriculum is strong. Learners acquire and develop high-quality skills and produce work of a consistently high standard.
- Learners consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Learners with SEND make the best possible outcomes.

243. To judge whether the quality of education is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

243. Note: Some sections of the criteria appear in Ofsted's framework. Ofsted. This is made that they are essential only, because we recognise that not all providers will be able to meet all the criteria at all times. Inspectors will take into account the circumstances. We, we believe our Methodology and Methodology even more in circumstances change and we continue to emerge from the pandemic.

Good (2)

Intent

- Leaders adapt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious, appropriately relevant to local and regional employment and training priorities and designed to give learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for life. Leaders, in the case of 16-19 study programmes, take a broad view of what they mean by a curriculum and ensure that it is relevant to the current and emerging employment priorities post-pandemic.
- The curriculum is sequenced so that learners build on previous learning and develop the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage. The curriculum is not just fully fine, even. It is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of ensuring that the curriculum is fully fine, even and making sure learners are progressing through it.
- The provider is ambitious for all its learners, including those with SEND and those who have high needs, and this is evident in the curriculum. The provider has ensured that the curriculum is suitable for all its learners, including individual needs. If this is not yet fully the case, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of ensuring that it is.
- Leaders adapt the delivery of the curriculum. Providers ensure this by teaching in communities of the local community.

Implementation

- Teachers have expert knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach. Leaders provide effective support for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise. Where relevant, teachers have extensive and up-to-date vocational experience.
- Teachers present information and demonstrate skills clearly, providing appropriate consideration of the subject/ matter being taught. They check learners' understanding of what they have been taught and address misconceptions, direct feedback. In doing this, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary, but without having to use unnecessary, time-consuming, individualised feedback/marking and assessment.
- The aim that learners are ready to progress is demonstrated and ensure that learners build knowledge and acquire skills, improving on what they already know and can do.
- Teachers encourage learners to use subject-specific vocabulary and to develop their understanding.
- Teachers check learners' understanding of what they have learned and how it relates to what they should.
- Over the course of study, teachers design and use activities to help learners remember what they have learned in their long-term memory. They ensure the sequence of activities/ curriculum, assessment and towards consolidating sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning, independent learning and employment.
- Teachers use formative assessment well, for example to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently and flexibly, to evaluate the effectiveness of skills, to check understanding and inform teaching, or to understand misconceptions and to inform next steps in learning. Teachers use this feedback of a coherently planned curriculum, assessment and towards consolidating sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning, independent learning and employment.
- Any remote education is well integrated into the programme of education/training, and is well designed to support the wider implementation of the provider's curriculum.

Impact

- Learners develop detailed knowledge across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve and are prepared at ease of their study. Learners make substantial and sustained progress from their identified and recorded starting points in each area of learning. Learners, including those who have SEND, make as much progress and academic and vocational, impact in relation to results from national examinations, which meet government expectations, or in the qualifications and courses that they are studying, compared with all learners.
- Learners are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training. They have gained qualifications or have met the standards to go on to sustainable destinations. Learners, including those who have SEND, over the course of study, learners with SEND high needs have greater independence in making decisions about their lives.

Requires improvement (3)

- The quality of education is not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

The quality of education is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies (unless they apply solely to the impact of COVID-19):

- The curriculum has little or no structure or coherence, and leaders have not ensured that it is ambitious for all learners, including those who have disconnected spheres of learning that do not build their knowledge, skills or understanding.
- Teachers do not use assessments or sessions contribute weakly to their learning of the intended curriculum.
- The curriculum does not prepare learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- Weak assessment practice results in learning that fails to meet learners' needs.
- Learners do not attempt to improve the English and mathematics skills they need to succeed in their next stage, whether that is in education, training or employment, or in their current workplace.
- The attainment and progress of groups consistently lower and slower little or no improvement over time, indicating that learners are underachieving compared with others.
- Learners with SEND do not benefit from a good quality education. Staff's expectations of them are low. Staff do not identify learners' needs accurately or plan for their education. Staff deal with any issues ineffectively.
- Learners have not attained the qualifications, skills or behaviours appropriate for them to progress to their next stage of education, training or employment.

Behaviour and attitudes

244. This judgement considers how learners are staff create a safe, disciplined and positive environment within the provider and the impact this has on the behaviour and attitudes of learners.

245. The judgement focuses on the factors that research and inspection evidence suggests are most important in creating a positive environment and in ensuring that learning from the provider provides opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. These factors are:

- the extent to which environment is the provider, classroom, workshop and workplace is felt to be supportive learners to be able to learn
- The setting of clear expectations for behaviour across all aspects of provider life, including at work.
- Arising focus on attendance at and punctuality to learning and even settings to ensure that learners are able to benefit from the education provided.
- Learner motivation and positive attitudes to learning are a important indicator of attainment
- Staff mutual respectful provider culture in which staff know and care about learners.
- An environment in which learners feel safe because staff and learners do not accept bullying and harassment. Staff deal with any issues quickly, consistently and effectively.

Learners with particular needs

246. The provider may be working with learners with particular needs to improve their behaviour or their attendance. When this is the case, behaviour and conduct that would be judged inadequate in other circumstances may be judged to be good, because it is evidence that the provider is working effectively and has had a positive impact on the behaviour and attitudes of these learners.

Sources of evidence specific to behaviour and attitudes

247. The following activities will provide inspectors with evidence as well as evidence of impact on learners' behaviour and attitudes over time. Inspectors will use evidence from visits to learning sessions and training workshops, including visits to classes, lectures, workshops and other activities, including observations of interactions between staff and learners, staff employees and other partners. Such evidence could include attendance registers may also be used.

248. Inspectors' judgements about learners' behaviour and attitudes are concerned with their attitudes to learning and, where appropriate, to work, and the development of their behaviour and attitudes over time. Inspectors will also consider the extent of learners' actions, behaviours appropriate behaviour. The behaviour of the learners and their attitudes to learning and work. Inspectors will also consider the extent to which when they prioritise the impact that overall and the criteria has on learners' behaviour and attitudes.

249. The learners' view will carry some weight in inspection certain questions about behaviour and attitudes. Inspectors will ensure that the provider and have reported upon respected they feel the provider.

250. Inspectors will carry out some evidence gathering activities that include, but are not limited to:

- observing learners' behaviour in a range of different classes/workshops at different times of the day
- observing learners' punctuality in arriving at the provider, to classroom and workshop sessions and to other activities
- observing learners' courtesy, respect for, and good manners towards, each other and staff, and pride in themselves and their provider and/or employer
- observing how learners are treated by staff
- gathering the views of learners, employers, parents, staff, those with responsibility for governance and other stakeholders
- gathering evidence about the behaviour of learners when not in lessons during the inspection
- balancing evidence seen during the inspection and evidence of trends over time

Grade descriptors for behaviour and attitudes

251. For the behaviour and attitudes to be judged outstanding, it must meet the following criteria:

Outstanding (1)

- The provider must meet all the criteria for good behaviour and attitudes, security and consistently.
- The behaviour and attitudes are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

- Learners have consistently high levels of respect for others. They play a highly positive role in promoting the provider's culture of mutual respect. Bullying and harassment are never tolerated.
- Learners demonstrate consistently high positive attitudes and commitment to their education. They are resilient to setbacks and persistent in difficulties. If learners struggle with this, the provider takes intelligent, swift and highly effective action to support them.
- Learners are consistently punctual to lessons and the basics, for example high participation in skills competitions or equivalent activity.
- Learners behave consistently well, demonstrating high levels of self-control and self-discipline. If learners do not, the provider takes swift action. If learners struggle with this, the provider takes intelligent, swift and highly effective action to support them to succeed in their programme of learning.

253. To judge whether behaviour and attitudes are good, require improvement or are inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)

- Learners' attitudes to education/training of learners' behaviour and conduct and these are applied consistently and fairly. This is reflected in learners' positive behaviour.
- Learners' attitudes to their education or training are positive. They respond to challenge and are proud of their achievements.

- their attitudes over time. They understand their rights and responsibilities as learners. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.
- Learners have high attendance (bearing in mind the context of the pandemic as necessary) and are punctual. This includes participating in any distance-learning activities, such as online learning and virtual learning environments.
- Relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture where the principles of equality and diversity are nurtured. Learners feel safe and rarely experience bullying, harassment or discrimination. If incidents occur, learners feel safe and confident to report them, knowing that staff will take swift and appropriate action.

Requires improvement (3)

- Behaviour and attitudes are not yet good.
- Learners feel safe and confident in reporting incidents of bullying, harassment or discrimination, knowing that staff will take swift and appropriate action.

Inadequate (4)
Behaviour and attitudes are likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies.

- Learners' lack of engagement, motivation or enthusiasm inhibits their progress and development.
- A significant minority of learners show a lack of respect and self-discipline. Learners ignore or rebut requests to moderate their conduct and are not ready to move on to their next stage or the world of work.
- Learners' attendance is consistently low and shows little sign of sustained improvement.
- Incidents of bullying, harassment or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent.
- Learners have little confidence in the provider's ability to tackle bullying, harassment or discrimination successfully.
- Learners are not safe, or do not feel safe, at the provider or at work or subcontractor settings.

Personal development

254. The curriculum should support learners to develop their knowledge and skills beyond the purely academic, technical or vocational. This judgement evaluates the provider's intent to provide for the personal development of learners, and the quality of the way in which it does this.

255. As the provider is working with learners, those learners are also being influenced by other factors in their home environment, their community and elsewhere. Providers can teach and train learners how to build their confidence and resilience, for example, but they cannot determine how well young people and adult learners draw on this. Similarly, providers cannot make their learners active, engaged citizens, but they can help them understand how to engage with society and provide them with plentiful opportunities to do so. Providers can take effective action to prepare learners for many aspects of life, but the impact of this work may not be seen until many years later. In this judgement, therefore, inspectors will seek to evaluate the quality and intent of what a provider offers and will look to see what learners know but will not attempt to measure the impact of the provider's work on the lives of individual learners. Where the usual opportunities have been disrupted by the pandemic, the provider has found alternative approaches to providing a rich range of personal development opportunities.

256. The judgement focuses on the most significant dimensions of the personal development of learners that our education system has agreed, either by consensus or statute, are the most significant:

- developing responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and know how to become involved in public life
- developing and deepening learners' understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance
- promoting equality of opportunity so that all learners can thrive together, understanding that difference is a positive, not a negative, and that individual characteristics make people unique
- promoting an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all learners, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, relationship status or pregnancy
- developing learners' character, which we define as the set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs their motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others. This gives learners the qualities they need to flourish in our society
- developing learners' confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy
- developing learners' understanding of how to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle
- developing an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate relationship and sex education
- providing an effective careers programme that offers advice, experience and contact with employers to encourage learners to aspire, make good choices and understand what they need to do in order to reach and succeed in their chosen career
- supporting readiness for the next phase of education, training or employment so that learners can make the transition to the next stage successfully

257. These aspects of personal development will be considered in an age-appropriate way within the context of the provider and its learners.

Sources of evidence specific to personal development
258. To inform this judgement, inspectors will use evidence gathered during the inspection and evidence of trends in learners' personal development over time. Inspectors will use first-hand evidence from visits to learning sessions and training workshops, including visits to learners at work or on work placements. Inspectors will gather evidence from interviews with learners, staff, employers and other partners. Evidence will also include information provided through learner, employer and parent questionnaires. Inspectors will use a range of evidence to evaluate personal development, including:

- the range, quality and take-up of extra-curricular activities offered
- how well leaders promote British values
- how well leaders develop learners' character through the quality of education that they provide
- where appropriate, the quality of debate and discussions that learners have
- learners' understanding of the protected characteristics and how they can promote equality and diversity, and how they celebrate the things we have in common
- the quality of careers information, education, advice and guidance, and how well these benefit learners in choosing and deciding on their next steps

Grade descriptors for personal development
259. For personal development to be judged outstanding, it must meet the following criteria.

Outstanding (1)

- The provider meets all the criteria for good in personal development securely and consistently.
- Personal development is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- The provider consistently and extensively promotes the personal development of learners. The provider goes beyond the expected, so that learners have access to a wide, rich set of experiences that teach them why it is important to contribute actively to society. Opportunities for learners to develop their talents and interests are of exceptional quality.
- The provider ensures that participation in these activities is very high, particularly among those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and all benefit from these opportunities and experiences.

260. To judge whether personal development is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)

- The curriculum extends beyond the academic/technical/vocational and provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents
- The curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and, where relevant, help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy.
- The provider prepares learners for future success in education, employment or training by providing: unbiased information to all about potential next steps; high-quality, up-to-date and locally relevant careers guidance; and opportunities for encounters with the world of work.
- The provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: teaching them how to protect themselves from radicalisation and extremist views; helping to equip them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common; and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.

Requires improvement (3)

- Personal development is not yet good.

Inadequate (4)
Personal development is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies.

- A significant minority of learners do not understand how and why to live healthy, positive lives.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance do not protect learners from radicalisation and extremist views when learners are vulnerable to these. Policy and practice are poor, which means that learners are at risk.

Leadership and management

261. Inspectors will look at the work of principals, chief executives, senior leaders, deans, heads of apprenticeships, subject leaders and others with leadership and management roles when reaching this judgement.[footnote 63]

262. This judgement is about how leaders, managers and those responsible for governance ensure that the education and training delivered by the provider have a positive impact on all learners, including those with SEND and those who have high needs. It focuses on the areas in which inspection evidence and research show that leaders and managers can have the strongest impact on the quality of education and training provided. Important factors include:

- leaders' high expectations of all learners and the extent to which these are embodied in day-to-day interactions with and support for learners
- the extent to which leaders focus their attention on the education and training they provide, leading to better outcomes for learners and continued and sustainable improvement
- whether continuing professional development for teachers, trainers and other staff is aligned with the curriculum, and the extent to which this develops teachers' subject expertise and pedagogical knowledge over time, so that they deliver high-quality education and training
- the extent to which leaders ensure that learners benefit from effective teaching and high expectations in classrooms, online, in workshops, at work or with subcontractors
- whether leaders engage with learners, parents, their community and employers to plan and support the education and training that learners get
- the extent to which leaders consider the workload and well-being of their staff, while also developing and strengthening the quality of the workforce
- the extent to which leaders' and managers' high ambitions are for all learners, including those who are difficult to engage
- whether leaders and those responsible for governance understand their respective roles and carry these out to enhance the effectiveness of the provider

Governance
263. Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance. They will determine whether they provide confident, strategic leadership and create strong accountability for, and oversight and assurance of, educational performance to ensure continuous and sustainable improvement.

264. Inspectors should consider whether those responsible for governance:

- know the provider and understand its strengths and weaknesses
- support and strengthen the provider's leadership and contribute to shaping its strategic direction
- ensure that the provider meets its statutory responsibilities
- provide challenge and hold senior leaders and managers to account for improving the quality of learning and the effectiveness of performance management systems

265. Inspectors will satisfy themselves that those responsible for governance understand their responsibilities and are ensuring that these are carried out appropriately within the provider. They are not expected to review a list of duties with inspectors.

College groups and governance arrangements
266. Many providers cooperate as groups, with an overall board and chief executive officer, or similar arrangement. These assume some or all of the responsibilities formerly shouldered by the individual college's/provider's governing body. In these providers, inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of the overall board and its staff as well as the college's/provider's local board, committee or governing body, to which there are relevant delegated responsibilities.

Safeguarding
267. Inspectors will always take into account how well providers help and protect young people and learners so that they are kept safe, including when learning remotely.[footnote 64] Although inspectors will not provide a separate numerical grade for this, they will always make a written judgement in the leadership and management section of the inspection report about whether the arrangements for safeguarding young people and learners are effective.

268. If safeguarding is ineffective, this is likely to lead to a judgement of inadequate leadership and management. The following are examples of what ineffective safeguarding might include:

- learners' behaviour towards each other is unsafe, putting learners at risk of harm
- incidents of bullying or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, either direct or indirect, are common
- learners have little confidence that the provider will address concerns about their safety, including concerns about the risk of abuse
- learners or particular groups of learners do not feel safe in the provider, the workplace, in a subcontractor's premises or online
- leaders and managers do not handle safeguarding allegations about staff members and learners appropriately
- leaders and managers do not have suitable arrangements for learners to raise concerns, for identifying vulnerable adults or for managing safe recruitment
- leaders fail to protect learners from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism in accordance with the 'Prevent' duty guidance

269. However, there may be circumstances when it is appropriate to judge a provider as requires improvement, rather than inadequate, when there are minor weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements that are easy to put right. We will assess safeguarding arrangements in an age-appropriate way, taking account of the age and vulnerability of the learners involved.

270. 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings' sets out the approach inspectors should take to inspecting safeguarding in providers covered by the EIF. This should be read alongside the framework and this handbook.

271. In addition, inspectors should be familiar with relevant, including statutory, guidance on safeguarding:

- 'Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges'
- 'Working together to safeguard children'
- 'Positive environments where children can flourish'

272. Inspectors will consider to how leaders and managers adapted approaches to safeguarding during the pandemic to make sure that:

- vulnerable learners were prioritised for face-to-face education as necessary
- safeguarding procedures remained effective for those receiving remote education and those in self-isolation, as well as those attending the provider

Inspectors will discuss how safeguarding arrangements have changed over time due to the pandemic, and how leaders and managers have made sure that they remain effective.

Sources of evidence specific to leadership and management
273. Inspectors will gather a range of evidence from meetings with leaders, managers and governors and first-hand evidence of their work across the provider, including in subcontracted provision.

274. Inspectors will use documentary evidence that the provider supplies to evaluate the impact of the work of leaders, managers and governors, both currently and over time. They will use this in conjunction with first-hand evidence. This includes, but is not limited to:

- meetings with leaders and those responsible for governance, to evaluate how well they fulfil their statutory duties with respect to equality and safeguarding
- documentary evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of the provision for all learners and its continuous and sustainable improvement
- interviews with staff and learners to evidence how well leaders have created a positive culture
- first-hand evidence gathered during the inspection
- responses to the staff, learner, employer and parent/carer questionnaires. These will be particularly useful for judging the culture that leaders and managers have established
- any evidence the provider has from surveying the staff and the way in which leaders and managers have responded to concerns raised by staff, parents or employers
- considering the overall aims of bodies giving strategic direction to providers on skills and economic needs, such as mayoral and combined authorities for devolved adult education

Grade descriptors for leadership and management
275. For the leadership and management of a provider to be judged outstanding, it must meet the following criteria.

Outstanding (1)

- The provider meets all the criteria for good leadership and management securely and consistently.
- The leadership and management are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- Leaders ensure that teachers receive focused and highly effective professional development. Teachers' subject, vocational, technical, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge builds and develops consistently over time and improves the quality of education provided to learners.
- Leaders' engagement with learners, employers, parents and the local community/economy is very effective. They provide clear and direct evidence of the positive impact of how this engagement benefits learners and ensures continuous and sustainable improvement.
- Leaders ensure that regular, frequent and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels, so that they can be confident that issues will be identified. When issues are identified – in particular about workload – leaders deal with them consistently, appropriately and quickly.
- Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues.

276. To judge whether leadership and management are good, requires improvement or inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice. This vision has been maintained through the pandemic.
- Leaders focus on improving teachers' subject and teaching knowledge to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment. The practice, subject knowledge and up-to-date vocational expertise of staff build and improve over time. This includes their expertise in remote education.
- Leaders ensure that all learners, including those with SEND and high needs, and disadvantaged learners, get the information, advice, guidance and support to achieve their next steps and progress to positive destinations. Leaders provide the support for staff to make this possible.
- Leaders engage effectively with their community, including, where relevant, with parents/carers, employers, local services and organisations responsible for local and regional economic planning.
- Leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff, including their workload
- Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education and training and help to ensure continuous and sustainable improvement.
- Those responsible for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its legal duties and responsibilities. These include, for example, those under the Equality Act 2010, and those in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding.
- Leaders protect staff from harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- The provider has an effective culture of safeguarding that enables staff to: identify, help and protect learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming, exploitation, radicalisation or extremism; help learners to reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; and manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults and learners who may be a risk to other learners and vulnerable adults.

Requires improvement (3)

- Leadership and management are not yet good.
- Safeguarding is effective. If any weaknesses in safeguarding exist, these are not difficult to rectify, and there are no serious failings that leave learners being harmed or at risk of harm.

Inadequate (4)
Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies:

- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle a poor quality of education or training. This significantly impairs the progress of learners, including the most disadvantaged, learners with SEND and those who have high needs.
- Leaders are not aware of, or do not take effective action to stem, the decline in the quality of provision.
- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of learners, employers, the local community or local and regional economies. This is reflected in the low proportion of learners who progress to destinations relevant to their career or learning aims.
- The curriculum does not equip learners with the skills, knowledge or understanding required to prepare them for life in modern Britain or enable them to progress to their next steps.
- Leaders, managers and those responsible for governance, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity. They do not prevent discriminatory behaviour or prejudiced actions and views.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. The provider's arrangements for safeguarding learners do not meet statutory requirements and do not protect learners, or the provider takes insufficient action to remedy weaknesses following a serious failure of safeguarding arrangements.
- Leaders, managers and governors are not protecting learners from radicalisation and extremist views. Policy and practice are poor, which means that learners are at risk.

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1. Dance and drama colleges are inspected against the principles of the EIF at the request of the DfE. ↩
2. From 1 April 2021, Ofsted is responsible for the inspection of apprenticeships at levels 6 and 7 (degree and non-degree) as well as at levels 2 to 5). ↩
3. Designated institutions have specially designated educational status under section 28 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. ↩
4. From 1 April 2021, Ofsted is responsible for the inspection of apprenticeships at levels 6 and 7 (degree and non-degree) as well as at levels 2 to 5. ↩
5. Ofsted will not publish any information that identifies an individual in the report but may name the principal, the chief executive or equivalent. ↩
6. In order to protect the identity of learners in inspection and monitoring visit reports, when fewer than 5 learners are referred to we will state 'fewer than 5 learners' and not the specific number. ↩
7. This inspection interval is normally extended to 'within 7 years from the publication of the previous inspection report' for the next inspection for any good provider as at 19 April 2021. This is due to the suspension of routine inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020. Good providers that were due their inspection during the period of inspection suspension will normally receive their next inspection within 16 months of May 2021. ↩
8. This inspection interval is normally extended to 'within 42 months from the publication of the report of the previous inspection' for the next inspection of any provider that requires improvement as at 19 April 2021. This is due to the suspension of routine inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020. ↩
9. Providers that were due a requires improvement monitoring visit (RIMV) during the period of COVID-19 inspection suspension will normally have received a progress monitoring visit. In those cases where the provider did not waive its RIMV, it will normally receive it by February 2022. Requirement improvement providers that did not receive a progress monitoring visit and so are due a RIMV will also normally receive this by February 2022. When a provider has been graded inadequate for apprenticeship provision and the provider has had its apprenticeship funding terminated/been removed from the register of apprenticeship training providers, that apprenticeship provision will not normally be covered at the RIMV. ↩
10. This inspection interval is normally extended to 'within 27 months from the publication of the previous inspection report' for the next inspection of any inadequate provider as at 19 April 2021 on account of the impact of COVID-19 and the consequent suspension of inspection from March 2020. ↩
11. See also the ESFA guidance, 'Removal from register of apprenticeship training providers'. ↩
12. This relates to providers newly and directly funded to deliver apprenticeship provision from or after April 2017 (whether levy or non-levy) and those which are newly funded to deliver education provision from or after August 2017 whether, adult education, 16 to 19 study programme or high needs funded. ↩
13. See Adult education budget (AEB) devolution and 'Apprenticeship funding: how it works'. ↩
14. This interval is normally extended to 'within 36 months of the provider starting to deliver directly funded provision' if the provider has not received a new provider monitoring visit as at 19 April 2021. This is due to the suspension of routine inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020. ↩
15. This interval is normally extended to 'within 40 months of the publication of the monitoring visit report' due to the suspension of routine inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic for a new provider that has not yet received its full inspection as at 19 April 2021. If a new provider has been found to be making insufficient progress in one or more theme at a second new provider monitoring visit and continues to be funded, it will receive its next full inspection normally within 28 months from the publication of its first monitoring visit report. We may, in exceptional circumstances, carry out a second new provider monitoring visit where necessary before the first full inspection where learner numbers are very low or circumstances make that appropriate. New FE colleges, and 16 to 19 academies that began to deliver funded provision from August/September 2017 but before August 2019 will normally receive their full inspection within 52 months of beginning to deliver funded provision. They will not normally receive a monitoring visit. However, new FE colleges and 16 to 19 academies starting to deliver directly funded provision from August 2019 will normally receive a new provider monitoring visit within 30 months of starting to deliver funded provision. That will revert to receiving a new provider monitoring visit within 24 months for those new FE colleges, designated institutions and 16 to 19 academies starting to deliver directly funded provision from April 2021 onwards. ↩
16. New providers that became newly directly funded for apprenticeship provision before April 2017 or other forms of funding before August 2017 and that have not yet received their first full inspection will normally receive a full inspection by February 2022. A provider that has been removed from the RoATP for reasons other than being judged inadequate and whose only funding is for apprenticeship provision will not normally receive a monitoring visit or a full inspection while removed from the RoATP (for an exception see paragraph 17). If the provider returns to the RoATP, they will normally resume being subject to a monitoring visit or full inspection, whichever was due when they were removed from the RoATP. That monitoring visit or inspection will take place within 12 months of returning to the RoATP (if they have continued to deliver funded provision) or within 12 months of starting to deliver funded provision again (if they have ceased to deliver funded provision). We will normally treat a provider that has ceased delivering all directly funded provision for 2 full individual learner record (ILR) years and that returns to delivering directly funded education or training as a new provider for the purposes of inspection. A provider that has been removed from the RoATP for reasons other than being judged inadequate and that delivers other types of provision as well as apprenticeship training (see paragraph 90) will continue to be subject to a monitoring visit or full inspection with respect to those other types of provision. However, we will not normally inspect the apprenticeship provision while the provider is removed from the RoATP. We will inspect the apprenticeship provision as outlined in this footnote if the provider successfully re-applies to the RoATP. ↩
17. If the provider's only insufficient progress judgement relates to safeguarding and it then receives a judgement of reasonable or significant progress with respect to safeguarding at the second monitoring visit, the provider will not then have a judgement of insufficient progress. The full inspection will then take place within 24 months of the publication of the first monitoring visit report.

    If a provider is due a follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit because it was judged to be making insufficient progress and is then removed from the RoATP, the provider will still normally receive the follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit within 4 months of the publication of the first monitoring visit report, provided that they are continuing to deliver funded provision. ↩

continuing to deliver funded provision. ↩

18. Ofsted grades on a full inspection, or makes progress judgements on a monitoring visit, on the whole of a provider's apprenticeship provision. From April 2021, all apprenticeship provision that a provider delivers will be graded collectively, irrespective of the levels of provision delivered. There is no separate grading for different levels or different subjects or standards or whether they are degree or non-degree apprenticeships.

    Ofsted may carry out a full inspection of any provider without first completing a monitoring visit where risk factors or other concerns are identified and this is considered the most appropriate course of action. ↩

19. Providers that are currently 'good' but that have substantial L6/7 provision that is subject to inspection from 1 April 2021 will have that substantial additional provision now in scope taken into account when considering whether they should be due a full or a short inspection for their next inspection. ↩

20. This is notwithstanding the date from which the provider may have first begun to deliver funded Level 6 and 7 apprenticeships provision. ↩

21. This includes new providers delivering other types of funded provision as set out in paragraph 90 as well as apprenticeship training. ↩

22. This interval is normally extended to 'within 48 months of the merger' where the newly merged college has not yet received its first full inspection by 19 April 2021. This is due to the suspension of routine inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020. Further education colleges and sixth-form colleges will be inspected at corporation level. ↩

23. This refers to mergers between further education colleges, sixth form colleges and designated institutions. ↩

24. This may not apply if the merged college has already received a support and challenge visit or the most recent merger took place before January 2018. ↩

25. See paragraph 27 above for the range of sources that Ofsted draws on for risk assessment. ↩

26. All inspection intervals are extended for 16 to 19 academy converters according to their inspection grade as at 19 April 2021 as set out above. ↩

27. If the provider only delivers one type of provision, for example apprenticeship training, and the learner numbers are very low and inspectors are doubtful that they can gather sufficient evidence to arrive at the necessary judgements for a full inspection, Ofsted may postpone the full inspection or carry out a monitoring visit in place of the full inspection. If the provider only delivers apprenticeship training and the learner numbers are very low, inspectors are doubtful that they can gather sufficient evidence to arrive at the necessary judgements for a full inspection and the provider's last monitoring visit judged the provider to be making insufficient progress in one or more themes (and the provider cannot take on more apprentices), Ofsted will normally carry out a monitoring visit in place of the full inspection. When a monitoring visit is carried out to replace a full inspection, it will normally follow the arrangement as set out in the table later in this handbook covering the 3 set themes. Please see footnote 16 for an explanation of how we inspect providers that have been removed from the RoATP for reasons other than being judged inadequate. ↩

28. Note the references to insufficient progress judgements with respect to ESFA intervention in 'Removal from register of apprenticeship training providers'. ↩

29. See 'Apprenticeship funding: how it works'. ↩

30. For a new designated institution, see footnote 15. The themes will depend on the nature of the provider's provision but will reflect the structure set out. See footnote 16 relating to inspection of providers that are removed from the RoATP for reasons other than being judged inadequate. ↩

31. If an adult learning provider acquires apprenticeship funding it will then enter the category of a new apprenticeships training provider and the adult learning will be covered under a separate theme which will be the adult learning 'quality of education' theme. ↩

32. See footnote 9. Any RIMV taking place after 1 April 2021 will include any substantial level 6/7 apprenticeship provision that a provider has in its coverage (provided it continues to be funded). This substantial provision will normally be covered under a separate theme 'What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices on level 6/7 programmes benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?'. ↩

33. See the consultation outcome: inspection visits to further education and skills providers judged to require improvement. ↩

34. If a provider judged to require improvement has apprenticeship provision graded inadequate and has been removed from the RoATP, that apprenticeship provision will not normally be covered as part of the monitoring visit. ↩

35. If a provider judged to be inadequate has apprenticeship provision graded inadequate and has been removed from the RoATP, that apprenticeship provision will not normally be covered as part of the monitoring visit. ↩

36. Providers that were due a reinspection monitoring visit (RMV) during the period of COVID-19 inspection suspension will normally have received a progress monitoring visit. If a provider did not waive its RMV(s), it will normally receive its RMV(s) by February 2022. If an inadequate provider did not receive a progress monitoring visit and is still due a RMV, it will normally receive it by February 2022. ↩

37. Ten combined authorities have been established so far. Currently the authorities are: Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region, West Yorkshire, North of Tyne, Tees Valley, West Midlands, West of England, Cambridgeshire/Peterborough, North East. See 'Adult education budget (AEB) devolution'. ↩

38. We will not normally inspect apprenticeship provision or deem it to be within the scope of inspection when a provider has been removed from RoATP (see paragraph 37 and footnotes 11 and 16). ↩

39. See 'Apprenticeship accountability statement'. Where a provider registered with the Office for Students (OfS) provides apprenticeship training in one or more apprenticeship standards that includes a mandatory higher education qualification, the OfS may provide Ofsted with provider-specific information to inform the inspection judgement relating to the apprenticeship provision. ↩

40. We will not normally inspect apprenticeship provision when a provider has been removed from the RoATP (see paragraph 37 and footnotes 11 and 16). ↩

41. In the case of monitoring visits, inspectors will use their range of expertise to contribute to the relevant themes. ↩

42. Inspectors may identify a number of off-site learners and employers to observe and/or interview. The nominee should ensure that they are notified, as well as any other users and partners who inspectors wish to meet. ↩

43. This does not apply to monitoring visits. ↩

44. Inspectors may ask for specific information relating to 14- and 15-year-olds. ↩

45. When a full inspection is planned, learner numbers are very low and inspectors are doubtful that they can gather sufficient evidence to arrive at the necessary judgements for a full inspection, the lead inspector may decide to postpone the inspection or to replace the full inspection with a monitoring visit. For these circumstances, see footnote 27. ↩

46. This does not apply in the case of monitoring visits. ↩

47. An Ofsted Inspector is an inspector who is not an HMI but is deployed by Ofsted as a team or lead inspector on further education and skills inspections and monitoring visits. ↩

48. Ofsted will periodically write to all providers to request that they provide a copy of their self-assessment. Providers can send their latest self-assessment to fes.sar@ofsted.gov.uk at any time. ↩

49. Not all inspectors will necessarily attend this meeting. ↩

50. Staff from GLA or an MCA may also attend where they are funding the provider. ↩

51. For monitoring visits, when grades are referred to, this should be understood to refer to progress judgements. ↩ ↩[2] ↩[3]

52. Note the references to inadequate judgements on inspections and insufficient progress judgements on monitoring visits with respect to ESFA intervention in the guidance 'Removal from register of apprenticeship training providers'. ↩

53. See 'Induction for newly qualified teachers (England)'. ↩

54. See 'Retention and disposing of information'. Inspectors can access this through the Ofsted engagement hub (internal only). ↩

55. But see above footnote 7 above for the extension on account of the COVID-19 suspension of inspection. Once an outstanding provider has received a short inspection and is confirmed to still be outstanding, we will normally carry out a further short inspection within 6 years of the publication of the previous report. ↩

56. As at paragraph 35. ↩

57. Section 41 of the Technical and Further Education Act 2017 requires that Ofsted 'comment[s]' on careers guidance provided to students in further education colleges, sixth-form colleges and designated institutions. The Act defines students for this purpose as those aged 16 to 18 and those up to the age of 25 who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. While the statutory duty applies only to the inspection of the above institutions, inspectors will inspect and comment in similar fashion on careers advice on short and full inspections of all further education and skills providers as appropriate. If there are no 16- to 19-year olds or those with EHC plans, the inspection may not cover careers guidance. ↩

58. That is 1 or 2 days on site. Additional time is also allocated for the lead inspector to plan the inspection and write the inspection report. ↩

59. Non-qualification activities may include tutorials, work to develop study, leadership teamwork, self-management skills and volunteering. ↩

60. From 1 April 2021, Ofsted is responsible for inspecting apprenticeship training (as defined in paragraph 90) at levels 6 and 7 apprenticeship provision (both degree and non-degree) as well as at levels 2 to 5.

    Ofsted inspects apprenticeship training, not degrees or qualifications or end-point assessment (EPA). For example, with respect to degree apprenticeships, we will not inspect the academic standard of the degree (that is, whether it meets the sector recognised standard for higher education). ↩

61. This covers the quality of education and training. Where teachers and teaching are referred to, this should be understood to cover lecturers, trainers and training too. ↩

62. References to classes should be taken to include the range of possible teaching, training and learning sessions that may occur across the range of contexts covered. ↩

63. Research suggests that leadership and management can be highly effective when it is shared by different individuals and distributed across different levels across a provider. ↩

64. See 'Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)'. Inspectors should also take into account the provider's safeguarding of any young people below the age of 16 who may be on the premises of a provider, even when the quality of their education is not within the scope of inspection. ↩

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