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Guidance

# British schools overseas: how to get accredited

How to apply for the voluntary accreditation scheme for British schools overseas and where to get support.

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Accreditation helps inform school staff and parents about how British schools overseas (BSOs) align with the standards applied to independent schools in England.

Overseas schools which have not been accredited as BSOs cannot offer statutory induction to early career teachers (ECTs). Find out more about about [statutory induction](#).

## Choose a standard

As a British school overseas, you need to :

- choose a standard to be inspected by
- arrange an inspection by an approved inspectorate
- have an inspection every 3 years to show that your school meets the standards set by the organisations who provide the inspections

Before you arrange an inspection, choose a set of standards that you want to be inspected by. The standards are comparable with the [independent school standards](#) and the [national minimum standards for boarding schools](#) used in England.

[British schools overseas: standards for schools](#) lists the standards that schools must meet to be accredited as a BSO. Approved inspectorates will use these standards when they inspect your school.

## Arrange an inspection

The following organisations are approved to inspect and report on BSOs:

- [Education Development Trust](#)
- [Independent Schools Inspectorate \(ISI\)](#)
- [Penta International](#)

DfE approves organisations to inspect overseas schools and

produce inspection reports.

Ofsted monitors these inspectorates and [reports on the quality of their inspections](#) annually.

Schools in Dubai should request an inspection through the [Knowledge and Human Development Authority](#) of the Government of Dubai, which works in partnership with the Education Development Trust.

## Inspection fees

DfE has no role in setting fees for overseas inspections.

## Inspection reports

Inspectorates are required to publish the results of all inspections for the past 3 years on their websites.

DfE also publishes [BSO inspection reports](#).

## School reference number

If your school meets the standards, it will be allocated a unique reference number on the national school reference system, [get information about schools](#).

## Inspections affected by coronavirus (COVID-19)

DfE is contacting all schools whose inspection cycle was impacted by COVID-19. We will ask schools who have not been inspected in the last 3 years when they are scheduling their next inspection.

Send any queries to [BritishSchools.OVERSEAS@education.gov.uk](mailto:BritishSchools.OVERSEAS@education.gov.uk).

## Support for BSOs

The following organisations provide help and support to BSOs in arranging and preparing for inspections:

- [Association of British Schools Overseas \(AoBSO\)](#)
- [British Schools in the Middle East \(BSME\)](#)
- [Council of British International Schools \(COBIS\)](#)
- [Federation of British International Schools in Asia \(FOBISIA\)](#)

- [The National Association of British Schools in Spain \(NABSS\)](#)


## Jurisdiction

DfE has no jurisdiction over schools operating outside England. Complaints about a school should be taken up directly with the school.

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