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Official Statistics

Methodology: Initial teacher education inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2023

Published 8 November 2023

Applies to England

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Introduction

This document contains methodology and quality information relevant to [our annual release of initial teacher education \(ITE\) inspections and outcomes data](#).

This official statistics release reports on the outcomes of ITE inspections that were completed within the 2022 to 2023 academic year. This release also includes the most recent inspection outcomes of all open age phases that have been inspected, as at the end of that period.

This report includes outcomes for:

- all providers of programmes leading to qualified teacher status for maintained schools and academies in England
- all providers of programmes of further education teacher training validated by higher education institutions in England
- all providers of programmes leading to early years teacher status in England

We inspect ITE providers in accordance with section 18B of the Education Act 1994 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. Several sections of the Act relate to the inspection of ITE. The [ITE inspection handbook](#) contains more information.

The inspection framework was most recently revised on 1 September 2020. Under this framework, each provider can offer training for up to 4 different age ranges. These are called age phases. They cover:

- early years
- primary
- secondary
- further education

Age phases are judged on a 4-point scale as:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement

- inadequate

If a provider has been inspected more than once, not all age phases may have been inspected each time. Statistics on most recent inspection judgements are based on the most recent judgement of each age phase, not the most recent judgement of each provider.

From September 2020, we moved to a 1-stage inspection model, rather than the previous 2-stage model.

From June 2014 to September 2020, an age phase that had been judged as requires improvement or inadequate would have a 1-stage follow-up inspection in the summer term of the same academic year as its 2-stage inspection. If we did not see improvement at the second inspection of primary or secondary provision, the provider was usually subject to the [withdrawal of its accreditation](#) by the Department for Education (DfE). A similar condition does not exist for inspection of further education providers since they are not accredited by the DfE.

Quality

This section is broken down by the 5 dimensions of statistical output quality in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#):

- relevance
- coherence and comparability
- accuracy and reliability
- timeliness and punctuality
- accessibility and clarity

There is also additional information on meeting user needs.

Relevance

Information in this release has 5 distinct purposes:

- it gives trainees and prospective trainees an expert and independent assessment of how well an age phase is performing and the quality of teacher training offered
- it allows users to track movement in the sector and monitor the quality of provision available at a national and local level
- it gives an accurate picture of the provision, which influences policy decisions and helps to ensure that provision is available where it is most needed
- it helps identify good practice and target areas of weak performance, which informs policy development within the DfE to address issues and implement strategies to mitigate them
- within Ofsted, it contributes to inspection profiles, which inform inspection framework development and underpin policies to improve standards

Inspection acts in several ways to drive and support improvement in the ITE sector. It:

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

Assessment of user needs and perceptions

We welcome feedback about our statistical releases. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please contact the [Inspection Insight team](#).

Coherence and comparability

Ofsted assumed responsibility for inspection of ITE from the Teacher Training Agency in 2002.

We have reported on inspections and inspection outcomes as official statistics since 2012 (covering the 2011 to 2012 academic year).

There have been a number of framework changes since the first release of statistics and we have reflected these in the publications.

For inspections after September 2020, the current framework has 2 key judgement areas: 'The quality of education and training' and 'Leadership and management'. There is no longer an 'Outcomes for trainees' judgement.

When we have implemented changes, such as releasing a new framework, we have alerted users through updates in the main findings document. When framework changes have meant direct comparisons have not been possible, then breaks in time series have been clearly added to tables and charts and explained in the text. When we have implemented methodological changes to improve the output, we have added guidance to footnotes and the main findings document for easy access.

For the inspection outcomes aspect of this release and when statements are made about whether inspection outcomes have declined or improved, we are referring to the most recent relevant outcome and to overall effectiveness outcomes only.

When a provider offering only primary and secondary training has a small number of trainees, we may inspect both phases simultaneously and produce a combined judgement on the primary and secondary training. This is different from what happens in larger providers where we make judgements separately for primary and for secondary training. These inspections are marked as 'primary and secondary'.

Accuracy and reliability

Information on inspection outcomes is extracted from our administrative systems. While we aim to produce the highest-quality statistics, there are occasional differences between the data on the administrative system and the final inspection report, such as changes during the quality assurance process. We perform rigorous quality assurance checks, including checking a sample of entries to ensure the inspection report matches the data on the administrative system. If the data recorded on the system affects reporting, we will provide a note in the release.

Technical production

Technical production of the official statistics publication may also result in manual errors. We carry out a rigorous data quality assurance procedure with the aim of minimising the risk of reporting error. If an error is discovered within the document, we place a note on the website and upload a corrected version of the document as soon as possible.

You can find more information online on the [issues of using administrative data](#).

Changes to providers

A provider may list itself as closed but still provide training to individuals part way through the course. For data and statistics purposes, these providers are considered closed and are excluded from figures, even though a small number of trainees may still be receiving training.

Timeliness and punctuality

We currently publish data once a year and include details of inspections that have taken place and been published in the relevant period.

We publish data at 9:30am on the date pre-announced in the [publication schedule](#).

You can also find information on any delay in publication on the publication schedule.

The average production time for this release is approximately 6 weeks. This time includes obtaining and cleaning the data, drafting findings, quality assuring all outputs and uploading information onto GOV.UK.

We announce publications on our social media channels. We give pre-release access in accordance with the [Pre-release to Official Statistics Order \(2008\)](#).

Accessibility and clarity

We publish our releases in an accessible format on GOV.UK. The information is publicly available and there are no restrictions on access to the published data. Each release includes outcomes from inspections that have subsequently been published and accurate numbers of age phases registered with Ofsted. The data is aimed at keeping users informed of progress under the inspection framework and of changes in the sector.

Supporting underlying data in an accessible format accompanies each release. This data consists of provider-level information.

Performance, cost and respondent burden

There is no respondent burden in relation to this statistics release because data is a by-product of Ofsted's inspection process. The only cost involved is the internal resource involved in collating the release.

Confidentiality, transparency and security

When we hold sensitive or personal data, the disclosure control processes we have in place ensure that this data is not published.

All data releases follow [our confidentiality and revisions policies](#).

Methodology

Official statistics only include information on published inspection reports. We choose the cut-off date for publication to allow all inspections that took place within the reporting period to be published. We specify the cut-off date in the official statistics publication.

We take the information on providers, including postcode, regional information and the status of

which age phases are active at each provider, from the annual provider returns. This information may be subject to change.

Glossary

Definitions of terms are within the [statistical glossary](#).

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