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Guidance

Operating guide for inspectors: education, skills training and work in prisons and young offender institutions

Published 28 August 2026

Applies to England

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 **For use on inspections from 21 September 2026.**

About this page

This guidance sets out how lead inspectors ('you') and team inspectors should carry out full inspections of prisons and young offender institutions (YOIs).

Inspectors should use the guidance in this document and [the toolkit](#), along with their professional curiosity, empathy and compassion, to gather evidence to reach fair and accurate grades. They should also draw on their experience and expertise.

Information for inspectors on how to carry out monitoring visits is in our separate operating guide for monitoring inspections of prisons and YOIs, which will be published in due course.

Conduct

Throughout the inspection, you must act in line with our [code of conduct](#), and show professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect at all times. At the earliest opportunity, and as necessary throughout the inspection, remind both the establishment leaders and the inspection team of the importance of following the code of conduct.

Key principles

Principle 1

Throughout the inspection, the toolkit will help you to gather evidence to celebrate the establishment's strengths, validate leaders' priorities and progress and highlight where improvement is needed. In doing so, you will consider the extent to which prisoners:

- engage – with the education, skills and work offer
- achieve – academically, vocationally and personally
- thrive – benefit from the right systems, processes and levels of oversight, so that they can flourish, and fulfil their potential, whatever their background or individual needs

These prompts align closely with the evaluation areas in the toolkit and will give you assurance that you are building a clear and typical picture of all aspects of the establishment's work.

Principle 2

Leadership and inclusion are key areas of focus when gathering evidence.

Principle 3

The 'expected standard' in the evaluation areas in the toolkit is the starting point for planning your inspection activities.

What to do before arriving on site

Preparing for inspection

Preparation is a vital part of ensuring that the inspection is a positive experience. Being focused and proportionate is key. Once His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) has made initial contact to announce the inspection, you will contact, by email, a senior person responsible for education, skills and work activities in the establishment (for example, the head of education, skills and work). In this email, you will arrange your initial planning call for later that week and confirm the documents you require and by when so that you can prepare for the on-site inspection (which usually takes place the following week). Further details about this initial call and the documents the establishment should provide are in the [inspection information for prisons and YOIs](#).

Your planning will focus primarily on how inspectors will gather first-hand evidence of prisoners' experiences to evaluate them against [the toolkit](#).

When preparing, consider the [3 key principles](#).

As soon as the establishment has been notified of the inspection, staff at the establishment should begin to draw together the documents that you will need for the inspection. You will discuss the information in these documents during the [planning calls](#). These should be working documents and not prepared specifically for the inspection. You should keep the review of documents to a minimum. Be mindful that the establishment will need to accommodate the inspection while managing its day-to-day operations.

During the planning stage, review the following and record brief, relevant, evaluative information in your evidence:

- the completed Ofsted information annex, provided by HMIP ('Planning sheet for the inspection of education, skills and work in adult and young adult prisons'); on a standalone inspection, Ofsted will request a similar set of information directly
- outcomes of HMIP's pre-inspection questionnaire
- prisoner population statistics, including age, ethnicity, length of sentence, length of

stay and whether any barriers to education, skills and work have been identified (such as special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), low-level reading ability or other support needs)

- timetables for lessons/sessions/workshops or other learning and work activities during the week
- the establishment's current self-assessment report or equivalent evaluation report and quality improvement plans
- verified achievement data (for example from prison management information systems), and performance data on prisoners' progression to further courses and/or into work
- the report from the previous inspection
- any subsequent monitoring visit reports by Ofsted, including joint independent reviews of progress (IRPs) with HMIP

Use your preparation to identify what to discuss/explore further in the planning call.

Notification, communication and follow-up calls

Constructive, professional dialogue

At the heart of our inspections is a professional dialogue between inspectors, leaders and [the nominee](#). This dialogue must follow our [code of conduct](#) and always be carried out with professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect.

Initial contact with the establishment should set the tone for the inspection. From the planning week, you should start to build positive relationships and rapport with leaders. Consider the wellbeing of staff and leaders throughout.

Initial contact with senior leaders

In almost all cases, we will continue to inspect jointly with HMIP. Once HMIP has

notified the establishment of the inspection, follow this up with your email to the senior person responsible for education, skills and work activities in the establishment. This will usually be by the end of the Tuesday in the week before the inspection.

Notifying leaders of any standalone inspection

For a separate, standalone Ofsted inspection of education, skills and work, you will normally contact the governor by email, 10 working days before the inspection starts, to notify them of the inspection. Use the email template for this. Inform the establishment that an inspection is taking place and explain the type and length of the inspection.

The governor will tell you who they want to act as the inspection nominee, whether they will have a shadow nominee and whether the governor or a senior leader will also attend the planning call. You will then contact the nominee, normally by email, as soon as possible and by the following morning at the latest.

Confirm details of the inspection team, including whether there is an assistant lead inspector. Check whether there are any conflicts of interest or concerns. Note any conflicts or concerns and your response in the evidence base.

Scheduling the planning call

The [planning call](#) is in 3 parts:

- introduction and discussing practicalities
- understanding the establishment's context
- planning inspection activities

When you make email contact with the senior leader or nominee, agree times for part 1 of the call.

Parts 2 and 3 may be held as a single call or split into 2 calls, depending on the size and complexity of the establishment. You may also suggest a time for parts 2 and 3 in your email. To manage your own workload appropriately (you will likely have other inspection activity to complete in the same week as the planning call), you should

aim to schedule all parts of the planning call for the same day.

Explain that these are normally video conference calls, unless technology does not allow for this. Agree the specific arrangements with the senior leader.

Explain what you are going to discuss on the call(s) and that each part of the call may last around 90 minutes. Emphasise to leaders that they can take breaks as needed.

Agree who should attend the call(s). Encourage the leader or nominee to invite other members of staff to assist and support them in all calls.

At this point, you can also provide, for information, the template that the nominee may use to share information in part 2 of the planning call. Briefly explain its purpose.

Nominee

Explain the role of [the nominee](#). Early in your planning, ask leaders who they have selected for this role. Ask if the proposed nominee has accessed any of our optional training for nominees. Reassure leaders that there is no requirement for the proposed nominee to have completed this training, and it will not hinder the inspection if they have not.

Confirm that the nominee is suitably placed to support inspection activity. They should be a senior member of staff with a thorough knowledge of how the establishment operates on a day-to-day basis. Record in the evidence base the role of the person selected to be the nominee.

Agree who should attend the planning calls with you and the nominee. Ask the nominee to invite another member of staff to assist and support them – but keep numbers on the calls manageable. The calls may also include other senior managers, but do not specifically ask for them to be present. It may also include the [shadow nominee](#), if there is one. If others join the planning call(s), such as a leader from the education contractor, you must check that any information that you discuss is appropriate to share with them.

You must not share information recorded on evidence forms with the nominee. Only relevant logistical and contextual information may be shared.

Reasonable adjustments and adaptations

Ask whether anyone who will be joining the planning call requires any reasonable adjustments due to a disability and, if so, what arrangements are already in place.

Consider any requests, following the guidance in the [Responding to requests for reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations](#) section and inform the duty desk, who will log the reasonable adjustments. Advise the nominee of your decision. If they have any questions or unresolved concerns following this discussion, refer them to the provider contact helpline number.

Consider making other adaptations to the inspection process where those with other protected characteristics may otherwise be put at a disadvantage.

Also ask the inspection team whether anyone requires any reasonable adjustments due to a disability and, if so, what arrangements Ofsted already puts in place.

The planning call

Planning calls are normally video conference calls. Ask the establishment not to record any of the calls. In exceptional circumstances, you may permit the establishment to record calls where this is required in response to a request for reasonable adjustments. Similarly, tell the establishment that we do not normally record calls, unless we have agreed this beforehand with them. Let the nominee know that they are welcome to take notes.

Remember that a key aim of the calls is to have a meaningful and professional conversation about the establishment, its context and leaders' views about its strengths and priorities for improvement. These are important discussions that will help you to form a top-level view of the establishment.

Part 1: introduction and discussing practicalities

Call the establishment at the time agreed. The agenda for this part of the call is as follows:

- introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the call
- confirm who will carry out the nominee and shadow nominee roles (where relevant)
- check on leaders' wellbeing
- check whether any reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations are needed and what is already in place
- explain the use of the toolkit and scope of the inspection
- list the inspection team members and their responsibilities
- explain the role and responsibilities of the nominee
- agree on arrangements for the lead inspector to have schedules/timetables of all learning activities, including those delivered by contractors, where applicable
- list the documents that need to be made available during the inspection
- agree on domestic arrangements
- confirm measures to ensure the health, safety and security of inspectors
- explain the arrangements for final feedback, evaluation and reporting
- agree on the arrangements, where applicable, for any additional visitors/observers during the inspection
- set out details of parts 2 and 3 of the planning call
- deal with any other business, including any questions, queries or concerns

Record the roles of all staff on the call. Work your way through the agenda, making brief notes as required. When confirming details of part 2 of the planning call, remind leaders that they can choose to use the template you provided to share information with you. However, explain that there is no requirement to use the template.

Once you have agreed on arrangements for parts 2 and 3 of the call, including whether this will be one call or separate calls, email the nominee with confirmation.

Part 2: understanding the establishment's context and leaders' priorities for improvement

It is crucial that, during the planning call, you develop an accurate understanding of the establishment's context, including the types of prisoner the establishment holds

and prisoners' needs. This will help you to understand the lens through which leaders have made their decisions and reflect on the impact of the establishment's work, particularly on those who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to improve their reading; and those who have other support needs.

Remember to apply the [3 key principles](#) throughout the planning call.

Contextual information, leaders' successes and leadership priorities

To deepen your understanding of the establishment, and in collaboration with leaders/the nominee, use this part of the call to discuss:

- your pre-inspection preparation
- the establishment's context, including any major changes since the previous inspection or monitoring visit
- leaders' evaluation of the establishment's current strengths and successes and their priorities for improvement, including where they believe they currently sit in terms of the 5-point grading scale for each evaluation area
- leaders' recent and ongoing priorities and challenges, the actions they have taken to improve or maintain standards, and how they have assessed the impact of their actions

Leaders' approach to inclusion

Explore:

- an overview of prisoners' needs
- leaders' approach to ensuring that staff can identify prisoners who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs – you need to consider this even if leaders have not identified any prisoners who fall into these groups; this is to ensure that leaders are identifying and addressing the needs of prisoners effectively
- how the establishment supports these prisoners
- the impact of the support given to prisoners and whether and how that impact is monitored and reviewed
- steps the establishment has taken to meet the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled prisoners

Inspection focus areas

Discuss the inspection focus areas with leaders. You should take into account a range of factors, including:

- the different courses/work opportunities offered
- the relative performance of prisoners in different courses
- the proportions of prisoners taking part in education and vocational training compared to the proportion in work roles
- leaders' views of their priorities and their strengths, successes and areas for development
- whether there are education, skills and work opportunities with direct links to employers and/or that lead to employment on release
- prisoners not engaged in education, skills and work
- the context of the prison and its prisoners
- the geographical spread of any prisoners undertaking work or other activities outside the prison
- information from the nominee, prisoners and employers, HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) or HMIP

Part 3: planning inspection activities

The purpose of this part of the call is to shape the plan for the inspection. Make sure that leaders/the nominee understand the plan and know the practical arrangements they need to make to support it.

The information from your calls so far will help you consider and plan with leaders/the nominee the inspection activities you and the team need to carry out to gather the necessary evidence to:

- celebrate what leaders have identified as strengths
- validate the priorities leaders have identified for improvement, and whether they have an effective plan to bring about the desired impact
- highlight where there is more to do to ensure that prisoners engage, achieve and thrive

You must consider the establishment's context when planning inspection activities. You need to be flexible, for example by working with leaders/the nominee to arrange

meetings around their other inspection priorities, or, where prisoners are released on temporary licence (RoTL), visiting workplaces or external sites in the community that prisoners access. Agree on whether activities can be carried out remotely, such as by telephone.

Meetings with key staff and any visits to prisoners at work or external sites should be agreed as quickly as possible. As applicable, leaders will need to inform the education and training contractors, their staff and other users about the inspection, emphasising that inspectors may visit any sessions involving prisoners.

Find a suitable time during the inspection to meet with those responsible for governance and/or oversight.

Case sampling

Briefly explain [case sampling](#) to leaders/the nominee. If they have not done this already, ask them to provide a list of prisoners with specific barriers to learning, referring, as appropriate, to the groups listed in the 'Inclusion' evaluation areas of [the toolkit](#). There is no requirement to provide information on all prisoners at the establishment, but the list should include:

- all prisoners allocated to courses or work that relate to the selected inspection focus areas
- all prisoners who are unemployed with identified barriers to participating and succeeding in education, skills and work, including, as appropriate, those living on the establishment's segregation unit (or equivalent)

Explain that, before the start of the inspection, you will use this list to select a number of prisoners for case sampling.

Make sure you select a representative sample from the list. Always aim to include prisoners who face barriers to participating in education, skills and work; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs.

When inspecting YOIs, you should also aim to include a child/children known (or previously known) to social care and a disadvantaged child/children (eligible for free school meals or pupil premium funding in the last 6 years).

It is important that, as part of your case sampling, you cover those who are engaged in education, skills and work, as well as those who are not.

If leaders have not identified for case sampling any prisoners who fall into the

groups listed above, reflect on why this may be the case. Take into account any contextual information about the establishment. However, you should select prisoners for case sampling anyway. This is to check that leaders are identifying and addressing the needs of prisoners.

Tell leaders/the nominee that you will confirm that the planned case sample is still viable at the beginning of day 1.

The inspection team will need to gather evidence about the typical experiences of these prisoners.

Inspection activities on day 1

[Inspection activities on day 1](#) follow a clear structure. Explain the following structure on the planning call to leaders/the nominee.

The team will focus on gathering direct, first-hand evidence about prisoners' outcomes and experiences, including those who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing. You will also gather evidence about leaders' priorities and actions, and the impact of these.

Inspectors will accompany relevant leaders/managers on [learning walks](#)/visits to education, work and skills sessions (where relevant), so that they can connect the top-level view with the first-hand evidence they gather about prisoners' experiences.

Inspectors are also likely to look at prisoners' work and consider the skills they are learning. They will gather evidence about the provision to help prisoners develop their reading skills, including reading for pleasure. This may include, where appropriate, listening to prisoners reading and/or talking to them about reading.

Inspectors will meet with prisoners. To ensure that prisoners' views are included meaningfully, inspectors will speak to prisoners separately from staff. The team will also consider the views of prisoners through their responses to HMIP's pre-inspection questionnaire.

The inspection team will carry out case sampling activities.

Reflection meetings should be held with leaders and the inspection team during each day of the inspection.

You will also meet with leaders so that you can understand their rationale for the strengths and areas of focus they have identified and their actions to date. It is important not to plan meetings that are unnecessary or too long. Bear in mind that, in some establishments, one leader may be responsible for many different areas or

have oversight of a large area, such as industries. Discuss with leaders who would be the most appropriate person for an inspector to talk with, and their availability.

Further information on the range of [inspection activities](#) is set out below.

Write-up time

Make sure leaders/the nominee understand that the inspection team will require short amounts of time between inspection activities to write up their evaluations.

End-of-day reflection meetings

The meetings will include the nominee, the shadow nominee and the inspection team. Normally the reflection meetings will review all the toolkit evaluation areas. Make sure the nominee understands the purpose and content of the meetings.

The meetings should focus on the quality of leaders' choices and actions, and the impact on prisoners, rather than compliance alone. They are to review the evidence gathered overall by the inspection team so far. You will use the toolkit grading standards to consider the emerging picture, starting with the 'expected standard' for each evaluation area.

By the end of an inspection day, for example on day 2 or day 3, the team may have gathered enough evidence to indicate a 'secure fit' around an evaluation area. If this is the case, and the nominee agrees, you may decide to give an indicative grade and not to gather any further direct evidence in this evaluation area. This is likely to be the case where the emerging evidence aligns with the leaders' self-evaluation against the grading standards.

Explain that in this meeting you will also work with leaders to finalise the plan for each subsequent day of the inspection. It is important that leaders are clear about meetings they might need to organise for these subsequent days.

On the final inspection day, the end-of-day meeting will be the formal grading meeting. This is when you evaluate the evidence gathered, including that already shared and discussed at the previous meetings. Provisional grades will be determined based on a 'secure fit'.

Final feedback meeting

Ask the establishment to invite the appropriate people to the final feedback meeting at the end of the final day of the inspection. See the [inspection information for prison and YOI inspections](#) for who may attend.

Final document-sharing

Agree a time when you will be able to share the finalised schedule with the nominee.

If not already agreed, ask the nominee to send a schedule of teaching, training and work activities during the on-site inspection days.

After the call(s)

Draw up a pre-inspection team briefing letter for the inspection team and the nominee. The purpose of this briefing is to focus inspection activity and identify areas to explore. The lead inspector's team briefing letter may use, but will not be restricted to:

- the prison, YOI and, as relevant, the education and skills provider's current self-assessment report or equivalent evaluation report, and quality improvement plans
- performance data since the previous inspection, including on prisoners' achievement rates and progression to further education, training or employment
- the report from the previous inspection
- any monitoring visit reports from Ofsted, including joint IRPs with HMIP

Make sure that team members are aware of the outcome of any requests for reasonable adjustments, and any other adaptations to the inspection process that are to be made where those with protected characteristics may otherwise be put at a disadvantage. You should include these in the team briefing letter where this is appropriate.

Share the team briefing letter with the inspection team and nominee the working day before the on-site inspection activity begins at the latest.

Core requirements throughout the inspection

The time Ofsted's inspectors arrive and depart on each day of the inspection must be agreed in advance with the nominee.

Ofsted's inspectors will normally arrive by 10.45am on day 1 of the inspection to pass through prison security and draw keys. The initial orientation meeting will usually start at 11.30am.

From day 2 onwards, inspectors may start inspection activities from 8.30am, unless agreed otherwise with leaders. The lead inspector may attend the governor's/director's briefing with HMIP on Monday morning.

Leave the premises by 5.45pm, other than in exceptional circumstances. You may need to stay later for any twilight or evening provision and should agree this with leaders.

On each day of the inspection (apart from day 1), hold an initial face-to-face reflection meeting with the nominee and another relevant senior leader. Check with leaders on their wellbeing and the wellbeing of other staff and discuss leaders' reflections on the evaluative evidence so far. With the nominee, review the planned timetable and adjust inspection activities, as needed.

Remember to plan regular time to reflect on evidence, including sharing any emerging evaluations with leaders/the nominee.

Throughout the inspection, you (as the lead inspector) are responsible for assuring the quality of the evidence gathered, managing the conduct of the inspection team, and ensuring that the inspection runs smoothly, working alongside leaders/the nominee. Focus on building and managing relationships with leaders, having oversight of leadership and governance, and quality assuring the work of your team.

Each end-of-day reflection meeting, including the grading meeting, should include the nominee (and shadow nominee, where relevant). In these meetings, reflect with the nominee on the wellbeing of staff and how effective any reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations have been. Ask whether they want to change the arrangements/adaptations or make any additional requests. Refer to the [Responding to requests for reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations](#) section for further information. Continue to consider any further reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations you may need to put in place.

Safeguarding

You will always have regard to how well prisoners are helped and protected so that they are kept safe. Although you will not give a separate grade for this key aspect of the establishment's work, on joint inspections you will always inform HMIP's inspectors, who inspect this area, about any serious concerns that you identify or are reported to you during inspection activities, in particular those that impact on the wider prison.

As part of grading participation and development, you will consider whether in education, skills and work:

- prisoners' behaviour towards each other is unsafe, putting prisoners at risk of harm when attending activities
- incidents of bullying or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, either direct or indirect, are common
- prisoners or particular groups of prisoners do not feel safe (for example, because of unsafe working practices, the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and the risk of sexual abuse) when attending activities

During standalone inspections, you should inform senior prison/YOI leaders (including the nominee) about safeguarding concerns that are raised, and confirm the actions that leaders take or intend to take. You should also inform the Ofsted duty desk and the relevant policy lead for prisons/YOIs so that this information can be shared with HMIP, as appropriate.

If you become aware of any prisoner alleging that they have been subject to sanction or other prejudice arising from communication with Ofsted, alert the HMI Prisons team leader inspector at the earliest opportunity.

Recording evidence

You must make sure that the evidence base:

- provides a clear and accurate evaluative record of relevant evidence (rather than a verbatim record of discussion or inspection activities)
- explains how you arrived at your decisions and findings, including how you weighed the evidence in reaching these – this includes findings relating to indicative and provisional grades, as well as other relevant decisions, such as the focus of inspection activities or responses to requests from leaders/the nominee
- complies with any relevant legal requirements, thresholds and Ofsted policies (justifying any departures from policies) and reflects our guidelines (including this operating guide for prisons and YOIs, and the toolkit)

If leaders or managers have accompanied you on activities, briefly review your findings with them.

Record evidence in a proportionate way, with enough detail to clearly explain the grades you gave. Recorded evidence should be more detailed in cases where decisions are more complex or potentially have greater consequences. This is so that you can convey accurately and clearly how the decisions were reached and how you took account of relevant policies and guidance in doing so.

Meeting standards and determining grades

Evaluating against the toolkit evaluation areas and grading standards

When you have collected reliable evidence in an evaluation area to support an indicative grade, as set out in the ‘gathering evidence about’ sections of the toolkit, consider whether all the expected standards are reached. If this is the case, consider whether all the strong standards are also reached securely. At this point, if the evidence clearly and consistently goes beyond the strong standards, you might have enough evidence to consider the ‘exceptional’ grade. This is summarised in the following table. You should call the duty desk when an ‘exceptional’ grade is being considered.

When grading, consider the following steps.

Step	Question	Resulting grade
1. Expected standard	Does the establishment reach all the expected grading standards for this evaluation area?	If no, go to the ‘Where the evaluation standards are not reached’ section.
		If yes, go to Step 2.
2. Strong standard	Does the establishment also reach all the strong grading standards?	If no, grade as ‘expected standard’.
		If yes, go to Step 3.

3.Exceptional	Is there clear evidence of the establishment going beyond the strong standard, and meeting the standards that define exceptional practice?	If yes, grade as 'exceptional'. If no, grade as 'strong standard'.
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Some minor inconsistencies may lead to priorities for improvement but do not lower the grade. This means that 'next steps' may be identified, even if the provisional grade is 'expected standard' or above. Where one or more standards have not been met for a particular grade, then that grade cannot be given and you should refer to the guidance below.

Where the evaluation standards are not reached

Needs attention

An evaluation area is likely to be graded as 'needs attention' when both:

- the 'expected standard' grade has not been reached
- no 'urgent improvement' indicators apply

Use the indicators for 'needs attention' to explain the grading and outline the priorities for improvement for the establishment. These should be based on the expected standards that have not been evidenced during the inspection, and the associated prompts in the 'gathering evidence' section of the relevant evaluation area.

Urgent improvement

If any of the 'urgent improvement' indicators apply, the evaluation area is likely to be graded as 'urgent improvement'. You should call the duty desk when an 'urgent improvement' grade is likely.

Use the relevant expected standards to help craft the establishment's priorities for improvement, including the associated prompts in the 'gathering evidence' section of the relevant evaluation area.

Where the evidence indicates a particular grade is likely to be reached

During a reflection meeting, if you have reliable evidence indicating a particular grade for any evaluation areas, let the nominee know. If the evidence supports an indicative grading decision, discuss and agree this with the nominee. Record the indicative grade and the nominee's comments in the evidence base.

Remember – you need to be very clear with the nominee that any grading made during the inspection is indicative/provisional. The final grading process will be carried out at the end of the inspection and will be subject to Ofsted's quality assurance and consistency checking process.

On each day of the inspection, let leaders and the nominee know if you have emerging evidence that any evaluation area is likely to be graded as 'needs attention' or 'urgent improvement'. In these cases, record the main points in the evidence base.

What to do on site during the inspection: day 1

When you arrive on site, you should:

- have a short orientation meeting with the nominee, shadow nominee and the inspection team; summarise relevant aspects of the planning call during this
- check on the wellbeing of leaders and staff and find out whether any issues have arisen since the planning call
- confirm planned meetings
- confirm planned inspection focus areas and related activities, in particular initial meetings with relevant staff
- confirm you have an accurate list of prisoners for [case sampling](#), as discussed in

the planning call

- check whether anyone involved in the inspection requires (and/or has requested) any reasonable adjustments because of a disability
- consider whether you need to make any other adaptations to the inspection process where those with other protected characteristics may otherwise be put at a disadvantage (refer to the [Responding to requests for reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations](#) section for further information)
- if there have been any requests, record them in the evidence base along with their outcome and any other adaptations that have been requested

Follow the schedule for day 1 discussed in the [planning call](#).

Structure for day 1

Remember to apply the [3 key principles](#) throughout the inspection.

Typical inspection activities for day 1 should include:

- inspection focus area meetings and follow-up activities such as lesson/workshop visits and work scrutiny (see below)
- leadership meetings, learning walks/visits, possible case sampling and any other appropriate inspection activities discussed with leaders

Be flexible and responsive – if new issues emerge, discuss them with leaders/the nominee and adjust the inspection activities as necessary. Use the toolkit to adapt what you focus on as you go. Leaders will be aware of the need for this from the planning call.

Inspection activities

Initial inspection focus area meetings

These meetings consist of professional discussions with the managers/other staff who have oversight of the respective focus areas. More than one staff member may attend each meeting.

Share the agreed agenda with them. The team inspector who is overseeing the

focus area will chair the meeting.

The meeting will explore the curriculum, teaching and training, achievement, and participation and development through the lens of the focus area.

Each meeting will normally last up to 60 minutes, which will include time to discuss plans for subsequent inspection activity within the focus area.

Learning walks

Learning walks/visits should be carried out with leaders and last for approximately 45 minutes. Remember, this is an important opportunity for leaders to show you the aspect or aspects of their provision that they are proudest of. Each selected learning walk has an agreed inspection focus:

- A learning walk with a focus on inclusion helps you gather evidence on the outcomes and experiences of prisoners who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs. This kind of learning walk will typically include a leader, such as one with oversight of SEND/inclusion. If appropriate, more than one leader can join the learning walk.
- A learning walk with a focus on curriculum, teaching and training, and achievement provides the opportunity to evaluate how well prisoners are learning the intended curriculum. This learning walk will likely involve visits to learning environments. You should ensure that visits do not overlap with locations being visited as part of inspection focus areas.
- A learning walk with a focus on leadership gives leaders the opportunity to demonstrate how their priorities and actions are being realised. The relevant leader/leaders should, where possible, accompany you on this kind of learning walk. It will provide important evidence for leadership and governance, as well as other evaluation areas.

Explain to leaders that learning walks are an important opportunity for them to show you their context and to celebrate and/or validate aspects of the provision that they have particularly emphasised. Depending on the prison's size and complexity, it might not be possible to have 3 separate learning walks. You will discuss this with the leaders/the nominee during planning.

Visits to learning environments

You will have discussed with the nominee the range of learning environments the team will visit as part of their inspection focus areas. The team will also visit

workplaces, subcontractors and online learning environments, as relevant.

Plan opportunities for professional dialogue with staff during these visits. Connect the evidence from observing learning activities with other evidence sources, including talking with prisoners about their learning and sampling their work.

Gather evidence across a range of evaluation areas. This will help you to understand the impact of the curriculum, teaching and training on prisoners' experiences and outcomes. This is especially important for prisoners who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs.

You may visit specialist provision that supports prisoners who face barriers to their learning, work and/or wellbeing. In these visits, you must work closely with staff to understand any arrangements that are necessary for prisoners when they meet an unfamiliar visitor. Be alert to these arrangements when entering a learning environment or approaching prisoners to start a conversation.

Case sampling

As explained in [Part 3: planning inspection activities](#), the initial case sample should include prisoners who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs. It should include those not engaged in education, skills and work, as well as those who are. Further prisoners may be identified for case sampling during the inspection.

Case sampling can help you evaluate whether the establishment's values and policies are reflected in the day-to-day experiences of those who are in most need of support. Establish whether their experiences are typical. You can also use case sampling to evaluate how the establishment is working with external partners to provide bespoke support.

Case sampling will likely involve reviewing records, speaking with staff who know the prisoners well, speaking with prisoners and observing support strategies in action during education, skills and work.

Sometimes, leaders may not have identified any prisoners who fall into the groups listed in [Part 3: planning inspection activities](#) for case sampling. In these instances, consider how well staff are supported and trained to be able to accurately identify these prisoners' needs and to help them. Be alert to any barriers prisoners may have to learning, work and/or wellbeing that are not being identified and reduced.

Reviewing prisoners' work and skills

Where possible, review prisoners' work and skills as part of learning walks or visits to learning environments and use this to support discussions with them about their learning.

Reviewing prisoners' work and skills provides further evidence about the knowledge and skills they have developed. Their work is an important part of how we inspect the curriculum, teaching and training, and of our evaluation of prisoners' knowledge and skills. However, it must be considered in the light of wider evidence.

Work and skills scrutiny is not about judging individual prisoners, trainers or teachers. Reviewing work with staff, including education, skills and work contractors, may provide evidence of how they evaluate the quality of provision and how they ensure that, over time, prisoners reach the highest possible standards.

Prisoners' work and skills take different forms – for vocational courses, for example, you may sample more practical work than written work. Make sure that any sample includes work completed by prisoners who face barriers to learning, work and/or wellbeing; those who have SEND, including needs related to neurodiversity; those who need to learn to read or improve their reading; and those who have other support needs.

Leadership meetings

Consider having planning meetings with the following members of staff:

- the governing governor (or equivalent)
- senior leaders with responsibility for education, skills and work to discuss areas including vision, curriculum and training, planning, outcomes and quality assurance
- those responsible for oversight of the establishment's performance, such as a prison group director or other senior leader who is not directly working at the prison/YOI but has oversight of its performance (this meeting could be carried out remotely)
- those responsible for allocating prisoners to activities and for oversight of attendance
- those responsible for identifying and reducing prisoners' key barriers to learning, such as (but not limited to) neurodiversity managers or reading leads
- leaders from the education and skills contractor

You may also consider meetings with the following:

- external organisations that work directly with prisoners, for example those included in any bespoke support plans; employers who work directly with prisoners; or those who provide specialist provision in aspects such as enrichment
- a senior leader from the education contractor who provides oversight of that provision
- at YOIs, a representative of the local authority who is involved with provision and/or support for prisoners with SEND and/or other barriers to learning

These are not exhaustive lists. Your discussions with leaders about their context may lead to you identifying other parties that it would be useful to meet. More than one member of staff can attend each meeting, and contracted staff working at the prison can attend meetings where this is helpful for gathering evidence. You should normally limit the number of attendees at any one meeting to 4 people (not including inspectors).

End-of-day reflection meetings

These meetings bring together the inspection team and the nominee to reflect on the emerging evidence. You should:

- check on the wellbeing of leaders and staff, and allow the nominee to raise any issues or concerns or seek clarification, including about the conduct of the inspection or of individual inspectors
- ensure that you have applied the [3 key principles](#) when evaluating the first-hand evidence gathered
- consider how the emerging evidence relates to the grading standards for a particular evaluation area
- consider which areas are emerging as strengths, and in which areas the establishment may have more to do – this will support you in having a transparent dialogue with the nominee about the emerging evidence, give the nominee an opportunity to suggest further evidence, and help you to identify further areas to explore
- evaluate to what extent the evidence supports a ‘secure fit’ in any of the evaluation areas, starting with the ‘expected standard’ for each evaluation area in the toolkit
- alert leaders if the evidence suggests that any area may be likely to be graded as ‘needs attention’ or ‘urgent improvement’
- record the nominee’s comments in the evidence base
- identify the most appropriate inspection activities to gather any further evidence that is required, using the evidence-gathering prompts

- discuss the practical arrangements for all the inspection activities that have been agreed

It may sometimes be necessary to change planned inspection activities to make sure that they enable you to form a clear picture across the toolkit evaluation areas. You should have explained the flexible, responsive nature of the inspection process to leaders in the planning call; keep them informed in a timely way of any changes that are required.

What to do on site during the inspection: day 2 onwards

Typical inspection activities

Begin with a brief reflection meeting with the nominee and another senior leader. Confirm everyone's wellbeing, record any overnight developments or unexpected events, and agree whether the schedule needs fine-tuning. Adjust plans only as necessary.

Continue to gather evidence across the evaluation areas through relevant activities. These may include:

- lesson visits and/or learning walks
- work and/or skills scrutiny
- engaging with prisoners, teachers and/or trainers, instructors, employers and subcontractors
- visit(s) to workplaces
- meeting curriculum leaders
- case sampling
- ongoing reflection meetings with the nominee to discuss emerging evidence and to further understand the context of leaders' actions and their impact
- meeting with senior leaders, including the governing governor
- where relevant, meetings with representatives from the local authority and/or

external agencies who work directly with prisoners, for example in relation to their support plans

- meeting with those responsible for governance and/or oversight

At appropriate points:

- you will need to set aside time to attend HMIP team meetings to provide feedback on your team's findings
- discuss the emerging findings with the nominee – follow the guidance in the [Where the evidence indicates a particular grade is likely to be reached](#) section

Continue to adapt inspection activity as necessary, explaining adaptations to the nominee as an ongoing process during the inspection.

Grading meeting

Once you have finished collecting evidence, the inspection team will hold the grading meeting. The nominee should be invited to attend this meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting:

- check on staff wellbeing, and allow the nominee to raise any issues or concerns, or to seek clarification, including about the conduct of the inspection or of individual inspectors
- reflect with the nominee on how effective any reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations were; ask them whether they want to change the existing arrangements or make any additional requests for the final feedback meeting

Following this, for each evaluation area:

- consider the additional evidence gathered on the last day of the inspection
- evaluate how this evidence builds on that gathered earlier in the inspection
- agree as a team the provisional grades, following the grading process set out in the section [Meeting standards and determining grades](#), in the following order:
 - inclusion
 - curriculum, teaching and training
 - achievement

- participation and development
- leadership and governance
- where required, identify priorities for improvement

Final feedback meeting

Record the main points for feedback to the establishment in the evidence base during the inspection.

Your feedback must be clear, respectful and grounded in the evidence gathered. It should cover the points that will appear in the written report.

The meeting should cover the following:

- Thank everyone for their contributions, engagement and involvement in the inspection.
- Explain that attendance at the final feedback meeting is voluntary and any attendee may leave at any time.
- Outline the key findings from the inspection and the grade for each evaluation area – explain that any of these may change as a result of quality assurance and consistency checking procedures or moderation.
- Explain the rationale for each grade and the key evidence supporting it, using the language of the toolkit.
- Celebrate the key strengths and validate the successes/evaluation of the establishment's work.
- Highlight any priorities for improvement and what the establishment needs to do to improve, giving sufficient detail so that those attending understand their part in improving the establishment's work, especially those responsible for governance and/or oversight.
- Explain that any progress monitoring will usually take place as part of HMIP's IRPs. In rare circumstances, Ofsted may decide to carry out a standalone monitoring visit.
- Ask leaders to share the inspection findings with anyone who has a governance and/or oversight role, and whoever else they consider appropriate – this may include colleagues, family members and/or their wider support or management group. However, the information should not be made public.

- Explain that the main points provided in the feedback, subject to any change, will generally be reflected in the text of HMIP's report (or Ofsted's report in the case of a standalone inspection), although the report may differ slightly from the oral feedback.
- Explain that inspection findings and provisional grades may be shared by Ofsted with HMPs before the publication of the report and, in the case of a standalone inspection, the findings will also be shared with HMIP or any other relevant regulator/inspectorate before the report is published.
- Remind leaders that the establishment has an opportunity to raise any concerns or to seek clarification about the inspection, and can also contact us after the end of the inspection, if necessary (see [inspection information for prisons and YOIs](#)).
- Explain that they can make a formal complaint and that information on how to do this is available in our [complaints procedure](#).
- Outline the procedures for publishing the report.

Reflect the establishment's context and frame your feedback through professional dialogue, with the aim of supporting improvement. Manage the conduct of everyone who attends the meeting to make sure the meeting is practical and constructive.

What to do after the inspection

After the end of the inspection, you (as lead inspector) will be responsible for writing the draft report and submitting this, alongside a 500-word debrief, to HMIP. You should also submit the evidence base to Ofsted's evidence collection team.

The text in the report must:

- reflect the evidence gathered
- be written in line with the writing guidance
- be clear, concise and focused on what matters most, as informed by the establishment's context, leaders' evaluation of their provision and the toolkit
- explain the grade for each evaluation area
- make clear what the establishment should improve
- be consistent with the verbal feedback to the establishment at the end of the inspection

Arrangements for publishing the report in separate standalone Ofsted inspections of education, skills and work

For these inspections, Ofsted will publish a report. You will draft the report in line with the protocols set out above. The draft report will be shared with the establishment for comment.

If the establishment submits comments after reviewing the draft report, you are responsible, as the lead inspector, for reviewing and responding to the comments and making any necessary amendments.

Further information about when and how the report will be published is in the [inspection information for prisons and YOIs](#).

Quality assurance and consistency checking

You are responsible for the quality of your own work and that of your team, where applicable. You must ensure that the inspection is carried out in accordance with the instruments for inspections of prisons and YOIs and the [code of conduct](#).

As the lead inspector, you are responsible for giving team inspectors timely feedback about the quality of their work and their conduct.

Additional guidance to support inspection

As explained earlier, you must check whether anyone involved in the inspection requires (and/or has requested) any reasonable adjustments because of a disability. It is also important to continue to consider making other adaptations where those with other protected characteristics may otherwise be put at a disadvantage. Refer to the [Responding to requests for reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations](#) section for further information. Record any requests and their outcome in the evidence base, along with any other adaptations that have been requested.

Additional guidance to support evidence-gathering

The toolkit provides guidance on gathering evidence in each evaluation area through inspection activities, as well as the standards you will use to determine grades.

The toolkit is not a checklist.

Connect evidence across a range of activities determined by you (as the lead inspector) to gather reliable evidence and determine the grades.

Use the toolkit to guide conversations, consider evidence and ensure that grades reflect the evidence gathered during the inspection. Always discuss with leaders/the nominee the typicality of the evidence you are gathering and the emerging evaluations. Where leaders/the nominee do not believe the evidence is typical or reflective of their provision, try to gather additional evidence as appropriate within the time you have. This may be through visiting more learning and work environments, speaking with other leaders, staff or prisoners, or reviewing more of the establishment's work.

Engaging with staff and leaders

Arrange to meet with the staff who are best placed to discuss the emerging themes. Discuss:

- their experience of working at the establishment
- how they ensure the best possible outcomes for prisoners
- the impact of leaders' actions

Remind staff that you do not expect them to bring documents with them, but they may do so if they wish.

If you meet with individual members of staff or leaders/managers on their own, give them the opportunity to be accompanied by a colleague. However, it is important that staff can express their views freely to inspectors.

Adjust arrangements when necessary. For example, staff may need a break, or a later opportunity to follow up the discussion, so that they can carry out their usual routines and responsibilities.

Be proportionate in considering the views of staff. Connect evidence from their views to the wider evidence base.

Meet leaders and managers with specific areas of responsibility. These may include leaders at key providers or subcontractors. Typically, these meetings will be face to face. However, in establishments with a broad geographic spread, you may need to meet leaders and managers remotely, for example through a video conference call.

Understand that, in some establishments, leaders may have multiple roles. Plan to reduce the need for multiple meetings, for example by discussing several topics in a single meeting.

You should take careful account of the wellbeing of leaders and staff and make suitable adjustments as necessary. If you see or suspect that a leader, manager or staff member is upset or distressed at any point, you should respond sensitively. If you have serious concerns, you must inform those responsible for the person's wellbeing, other than in exceptional circumstances, and you must contact the national duty desk.

In exceptional circumstances, you may need to consider [pausing the inspection](#).

Engaging with prisoners

Use a range of activities to understand prisoners' typical experiences, including through:

- analysing the responses to HMIP's pre-inspection questionnaire
- engaging with prisoners in a variety of settings, including at the start and end of their purposeful activity
- conversations during visits to learning environments and workplaces
- planned discussions with individual prisoners (or groups, as appropriate), taking account of individuals' communication needs
- reviewing prisoners' work
- reviewing relevant documents

- talking with relevant staff, including education and training providers/contractors

Remind leaders that they must provide opportunities for inspectors to speak with prisoners with no staff present. In exceptional circumstances, prisoners may ask for a staff member to be present or may require this as a reasonable adjustment (for example, because of a specific communication need).

When talking with prisoners, whether individually or in groups, follow these principles:

- Make sure you have let the nominee know, as early as possible, that you need to speak with prisoners as part of the inspection, and the broad themes you will want to explore. Give the nominee/leaders a chance to raise any concerns.
- Agree with the nominee/leaders how you will meet with any prisoners you wish to hold more focused group discussions with.
- Work closely with leaders on how best to talk with prisoners who have learning needs. You may need to use assistive technology to communicate with prisoners who are non-verbal. Some prisoners may need another prisoner or a member of staff to be their advocate, or to provide reassurance and/or support with communication.
- If any other prisoners would like to speak with you or another member of the inspection team, make sure they have an opportunity to do so, even if the establishment has refused to allow this without a member of staff present. In these circumstances, the conversation should be with you and at least one other inspector. You should inform the duty desk as soon as possible and, if practical, before speaking with the prisoner. Record full details in the evidence base.
- If a prisoner does not want to speak with you, you cannot compel them.

If leaders prevent inspectors from talking with prisoners:

- try to find out the reasons for this
- call the duty desk

Explain to leaders/the nominee that, if you are entirely prevented from speaking with prisoners, you may not be able to gather the necessary robust evidence for many aspects of provision, including positive evidence from prisoners about what the establishment is doing well, which would enable the establishment to evidence its strengths.

Without including information that might identify any prisoners, record in your evidence base and report if, during an inspection:

- it was not possible to speak with prisoners
- inspectors were requested not to ask prisoners certain questions
- a member of staff was present when inspectors spoke with prisoners

Record the impact of any of these on the evidence gathered and the inspection outcome.

Engaging with employers, education and training providers/ contractors

Employers are sometimes involved in elements of prisoners' training, for example in work placements for prisoners on RoTL. Where relevant, meet some employers. Do this at their workplaces where possible.

When selecting your visits, consider the location and number of prisoners. Work with the nominee to identify a sample and to plan online/telephone meetings or visits.

Make sure that discussions include representatives who are appropriate for providing the evidence you need from employers, education and training providers and/or contractors. Leaders and managers may be helpful for explaining how employers, providers and contractors are involved in curriculum design.

Reviewing key records

Key records you review should include data on attendance and allocations. They may also include training records, staff qualifications or records of leadership/governance meetings.

Review documents to connect the evidence that informs your evaluations.

Gathering evidence about reading

The support that prisoners receive for reading is an important part of evidence-gathering, and spans across all five grading areas. It will be important to understand

the work that the prison does to:

- identify any difficulties prisoners have with reading
- provide targeted support that helps them to learn to read and/or improve their reading
- make sure leaders and staff have the expertise needed to support prisoners with their reading and check that this support is effective

There is a place for the teaching of phonics in adult literacy. The attainment standards that link to the teaching of phonics are included in functional skills English reading and writing assessments at entry levels 1 to 3. Phonics programmes used to teach adults to read should be reputable, structured and age appropriate.

You should also gather evidence about reading for pleasure. This applies both to prisoners who are learning to read and to those who can already read fluently. Prisoners might be able to join book groups, read as part of their lesson or work activities, or be set challenging personal targets to encourage them to read more often.

Engaging with those responsible for governance and/or oversight

Meet with at least one representative from those responsible for governance and/or oversight, on a call if necessary. Consider the establishment's context when deciding who to speak with. In these discussions you should focus on the broad, strategic oversight of those responsible for governance and/or oversight, not the day-to-day operational detail of the establishment.

Specific contexts to consider

It is important that you and your team consider the context of the prison you are inspecting. The education, skills and work curriculum, and what prisoners can realistically achieve, will vary considerably depending on factors such as sentence length and length of stay at the prison.

Examples of different prison contexts, and the factors inspectors should consider

for them, are given below. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of contextual factors. You will gather valuable information about the context of the establishment during your planning discussions with the nominee.

Prisons mainly holding long-term prisoners

Inspectors should consider:

- the extent to which prisoners have access to education, training and work opportunities that enable them to use their long stays in prison productively – these include opportunities to study subjects at advanced levels and to undertake challenging work roles
- how well prisoners develop the knowledge and skills, including personal skills, that they need to successfully live, work and study in prison environments in the long term
- how well careers information, advice and guidance support prisoners to plan for long-term work and study goals in prison
- the extent to which prisoners are supported to develop an interest in reading and to read for pleasure

Prisons with a reception function

Inspectors should consider:

- whether prisoners staying for a short time at the prison can study courses of an appropriate duration, so that they achieve useful accredited qualifications and units before they move to other prisons or are released
- the extent to which the curriculum includes courses that support the wellbeing of those arriving in prison, particularly for the first time, and help them to develop their personal skills
- how well staff gather information about prisoners' starting points during induction, and, where appropriate, share this with other prisons (for example, when prisoners are transferred)
- where appropriate, how well staff support prisoners on remand to access education, skills and work activities

Prisons with training and resettlement functions

Inspectors should consider:

- the extent to which the curriculum includes appropriate work, study and training activities that develop the knowledge and skills that prisoners need for work and/or study after their release
- how well careers information, advice and guidance help prisoners plan for their study and career goals on release, and focus on prisoners' careers and study within the prison when they still have substantial sentences to serve
- how well staff engage with employers to provide prisoners with meaningful exposure to the world of work while in custody, and employment opportunities after release

Open prisons

Inspectors should consider the extent to which the prison focuses on providing prisoners with opportunities to work and study through RoTL, so that significant numbers of prisoners use RoTL to prepare for post-prison work and/or study opportunities.

Prisons for foreign nationals

Inspectors should consider whether there is sufficient opportunity for prisoners with low levels of ability in English to develop their English language skills and knowledge, including through English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. This will help prisoners to access the prison's wider education, skills and work curriculum and prepare for their next steps.

Women's prisons

Inspectors should consider:

- the extent to which the curriculum considers the needs of women, is diverse, is not based on gender stereotyping, and enables women to lead autonomous and independent lives
- whether women can combine work and study

Young offender institutions

Inspectors should consider:

- how well staff promote positive behaviour and attitudes to learning and manage instances of poor behaviour
- the extent to which those under school leaving age receive their statutory entitlement to education and skills training and/or related skills activities, and can access a comprehensive and purposeful day of education activity
- whether children have access to a broad, challenging and inspiring curriculum that includes an introduction to the world of work and promotes their personal and social development

Other matters

Responding to requests for reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations

On all inspections, you must ask whether anyone requires any reasonable adjustments due to a disability. Contact the duty desk for all requests. Those on the duty desk may consult with relevant policy and legal teams as needed.

What is considered reasonable is an objective test that depends on all the circumstances of the particular case. This includes the needs of the individual concerned, how effective the change will be in avoiding the disadvantage the disabled person would otherwise experience, what impact providing the adjustment

will have on the inspection, and the circumstances of the inspection or visit.

To understand the request, you must enter into an open dialogue about it with the individual. Ask what steps the individual thinks Ofsted should take to address the anticipated disadvantage. In the light of this, consider what adjustments might be reasonable in the circumstances of the inspection or visit. You can consider adjustments not proposed by the individual.

When considering whether the request is reasonable, you should take into account:

- how effective the reasonable adjustment would be in overcoming the disadvantage
- how practicable it is for Ofsted to make the adjustment
- the costs of making the adjustment
- the disruption that making the adjustment would cause
- the resources available to the inspector and to Ofsted
- the amount of resource already spent on making adjustments
- any health and safety risks, including the effect the arrangements will have on others

There is a 'positive' duty to make adjustments if they are considered to be reasonable, as set out above. This duty is 'anticipatory', and a failure to comply with it to make reasonable adjustments is a form of discrimination under the [Equality Act 2010](#). You can treat disabled people better or 'more favourably' than non-disabled people, and sometimes this may be an appropriate response to a request for reasonable adjustments.

It may also be appropriate to consider other adaptations that are requested where those with other protected characteristics may otherwise be put at a disadvantage. Where you are being asked to make such an adaptation to avoid potential discrimination, consider what the reason is for the policy, criterion or practice that you are being asked to adapt (the objective justification), and what the impact would be of both making and not making the adaptation.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) protects people from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the ground of a protected characteristic. This may include taking steps to avoid indirectly discriminating against someone on the ground of a protected characteristic. However, you should also consider the effect the proposed adaptation would have on others. Ensure that in making the adaptation, you are not directly discriminating against anyone else on the grounds of a protected

characteristic.

If you agree to the request(s), agree a plan for reasonable adjustments or adaptations with the individual and leaders as appropriate. You must discuss and agree the plan with the inspection team.

You must record in the evidence base that you have asked leaders if they need to request any reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations. You must also record the outcome of any decisions. It is essential that this information is recorded factually and accurately, and maintains the individual's anonymity.

If the establishment has concerns/complaints

Record any concerns raised, and actions taken, in the inspection evidence. Try to resolve any issues with leaders during the inspection. If this is not possible, the establishment can follow the steps set out in the [complaints policy](#).

If you need to consider pausing the inspection

There may be exceptional occasions when you need to consider pausing an inspection, including in response to concerns raised by the nominee. Contact the duty desk for advice and inform the HMIP lead inspector. We will consider requests on a case-by-case basis according to our published [guidance on pausing inspections](#).

If you identify evidence or allegations of abuse on inspection

You must familiarise yourself with our [guidance on safeguarding concerns](#).

If you come across evidence or allegations of child abuse, stop all other activity immediately and focus on ensuring that the child receives the help they need. Inform the HMIP lead, so that they can take appropriate action as part of their safeguarding inspection activity. You must be satisfied that the correct referral has been made within the establishment and record this in the evidence base.

If the establishment uses artificial intelligence

You do not need to ask whether artificial intelligence (AI) is used or actively search for it. If you come across instances where an establishment uses AI, record how leaders have chosen to implement it, its impact, how it is monitored, and the establishment's checks and balances to make sure that it is accurate, safe and used in the best interests of prisoners. If you have any concerns about the establishment's use of AI, contact the duty desk.

Inspecting as part of the wider HMIP inspection team

On joint inspections, the evidence we gather and the grades we give in each of our grading areas will be used by HMIP to help them determine the grade for 'purposeful activity'. It is therefore important that we work together closely with the HMIP team leader before and during inspection. This includes attending any pre-inspection briefings they hold.

On day 2, you should attend the HMIP lunchtime team meeting to provide headline feedback. Depending on your own schedule, you may agree with the team leader to attend only to provide your feedback. From this point in the inspection, you should also liaise with the HMIP inspector leading on purposeful activity to help you understand the emerging picture they are finding.

On day 3, you should attend the entire lunchtime team meeting. This will allow you to provide more detailed feedback, as directed by the team leader, and to gather a broader picture of evidence gathered relating to purposeful activity.

On day 4, after the Ofsted part of the inspection has concluded, you should attend the HMIP deliberation meeting. At this meeting, you should provide constructive input as the team reaches its judgement for purposeful activity. Ahead of this meeting, ensure that the team leader has the 500-word written debrief of Ofsted's findings. If there are any late changes to these findings, you should inform the team leader at the deliberation meeting.

You should ensure that the nominee is aware of times in the schedule when you will be unavailable for meetings due to your work with HMIP. Ahead of the inspection, confirm with the nominee/HMIP coordinator necessary security protocols, such as

information the prison/YOI needs about laptops that inspectors will bring with them, and whether inspectors will receive pin codes for drawing keys.

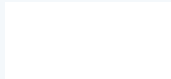
HMIP's 'Expectations'

In addition to the standards set out in the toolkit, inspectors will consider [HMIP's expectations for purposeful activity for different types of detention](#). These are for men's prisons, women's prisons and for children's custody.

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